CORNERSTONECONNECTIONS
SEPTEMBER14 2024

Scripture Story: Daniel 7.
Commentary: *Prophets and Kings* (or *Royalty and Ruin*), chapter 45.

troubling dream



Photo by The Crystal Lenz

flashlight

"Shortly before the fall of Babylon, when Daniel was meditating on these prophecies and seeking God for an understanding of the times, a series of visions was given him concerning the rise and fall of kingdoms. With the first vision, as recorded in the seventh chapter of the book of Daniel, an interpretation was given; yet not all was made clear to the prophet" (*Prophets and Kings*, p. 553).

keytext

"Then the sovereignty, power and greatness of all the kingdoms under heaven will be handed over to the holy people of the Most High. His kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom, and all rulers will worship and obey Him."

(Daniel 7:27, NIV)

what do you think?

Look at the following tech predictions made several decades ago.

1. "There is no reason anyone would want a computer in their home."—Ken Olsen, founder of Digital Equipment Corporation, 1977.

2. "There is practically no chance communications space satellites will be used to provide better telephone, telegraph, television, or radio service inside the United States."—T.A.M. Craven, Federal Communications Commission (FCC) commissioner.

3. "Television won't last. It's a flash in the pan."—Mary Somerville, radio pioneer, 1948.

4. Since all these predictions are proven to be false today, what do you think about making accurate predictions? Is it an easy task? What does it take to make accurate predictions? How are human predictions different from prophetic messages given by God? What do the prophecies that were fulfilled hundreds of years later tell you about God?

did you know?

From the rise and fall of nations as made plain in the books of Daniel and the Revelation, we need to learn how worthless is mere outward and worldly glory. . . .

"A careful study of the working out of God's purpose in the history of nations and in the revelation of things to come, will help us to estimate at their true value things seen and things unseen, and to learn what is the true aim of life. Thus, viewing the things of time in the light of eternity, we may, like Daniel and his fellows, live for that which is true and noble and enduring" (Ellen G. White, *Prophets and Kings*, p. 548).

INTO THE STORY

"I, Daniel, was troubled in spirit, and the visions that passed through my mind disturbed me. I approached one of those standing there and asked him the true meaning of all this.

"So he told me and gave me the interpretation of these things: 'The four great beasts are four kings that will rise from the earth. But the holy people of the Most High will receive the kingdom and will possess it forever—yes, for ever and ever.'

"Then I wanted to know the meaning of the fourth beast, which was different from all the others and most terrifying, with its iron teeth and bronze claws—the beast that crushed and devoured its victims and trampled underfoot whatever was left. I also wanted to know about the ten horns on its head and about the other horn that came up, before which three of them fell—the horn that looked more imposing than the others and that had eyes and a mouth that spoke boastfully. As I watched, this horn was waging war against the holy people and defeating them, until the Ancient of Days came and pronounced judgment in favor of the holy people of the Most High, and the time came when they possessed the kingdom.

"He gave me this explanation: 'The fourth beast is a fourth kingdom that will appear on earth. It will be different from all the other kingdoms and will devour the whole earth, trampling it down and crushing it. The ten horns are ten kings who will come from this kingdom. After them another king will arise, different from the earlier ones; he will subdue three kings. He will speak against the Most High and oppress his holy people and try to change the set times and the laws. The holy people will be delivered into his hands for a time, times and half a time.

" 'But the court will sit, and his power will be taken away and completely destroyed forever. Then the sovereignty, power and greatness of all the kingdoms under heaven will be handed over to the holy people of the Most High. His kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom, and all rulers will worship and obey him.'

"This is the end of the matter. I, Daniel, was deeply troubled by my thoughts, and my face turned pale, but I kept the matter to myself."

(Daniel 7:15-28, NIV)

OUT OF THE STORY

What aspects of this portion of Daniel 7 are new to you?

Review what you learned from Daniel 2 about the kingdoms symbolized by the various divisions of the great statue. List these kingdoms on the spaces below. What symbols are used in Daniel chapter 7 to describe the same kingdoms?

List the eight characteristics of the little horn described in Daniel 7:8, 20, 24, 25:

According to Daniel 7:13, 14 who is "the Ancient of Days" (NIV)? Who is the "one like a son of man" (NIV)? What significant event is described here? What authority did the son of man receive when He was brought before the Ancient of Days?

punch lines

"Surely the Sovereign LORD does nothing without revealing his plan to his servants the prophets" **(Amos 3:7, NIV).**

"I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you" **(John 15:15, NIV).**

"However, as it is written: 'What no eye has seen, what no ear has heard, and what no human mind has conceived'—the things God has prepared for those who love him—these are the things God has revealed to us by his Spirit" **(1 Corinthians 2:9, 10, NIV).**

"Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the LORD . . . will accomplish this" **(Isaiah 9:7, NIV).**

further insight

"Prophets have been God's chosen spokesmen, and through them He has made known things to come."—Denton E. Rebok, *Believe His Prophets*, 1955, p. 82

"Prophecy has traced the rise and fall of the world's great empires—Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome. With each of these, as with nations of less power, history repeated itself. Each had its period of test, each failed, its glory faded, its power departed, and its place was occupied by another."—Ellen G. White, *Education*, p. 176

Sabbath

Read Daniel 7:9-14.

How did you answer the questions in the *What Do You Think?* section? Predictions are difficult, especially if it's about the future. But for God it is not a daunting task to predict what will happen a day, month, year, or century from now.

How does Daniel portray the Ancient of Days in Daniel 7:9, 10?

Today's Bible verses present a scene of judgment in which God the Father, "the Ancient of Days" (NIV), is portrayed as transferring the authority for judging to His Son, the "one like a son of man" (NIV). This event corresponds to the commencement of Jesus' high-priestly ministry in the holy of holies in the heavenly sanctuary. Since then He serves both as our advocate and as our judge. How do you feel knowing that Jesus is now your advocate, interceding for you to the Father based on His own merits?

Sunday

Read Daniel 7:1-7; Exodus 20:8-11; Revelation 14:6, 7.

After reading today's Bible passages, read the *Into the Story* section and complete the *Out of the Story* questions. What was it that troubled Daniel so deeply?

One of the characteristics of the little horn is that it attempted to "change the set times and the laws" (verse 25, NIV). In the Ten Commandments the only one that deals with the concept of time is the fourth commandment. History attests to such a change that took place where Saturday, the biblical seventh-day Sabbath, was changed by the Roman Church to Sunday. Why is the question over God's day of worship vitally important especially now in the final days of earth's history?

What parallels do you find between the fourth commandment and the third angel's message?

Monday

Read Daniel 7:27.

This week's *Key Text* is one of hope and encouragement. What assurance do we have that God is keeping His prophetic promises?

Summarize in your own words the message of hope contained in the *Key Text*.

Tuesday

Read Isaiah 44:28; Jeremiah 25:12.

This week's *Flashlight* quotation helps us understand Daniel's dilemma. What is the central message?

These prophecies were known and studied by Daniel and the Israelites who had been held captive by the Babylonians. They read them carefully, praying earnestly for God to fulfill His promises. It was in answer to these prayers that God gave Daniel a series of visions that helped to explain the future.

Wednesday

Read this week's *Punch Lines*. Focus on John 15:15. To whom is Jesus speaking in this passage?

After looking at Bible prophecies that were fulfilled in the past, can you tell who oversees and guides human history? How can you build on the assurance that God will guide your future as well if you trust Him?

Thursday

Read Proverbs 29:18.

What things get in the way of seeking God? Why is it important that you maintain a living relationship with Jesus, who has your best interest at heart and wants to see you in His kingdom?

Friday

Read Isaiah 41:10.

Does the unknown scare you? Are you afraid of the future? Do you have friends who may be? Based on this week's look at Daniel 7, write a short paragraph offering them hope. Quote at least one verse from Daniel 7 in your paragraph.

this week's reading*

Prophets and Kings (or *Royalty and Ruin*), chapter 45.

**Royalty and Ruin* is a special adaptation of *Prophets and Kings*, created for you by the Ellen G. White Estate and Pacific Press®. Get more information about it at http://www.cornerstoneconnections.net/article/191/about-us/conflict-of-the-ages-companion-books#.URlhF1rBO9s. By following the weekly reading plan, you will read at least one book of the Conflict of the Ages Series each year.