

Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes
First Quarter 2020: *Daniel*
Lesson 8 “From the Stormy Sea to the Clouds of Heaven”

Read for this week’s study

Daniel 7; 2 Thessalonians 2:1–12; Romans 8:1; Mark 13:26; Luke 9:26; Luke 12:8; 1 Timothy 2:5.

Memory Text

“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. His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him” (Daniel 7:27, NKJV).

Lesson Outline from Adult Sabbath School Study Guide

- I. Introduction
- II. Four Animals
- III. The Little Horn
- IV. The Court was Seated
- V. The Coming of the Son of Man
- VI. The Holy Ones of the Most High
- VII. Further Study

Questions and Notes for Consideration

Facilitator: Jon Paulien

1. Read Daniel 7:1. What does this passage teach us about the gift of prophecy? Read 2:28. What is similar about Nebuchadnezzar’s experience and what is different? What does it tell us about God that Nebuchadnezzar’s “gift” is so similar to Daniel’s? What can we learn about how God meets people where they are from the visions of Daniel 2 and 7? (Sabbath afternoon)
2. Read Daniel 7:1-14. What is the Old Testament background to the vision of chapter 7? Who would Daniel have understood to be the “son of man” in verses 13 and 14? What overall message does this allusion to previous Scripture send to Daniel and his people? What do these four unclean animals in the vision portray about Daniel’s future and that of his people? Is the historical reading of Daniel 7 as relevant as it was a hundred years ago? Why or why not? (Sunday’s lesson)
3. Read Daniel 7:7-8 and 19-25. How is the fourth beast of Daniel 7 different from the first three? How is the Little Horn different from the first ten? What is the main difference between Daniel’s vision (7:1-14) and the angelic interpretation of the

vision (7:15-27)? What implications does this have for Revelation and other prophecies of the Bible? What in the text tells you that the “1260 days” is not a short period of time? Why would prophecy operate on a “year-day principle?” What are some significant errors that have crept into Christendom and how do they distort the picture of God? (Monday’s lesson)

4. Read Daniel 7:9-10. When is this judgment located in the course of human history? What value is there in knowing that we are living in the time of judgment? What does such a prophecy tell us about God? In what ways does this judgment benefit God’s people? What aspect of the Bible’s big picture is missing in the concluding part of this chapter? (Tuesday’s lesson)
5. Read Daniel 7:13-14. Who is the “son of man” here and how do you identify him? How does the New Testament identify him? Mark 13:26; Matthew 8:20; 9:6; Luke 9:26; 12:8. Revelation 1:4-5 and Romans 1:7. What is the value of knowing that Jesus is an intercessor? How do we reconcile this with John 16:26? (Wednesday’s lesson)
6. Read Daniel 7:18, 21-22, 25, 27. What does this vision have to say about the fate of God’s people from the time of the fourth beast to the End? Why are prophecies like this not more detailed than they are? See Jeremiah 18:7-10. (Thursday’s lesson)
7. The monarchy of Old Testament Israel adopted many of its institutional and political forms from its neighboring countries. The medieval church adopted many of its institutional and political forms from the Roman Empire that preceded it. To what degree has the Seventh-day Adventist Church adopted its institutional forms from American predecessors? What does it tell us about God as he seeks to imbed divine principles in frail human institutions? (Friday’s lesson)
8. The prophecies of Daniel are apocalyptic in form. How does apocalyptic differ from classical prophecies like those found in Isaiah, Jeremiah and Matthew 24? (Friday’s lesson)

Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

I think one of the greatest pictures, though, in Daniel, is in Daniel 7. In Daniel 7, instead of the king having a dream, Daniel has one. And like the other prophets, he has a vision of heaven and of God. But there are some additional things in Daniel’s picture, you remember, starting with verse 9:

As I looked, thrones were placed and one that was Ancient of Days took his seat; his raiment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like pure wool; his throne was fiery flames; its wheels were burning fire. A stream of fire issued and came forth from before him [now, we’ve met this fire before. It was on Mt. Sinai. The glory of the Lord has the appearance of fire. It says that, doesn’t it, in Exodus, this is the glory of the Lord. It’s not gas jets on a Hollywood stage set. It’s not ordinary fire. This is the glory that surrounds

God. How many are present?], a thousand thousands served him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him [a hundred million!]; the court sat in judgment, and the books were opened.

And you know how Ellen White uses this particularly with respect to the *last* time this happens, what we call the Investigative Judgment. Then notice, a distinguished individual appears, in verse 13: “I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like ...” “the Son of Man”? I mean, it wasn’t really *the* Son of Man, just someone like him? We’re still in Aramaic here. In the Aramaic it doesn’t say “someone like *the* Son of Man.” It says, “Someone like *a* Son of Man,” meaning someone who looked like a human being. Do you remember Ezekiel was called “son of man” several times? Daniel is called “son of man”. It just means human being.

In Revelation 1, John says, “I turned to see the one who was speaking to me, and I saw someone who looked like [the Greek says, not, “*the* Son of Man,” someone who looked like Christ? No, someone who looked like] “*a* son of man.” The emphasis is on the humanity. And that’s what’s so stunning here in this setting, where the majesty and glory of God is fully revealed, and a hundred million angels are present. The person of central authority here is someone who looks like a human being! “And to him is given the kingdom and power and dominion” and so on. Now, we know who that is, from the rest of scripture. It *is* the Son of God. It *is* Christ. But what’s mentioned is that he appears in his human form.

And in Revelation 1 he’s in his human form, after his return to heaven. When he comes the second time he still looks like a human being. When he comes the third time, at the end of the millennium, he still is in his human form, and he maintains this for eternity, to remind us. What a teacher God is! The Sabbath is to remind us of many things. He keeps his human form to remind us. If evidence were not the basis for our trust, there would be no need to remind us. If faith were a leap in the dark, why would you need a reminder of anything? So we have these reminders for eternity. We’ll keep Sabbath in the New Earth, it says in Isaiah, for eternity. We see Christ in his human form to remember, all the evidence of history, particularly as recorded in scripture, of the truth God has revealed about himself, that he is infinitely worthy of our trust. Now, what would he be doing there in his human form? Does the Bible anywhere else comment on this?

“The court sat in judgment, and the books were opened.” There’s reference to books elsewhere, not that God needs books, but evidently there’s knowledge made available. Decisions are to be made, in the eyes of the whole on-looking universe. It’s not private. It’s not a secret matter. The whole great controversy has been public. The charges against God were public; the answers were public. “If I be lifted up, I will draw all unto me [angels and men].” But now the question here doesn’t seem to be about God. It seems to be about us. And as you know, there are other places coming up shortly, in Zechariah 3, which we’ll look at shortly.

There's a picture of God's people, standing before God, represented by their high priest, Joshua. But he's not interceding. He's the one who's being accused. God's people being accused before God. And Satan standing at his right hand to accuse him. We need to include him in these pictures, also. When we get to the book of Revelation, which belongs with Daniel, is not the accuser specifically mentioned and described as "the accuser of our brethren, who accuses them day and night before our God."

How about Job 1 and 2? Who's accusing? Who's defending? And before whose eyes is this all taking place? Remember in Job the sons of God assembled, and God defends his servant, and says, "I trust this man. He'll not let me down." And the devil says, "Ah [you remember his whole argument in the book of Job]! You've bribed him, either by reward or by threat of punishment." That's what the three theologians thought, you remember. That was their picture of God. And God says, "No, Job knows me better than that, In fact, he's so settled into the truth about me, you can do anything you like to him short of taking his life. He will not let me down." And he said this in the hearing of the counsel, the family of God. They have met many times through the years. They've heard the accusations of Satan. They heard Christ on resurrection day ask them, "Was it enough?" And they told him, "Yes, it is more than enough. You've won your case." As Paul says, in Romans 3:4, "God has indeed won his case." {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, The Picture of God in All 66 – Daniel, recorded February, 1982, Riverside, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

*Audio links to the West Covina series recorded in 1984:

<http://pkp.cc/39MMPOGIA66> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/40MMPOGIA66> (Part 2)

More than 2500 years ago, the prophet Daniel was given a vision of the judgment in heaven, and he wrote out this vivid description, the most dramatic description in the Bible of the judgment:

As I looked, thrones were placed and one that was Ancient of Days took his seat; his raiment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like pure wool; his throne was fiery flames; its wheels were burning fire. A stream of fire issued and came forth from before him, a thousand thousands served him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him; the court sat in judgment, and the books were opened. And I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him. And to him was given dominion and glory and kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed.

The whole universe is observing the judgment. This awesome description would be terrifying if we did not know the good news about our gracious God. But Jesus is there too. His human form reminding onlookers of what he has done to silence Satan's charges and win us sinners back to faith. And as we look at the Father seated there, in his terrible majesty, there rings in our ears those wonderful words of our LORD, "If you have seen me, you have seen the Father. There is no need for me to plead with him for you, for the Father loves you just as I do, myself." We can trust God to be our friend in the judgment. As our father, he is jealous for our reputation. We need not fear those records of our sins. God would gladly dismiss them as irrelevant and out-of-date. All he asks of us is faith—that we love and trust him enough to let him forgive us, and heal us, and give us eternal life. If we believe that, we can face the judgment unafraid. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio presentation – Facing the Judgment Unafraid, recorded May 3, 1978, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link: <http://pkp.cc/3MMMISC>*

Further Study with Ellen White

God never asks us to believe, without giving sufficient evidence upon which to base our faith. His existence, His character, the truthfulness of His word, are all established by testimony that appeals to our reason; and this testimony is abundant. Yet God has never removed the possibility of doubt. Our faith must rest upon evidence, not demonstration. Those who wish to doubt will have opportunity; while those who really desire to know the truth will find plenty of evidence on which to rest their faith. {SC 105.2}

All whom God has blessed with reasoning powers are to become intellectual Christians. They are not requested to believe without evidence; therefore Jesus has enjoined upon all to search the Scriptures. Let the ingenious inquirer, and the one who would know for himself what is truth, exert his mental powers to search out the truth as it is in Jesus. Any neglect here is at the peril of the soul. We must know individually the prescribed conditions of entering into eternal life. . . . We cannot allow these questions to be settled for us by another's mind, or another's judgment. . . . We cannot trust the salvation of our souls to ministers, to idle traditions, to human authorities, or to pretensions. . . . The Lord positively demands of every Christian an intelligent knowledge of the Scriptures. {RH, March 8, 1887 par. 1}

God could have destroyed Satan and his sympathizers as easily as one can cast a pebble to the earth; but He did not do this. Rebellion was not to be overcome by force. Compelling power is found only under Satan's government. The Lord's principles are not of this order. His authority rests upon goodness, mercy, and love; and the presentation of these principles is the means to be used. God's government is moral, and truth and love are to be the prevailing power. {DA 759.1}

It was God's purpose to place things on an eternal basis of security, and in the councils of heaven it was decided that time must be given for Satan to develop the principles which were the foundation of his system of government. He had claimed that these were superior to God's principles. Time was given for the working of Satan's principles, that they might be seen by the heavenly universe. {DA 759.2}

Satan led men into sin, and the plan of redemption was put in operation. For four thousand years, Christ was working for man's uplifting, and Satan for his ruin and degradation. And the heavenly universe beheld it all. {DA 759.3}

Satan is a deceiver. When he sinned in heaven, even the loyal angels did not fully discern his character. This was why God did not at once destroy Satan. Had He done so, the holy angels would not have perceived the justice and love of God. A doubt of God's goodness would have been as evil seed that would yield the bitter fruit of sin and woe. Therefore the author of evil was spared, fully to develop his character. Through long ages God has borne the anguish of beholding the work of evil, He has given the infinite Gift of Calvary, rather than leave any to be deceived by the misrepresentations of the wicked one; for the tares could not be plucked up without danger of uprooting the precious grain. And shall we not be as forbearing toward our fellow men as the Lord of heaven and earth is toward Satan? {COL 72.2}

The study of God's word is continually expanding the mind and strengthening the intellect. There is nothing that will so refine and elevate the character, and give vigor to every faculty, as the continual exercise of the mind to grasp and comprehend weighty and important truths. {4T 545.3}

Not one cloud has fallen upon the church that God has not prepared for; not one opposing force has risen to counterwork the work of God but He has foreseen. All has taken place as He has predicted through His prophets. He has not left His church in darkness, forsaken, but has traced in prophetic declarations what would occur, and through His providence, acting in its appointed place in the world's history, He has brought about that which His Holy Spirit inspired the prophets to foretell. All His purposes will be fulfilled and established. His law is linked with His throne, and satanic agencies combined with human agencies cannot destroy it. Truth is inspired and guarded by God; it will live, and will succeed, although it may appear at times to be overshadowed. The gospel of Christ is the law exemplified in character. The deceptions practiced against it, every device for vindicating falsehood, every error forged by satanic agencies, will eventually be eternally broken, and the triumph of truth will be like the appearing of the sun at noonday. The Sun of Righteousness shall shine forth with healing in His wings, and the whole earth shall be filled with His glory. {2SM 108.2}

The heavenly intelligences, angels that excel in strength, are waiting, obedient to His command, to unite with human agencies; and the Lord will interpose when matters have come to such a

pass that none but a divine power can counteract the satanic agencies at work. When His people shall be in the greatest danger, seemingly unable to stand against the power of Satan, God will work in their behalf. Man's extremity is God's opportunity. {2SM 373.1}

Satan's rebellion was to be a lesson to the universe through all coming ages, a perpetual testimony to the nature and terrible results of sin. The working out of Satan's rule, its effects upon both men and angels, would show what must be the fruit of setting aside the divine authority. It would testify that with the existence of God's government and His law is bound up the well-being of all the creatures He has made. Thus the history of this terrible experiment of rebellion was to be a perpetual safeguard to all holy intelligences, to prevent them from being deceived as to the nature of transgression, to save them from committing sin, and suffering its punishment. {4BC 1162.6}

Every man is free to choose what power he will have to rule over him. None have fallen so low, none are so vile, but that they can find deliverance in Christ. The demoniac, in place of prayer, could utter only the words of Satan; yet the heart's unspoken appeal was heard. No cry from a soul in need, though it fail of utterance in words, will be unheeded. Those who will consent to enter into covenant relation with the God of heaven are not left to the power of Satan or to the infirmity of their own nature. They are invited by the Saviour, "Let him take hold of My strength, that he may make peace with Me; and he shall make peace with Me." Isaiah 27:5. The spirits of darkness will battle for the soul once under their dominion, but angels of God will contend for that soul with prevailing power. The Lord says, "Shall the prey be taken from the mighty, or the lawful captive delivered? . . . Thus saith the Lord, Even the captives of the mighty shall be taken away, and the prey of the terrible shall be delivered: for I will contend with him that contendeth with thee, and I will save thy children." Isaiah 49:24, 25. {DA 258.6}

Through belief in Satan's misrepresentation of God, man's character and destiny were changed, but if men will believe in the Word of God, they will be transformed in mind and character, and fitted for eternal life. To believe that "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16), will change the heart, and reproduce in man the image of God. {1SM 346.1}

In His plan of government there is no employment of brute force to compel the conscience. The Jews looked for the kingdom of God to be established in the same way as the kingdoms of the world. To promote righteousness they resorted to external measures. They devised methods and plans. But Christ implants a principle. By implanting truth and righteousness, He counterworks error and sin. {COL 77.1}

In the truths of His word, God has given to men a revelation of Himself; and to all who accept them they are a shield against the deceptions of Satan. {GC 465.1}

Satan represents God's law of love as a law of selfishness. He declares that it is impossible for us to obey its precepts. The fall of our first parents, with all the woe that has resulted, he charges upon the Creator, leading men to look upon God as the author of sin, and suffering, and death. Jesus was to unveil this deception. {DA 24.2}

Every weak, doubting, struggling soul who yields fully to the Lord is placed in direct touch with agencies that enable him to overcome. Heaven is near to him, and he has the support and help of angels of mercy in every time of trial and need. {AA 299.1}

But though the conflict is a ceaseless one, none are left to struggle alone. Angels help and protect those who walk humbly before God. Never will our Lord betray one who trusts in Him. As His children draw near to Him for protection from evil, in pity and love He lifts up for them a standard against the enemy. Touch them not, He says; for they are Mine. I have graven them upon the palms of My hands. {PK 570.4}

His presence and guardianship are an abiding thing. While we trust in Christ's saving power, all the arts and wiles of the fallen host can do nothing to harm us. Heavenly angels are constantly with us, guiding and protecting. God has ordained that we shall have His saving power with us, to enable us to do all His will. Let us grasp the promises and cherish them moment by moment. Let us believe that God means just what He says. {HP 32.2}

God has angels whose whole work is to draw those who shall be heirs of salvation. Whenever one takes a step toward Jesus, Jesus is taking steps toward him. The angels' work is to keep back the powers of Satan (MS 17, 1893). {7BC 922.5}

God sends heavenly angels to the side of his children to keep them from evil. If we have placed ourselves in his care, we may rest securely; for he has promised that no man shall pluck us out of his hand. {YI, October 3, 1901 par. 7}

We are not to think of God only as a judge, and to forget him as our loving Father. Nothing can do our souls greater harm than this; for our whole spiritual life will be molded by our conceptions of God's character. {RH, April 5, 1887 par. 10}

From the opening of the great controversy in heaven, Satan has maintained his cause through deception; and Christ has been working to unveil his schemes and to break his power. {DA 210.2}

In word and in deed the Messiah, during His earthly ministry, was to reveal to mankind the glory of God the Father. Every act of His life, every word spoken, every miracle wrought, was to make known to fallen humanity the infinite love of God. {PK 696.3}

From the beginning it has been Satan's studied plan to cause men to forget God, that he might secure them to himself. Therefore he has sought to misrepresent the character of God, to lead men to cherish a false conception of Him. The Creator has been presented to their minds as

clothed with the attributes of the prince of evil himself—as arbitrary, severe, and unforgiving—that He might be feared, shunned, and even hated by men. . . . {HP 8.2}

Christ came to reveal God to the world as a God of love, a God of mercy, tenderness, and compassion. By the world's Redeemer the thick darkness with which Satan had enshrouded the throne of the Deity was swept away, and the Father was again manifest to men as the Light of life. . . . {HP 8.3}

What speech is to thought, so is Christ to the invisible Father. He is the manifestation of the Father, and is called the Word of God. God sent His Son into the world, His divinity clothed with humanity, that man might bear the image of the invisible God. He made known in His words, His character, His power and majesty, the nature and attributes of God. Divinity flashed through humanity in softening, subduing light. He was the embodiment of the law of God, which is the transcript of His character (MS 77, 1899). {5BC 1131.6}

Satan led men to conceive of God as a being whose chief attribute is stern justice—one who is a severe judge, a harsh, exacting creditor. He pictured the Creator as a being who is watching with jealous eye to discern the errors and mistakes of men that He may visit judgments upon them. It was to remove this dark shadow, by revealing to the world the infinite love of God, that Jesus came to live among men.—SC 11 (1892). {1MCP 250.1}

There was but one hope for the human race—that into this mass of discordant and corrupting elements might be cast a new leaven; that there might be brought to mankind the power of a new life; that the knowledge of God might be restored to the world. {Ed 76.1}

Christ came to restore this knowledge. He came to set aside the false teaching by which those who claimed to know God had misrepresented Him. He came to manifest the nature of His law, to reveal in His own character the beauty of holiness. {Ed 76.2}

Christ came to the world with the accumulated love of eternity. Sweeping away the exactions which had encumbered the law of God, He showed that the law is a law of love, an expression of the Divine Goodness. He showed that in obedience to its principles is involved the happiness of mankind, and with it the stability, the very foundation and framework, of human society. {Ed 76.3}

So far from making arbitrary requirements, God's law is given to men as a hedge, a shield. Whoever accepts its principles is preserved from evil. Fidelity to God involves fidelity to man. Thus the law guards the rights, the individuality, of every human being. It restrains the superior from oppression, and the subordinate from disobedience. It ensures man's well-being, both for this world and for the world to come. To the obedient it is the pledge of eternal life, for it expresses the principles that endure forever. {Ed 76.4}

Christ came to demonstrate the value of the divine principles by revealing their power for the regeneration of humanity. He came to teach how these principles are to be developed and applied. {Ed 77.1}

The infinite love of God has been manifested in the gift of His only-begotten Son to redeem a lost race. Christ came to the earth to reveal to men the character of His Father, and His life was filled with deeds of divine tenderness and compassion. {PP 469.2}

Christ, the Light of the world, veiled the dazzling splendor of His divinity and came to live as a man among men, that they might, without being consumed, become acquainted with their Creator. Since sin brought separation between man and his Maker, no man has seen God at any time, except as He is manifested through Christ. {MH 419.1}

Taking humanity upon Him, Christ came to be one with humanity, and at the same time to reveal our heavenly Father to sinful human beings. He who had been in the presence of the Father from the beginning, He who was the express image of the invisible God, was alone able to reveal the character of the Deity to mankind. He was in all things made like unto His brethren. He became flesh even as we are. He was hungry and thirsty and weary. He was sustained by food and refreshed by sleep. He shared the lot of men; yet He was the blameless Son of God. He was a stranger and sojourner on the earth—in the world, but not of the world; tempted and tried as men and women today are tempted and tried, yet living a life free from sin. Tender, compassionate, sympathetic, ever considerate of others, He represented the character of God, and was constantly engaged in service for God and man. {MH 422.2}

Christ alone was able to represent the Deity. He who had been in the presence of the Father from the beginning, He who was the express image of the invisible God, was alone sufficient to accomplish this work. No verbal description could reveal God to the world. Through a life of purity, a life of perfect trust and submission to the will of God, a life of humiliation such as even the highest seraph in heaven would have shrunk from, God Himself must be revealed to humanity. In order to do this, our Saviour clothed His divinity with humanity. He employed the human faculties, for only by adopting these could He be comprehended by humanity. Only humanity could reach humanity. He lived out the character of God through the human body which God had prepared for Him. He blessed the world by living out in human flesh the life of God, thus showing that He had the power to unite humanity to divinity (RH June 25, 1895). {7BC 924.6}

Christ came to reveal to a fallen race the love of God. He, the Light of the world, veiled the dazzling splendor of the brightness of His divinity, and came to live on this earth as a man among men, that they might, without being consumed, become acquainted with their Creator. No man has seen God at any time, except as He is revealed through Christ. {UL 334.5}