

Daniel 7:26-28 – Persecution, Preservation, Problem

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: We are not a war generation. It is true that there have been some wars in our time, but they have been localized to specific countries and areas like in Iraq and Afghanistan. Because we have not been a war generation, many people do not recognize that **for good to triumph the wicked necessarily have to be destroyed**. Now this type of talk might offend the pacifistic 和平主义 sensibilities 感性 of many, but it is the absolute truth. Wicked people believe in advancing what they believe and they use whatever means is necessary to do so, including killing Christians. If someone leaves Islam and become a Christian, for instance, he is considered an infidel and has a death sentence on his head. If someone escapes communism in North Korea and is caught, he is often killed. If someone leaves Buddhism in Sri Lanka he is often cut with wires strung across the road if he is on a motorcycle. **What will our God do to those who persecute his people?** He will destroy them. Today you will how God destroys persecutors of his people in order to preserve them.

Our headings are: **The Persecutors of the Church would be Destroyed, The People of the Church would be Advanced,** and **These Truths Must be Preserved.**

Our goals are: That you **will find comfort** from the fact that though persecution might come, **the church can never be destroyed, and in fact, she will conquer the world.**

The Persecutors of the Church would be Destroyed

26 'But the **court shall be seated**, And **they shall take away his dominion**, To consume and destroy it forever.

1. **Daniel saw in his vision that that horrible 4th beast**, Rome, would bring great terror to the church of Jesus Christ – the worst it would have ever seen. You have heard before much of that terror 恐怖 from Revelation. Rome would join with the Scarlet Harlot, **the Jewish establishment who sat on the beast's lap**, and severely persecute the saints of God. Many Christians abandoned serving the Lord during Rome's rule to avoid being fed as whole food to the hungry lions.

2. **Knowing the suffering that would come in the future, God wanted to comfort Judah.** He didn't simply want to say: "It will be alright...there...there," like when you are comforting a child who has hurt himself. He wanted to give them true assurance that things would get better and that he would always be in control of the outcome to their lives. How then would God comfort his covenant people?

3. **God would send judgment, a judgment which he taught by a court scene.** Look at the picture: God is seated. The evidence is weighed against the little horn of the 4th beast – a horn that grew. He caused much damage to the church so he is convicted. His kingdom is consumed and destroyed forever. **All authority that the horn had was removed and is given over to the people of God, the people in the new kingdom, the New Jerusalem.** And note the phrase "and destroy it forever."

4. **Now imagine if God had just told the Jews in Babylonian slavery** about how bad the 4 beasts would be and he did not discuss his preserving power and prosperity! Imagine how cold that would have been. But that is not how your covenant God is. He assures his people that he would destroy the wicked to urge them to remain faithful. And this promise of preservation of his people through persecution was consistent with how he dealt with his people before. **Isaiah 43:3** For I am the LORD your God, The Holy One of Israel, your Savior; I gave Egypt for your ransom, Ethiopia and Seba in your place. **God does not hesitate to destroy any one or any nation for the protection of his people** and the advancement of his purposes. You can bank on it. You see, his glory is at stake, and his love for you is unchangeable.

The People of the Church Would Advanced

27 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.'

1. **With the destruction of the 4th beast, particularly of the destruction of the 1 significant horn of the 4th beast, God's people would then be free and able to labor to advance the kingdom of God.** The saints of God would be able to set up, by God's Word and Spirit, a kingdom of light and a kingdom of holiness. Theirs would be a kingdom in which grace would be administered 给予 to the members. They would include and exclude people from the kingdom. Yes, this would be a right of the covenant people of God! And it would be a kingdom that sets the prelude 前奏曲 to that heavenly kingdom, where true peace would reign. Look at the Lord's promise to be with his children in the world: **John 14:18** "I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you. 19 "A little while longer and the world

will see Me no more, but you will see Me. Because I live, you will live also.
John 14:18, speaks of the Holy Spirit coming to help the church. There is no doubt that the Jews knew of this promise and expected the kingdom to be established and advanced when Jesus came.

Acts 1:6 Therefore, when they had come together, they asked Him, saying, "**Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?**"

2. This new kingdom would spread over the entire world. It is true that when Rome declared itself to be a Christian Empire in the early AD300's that there was some spread of the Gospel throughout the world, but Christ kingdom is never spread by kingly edict (like Darius tried, or Constantine). Furthermore, **God's kingdom is spread through faithful preaching and living of the Word of God.**

3. But would the Jews have believed that God's new kingdom would spread all over the world? Yes, if they had true faith in Christ they would have believed this! This is what true believers would have been taught from the beginning of the world. It didn't matter that two hundred years before Jesus that believers were virtually 实质上 non-existent. God always kept true believers and they wrote and passed on that message of hope. This promise of the spread of Christ's kingdom is coming true. The few disciples who were empowered by the Word and Spirit turned the world upside down. Many national leaders in Judah and around the Roman world became believers. The dried stump 树墩 of Jesse budded 发芽 and flourished 繁荣, 茂盛 (Isaiah 11) The Stone of Daniel 2, the Lord Jesus Christ, become a great mountain, crushed the other kingdoms... and started to fill the whole earth.

3. But it is important to note that the complete destruction of the wicked empires is not done prior to the advancement of the church; it is done concurrent with the advancement of the church. As the Word of God is preached and believed, the wicked are destroyed. Those who don't bow down to the rule of Christ under his golden scepter 权杖 will be destroyed by his power. This is what Nebuchadnezzar saw. The great smashing is not a one-time event.

Daniel 2:45 "Inasmuch as you saw that the stone was **cut out of the mountain without hands**, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold—the great God has made known to the king what will come to pass after this. **The dream is certain**, and its interpretation is sure."

This is what Jesus himself predicted.

Matthew 21:44 "And whoever falls on this stone will be broken; but on whomever it falls, it will grind him to powder."

Those who fell on their knees before the Lord and had a broken spirit were saved. If they did not do that, the stone fell on them and crushed them with a vicious 狠毒 condemnation.

This is what David had prophesied before.

Psalms 2:9 You shall break them with a rod of iron; You shall dash them to pieces like a potter's vessel." 10 Now therefore, be wise, O kings; Be instructed, you judges of the earth.

This is what Isaiah prophesied.

Isaiah 60:12 For the nation and kingdom which will not serve you shall perish, And those nations shall be utterly 完全 ruined.

3. This kingdom is an everlasting kingdom. This was what Isaiah prophesied before Daniel.

Isaiah 9:6 For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. 7 **Of the increase of His government and peace There will be no end**, Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, To order it and establish it with judgment and justice From that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

This was prophesied after Daniel by the angel to Mary.

Luke 1:33 "And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of **His kingdom there will be no end.**"

The kingdom is not only an eternal kingdom; it is also a kingdom with no space limit.

1Corinthians 15:24 Then *comes* the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power. 25 For **He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet.**

4. Has this been fulfilled yet? No. (This is John Calvin's view as well.) This is therefore the thing to which the church must look forward, and toward which it must work. Know that God always keeps his promises. His word never falls to the ground. It is true that he Muslims, and to a lesser extent, the Communists and the Roman Catholics, have tried to destroy the kingdom of God, but to no avail. Their end will be the same as the other empires that tried. God said that his kingdom

is indestructible and you can take God at his word. Yet you must not confuse the state and the church. God's kingdom is not measured by how many godly people are in political office – as wonderful as that may be. His kingdom is a spiritual one.

John 18:36 Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now My kingdom is not from here."

These Truths Must be Preserved

28 "This is the end of the account. As for me, Daniel, my **thoughts greatly troubled me**, and my **countenance** **面容** **changed**; but I kept the matter in my heart."

1. **It is clear that Daniel's vision had a tremendous impact upon him.** He admitted that he was greatly troubled. ("Thoughts" can be translated "cogitations" **熟思** or deep thoughts.) He described how his face became pale **苍白**, as it were. He was sorrowful and despondent **沮丧的**. But if the picture of God's kingdom expanding is so remarkable, why was he troubled by what he saw? **Daniel saw intense suffering ahead...especially under the Greeks and the Romans.** As a father, he was sad.

2. **But he kept the words in his heart.** Why? Was he intending to **hide the words from the church** so that **they would** go back to Judah and expect a return to normal life again? Was he afraid that they might kill him for prophesying this? After all, the Jews had killed for a lot less. **No, Daniel was not hiding the truth from the church. He was hiding the truth for the church.** He was committing it to safe keeping so that he could teach. He had to let the people know that they were to expect hardships before the church advanced worldwide.

3. **Couldn't Daniel save the Jews' feelings and hide the knowledge of their coming suffering from them?** No. He was a prophet who had to speak and it was good for him to speak. As the word that Daniel wrote became a reality, bit by bit, the people would be able to say: "This is what the Lord said and look, it came true, you can trust him with other things he has said about the future." "We saw the destruction of the lion. Now we see the destruction of the bear. We must now trust God that he will also destroy the leopard **豹** and the other beast." God's Word was the means by which the faith of his people was strengthened.

Conclusion:

Christ's kingdom is the church's kingdom. He paid for his kingdom with his blood and he gives it to you his church. His kingdom is secure. He is with you in his kingdom. His kingdom can never be destroyed. Yes, you might from time to time feel some pressure on your body and soul. But that is only temporary. Your soul and your renewed body are secured forever.

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: 1. **Be comforted that you are secured forever in the kingdom of God.** Don't walk with your heads bent down; hold it high. Don't be disappointed when you don't get all the comforts you want in this life. Think long term...everything the Lord has achieved is yours and none can take it away. 2. Be patient. You will get it in fullness at the right time. 3. **Work to bring others in who desire this comfort.** Remember 1Ti 2:4 [The Lord] desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. The world is sad. Look past the fake smiles and pretend happiness of souls. Look past their nice clothes and expensive cars. They need true heart comfort that only Christ can give. And he gives that comfort through you.

Finally, in God's kingdom there is safety, eternal safety. God's people are out for spiritual warfare. When we preach the Word of God we do it so you will surrender to God. If you don't surrender to God, his Word will become a sword of judgment. You will be condemned. The Bible says that Jesus died on the cross and he offers his life to you. Surrender to this truth or die in your sins.