

Comment

Jesus is presented as the weaker combatant. Christ is a sacrifice for sin. It is characteristic for the enemy, or for antichrist, that this power makes a mockery or counterfeit of the sacrifice of Jesus. It is a power of deceit, "different" from all other dominions (note this expression in Daniel 7:7, 19, and 24).

4. Another Kind of King



Read

• John 18:36

Reflect

What does Jesus mean by the phrase, "My kingdom is not of this world"? Do you think that it is ever justified for a society to enforce religious laws? Should Christians be favoured in a Christian state?

Comment

It is characteristic of the enemy of Christ that it attempts to establish a kingdom of this world, to combine church and state and to use civil power to enforce religious laws.

5. Worthy of Worship



Read

• Luke 4:5-8; Daniel 7:13, 14, 25.

Background

The temptation of Jesus in the wilderness reveals a fundamental issue in the controversy between good and evil. It is a matter of worship. The devil presents himself as if he were the "Son of man," given the authority over all kingdoms and worthy of worship. The enemy in the prophecy of Daniel 7 also attempts to make changes in regard to worship and to force the saints to follow him.

Reflect

Does worship matter? Is worship not totally private and independent of time and place? Has God given any laws in regard to when and how to worship Him? Can these laws be changed?

6. The Representative of the Saints



Read

• Daniel 7:13, 14 and Acts 7:55, 56

Background

About to die, the first Christian martyr, Stephen, was in a vision shown the "Son of man," Jesus, in the heavenly sanctuary at the right hand of God. Assured that he had such a Saviour and representative at the throne of God, he did not fear death, but prayed for his enemies like Jesus did on the cross (Acts 7:60; see also Luke 22:41).

Comment

It is a characteristic for the enemy power in the prophecies that it attempts to take the place of Jesus as the believers' representative before God.

Reflect

Meditate for yourself: do you feel certain that in Jesus you have a perfect and merciful representative at the very throne of God? If you have Him, would you need any power on earth to represent God for you?



Number 7. Universal Judgment

ClearView

Bible study guide

The idea of a great judgment at the end of history permeates the New Testament and is part of core Christian teaching. Jesus will come again to "judge the living and the dead." To many people today, judgment sounds scary. But the first Christians found the background for this belief in the Old Testament and were not afraid.

Judgment is not just execution and punishment. In the Bible, judgment reveals the righteousness of God, puts an end to suffering, establishes the eternal kingdom of God and brings deliverance and fulfilment of all good hopes. This lesson explores the dramatic visions of judgment in Daniel 7.

1. Kingdoms in History



Read

• Daniel 7:1-8 and 15-17

Reflect

What do the beasts of the vision symbolise? From where have they received their power?

Comment

Note how the explanation given by the heavenly being in verses 15-27 deals with the various elements of the vision in verses 2-14 and elaborates on what Daniel saw. By comparing with the subsequent vision in Daniel 8 and the facts of world history, these four kingdoms can be identified as Babylon, Media-Persia, Greece and Rome.

Background

The symbolism of such peculiar animals, combining reality with mythological imagination, was common in the Babylonian culture at the time of Daniel.

2. God "Comes" to Judge



Read

• Daniel 7:9, 10 and 21, 22

Reflect

Why do you think Daniel sees God moving, or "coming" to judge?

Background

The concept of God "coming" to judge was well known to Daniel from, for instance, the Old Testament Psalms. The sentence "God comes/came" is an idiomatic expression, indicating that judgment was set (see Psalm 96:13; 98:9).

3. Up for Evaluation



Read

• Daniel 7:11, 12