

The Book of Daniel Part 7

Daniel 2:46-3:30

by Erik Olsen

I. "ONE LIKE THE SON OF GOD" IN THE FIERY FURNACE...

--the identity of the 4TH person in the fiery furnace is debatable but many scholars, including C.H. Spurgeon, have concluded it was Christ Himself appearing as the "Angel of the Lord."

--definitive appearances of Christ in the Old Testament as "the Angel of the Lord"

--Genesis 18: appeared to Abraham and Sarah

--Joshua 5:13-15: appeared to Joshua on the plains of Jericho (not specified as "the Angel of the Lord" in this passage)

--Judges 6:11-27: appeared to Gideon

--Numbers 22:22-35: appeared to Balaam

--Judges 2:1-6: appeared to assembly of Israelites

--Judges 13:1-14: appeared to Samson's parents before his conception

--instances where "angel of the Lord" refers to a created angel instead of Christ

--1 Kings 19:1, 2 Kings 1:3, 1 Chron 21:16, Judges 5:23

--*If it was the Angel of the Lord in the furnace, then the following is true...*

--As Nebuchadnezzar stared into the fire, little did he know who he saw standing in the fire...

--the sovereign God who gave him the dream, the One who will set up the Kingdom that cannot be destroyed (5th Kingdom in the dream), the One who is a "consuming fire"! (Hebrews 13:29)

--Daniel 2:28: "But there is a God in heaven who reveals secrets, and He has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what will be in the latter days."

--Daniel 2:44-45: "the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever."

--the suffering of Christ... symbolic picture of Christ in the fire

--the fiery furnace incident occurred the same year that Jerusalem was burned... 2 Chronicles 36:19-20: "they [Nebuchadnezzar's army] **burned the house of God**, broke down the wall of Jerusalem, **burned all its palaces with fire**, and destroyed all its precious possessions."

--the picture of God walking in the furnace is a reflection of the temple in Jerusalem ("the house of God") being engulfed in flames

--the picture of God walking in the furnace is a reflection of the fact that He is still on the throne even though the city that will one day be called "the Throne of the Lord" was engulfed in flames

--Jeremiah 3:17: "At that time [during the 5th Kingdom of Nebuchadnezzar's prophetic dream] Jerusalem shall be called The Throne of the LORD, and all the nations shall be gathered to it, to the name of the LORD, to Jerusalem. No more shall they follow the dictates of their evil hearts."

--the fiery furnace may be the last appearance of Christ on earth as the Angel of the Lord before He was born as "the Word" that "became flesh and dwelt among us" (John 1:14)

--in the Bible Christ never again appears as the Angel of the Lord after the fiery furnace incident in Daniel

--ever since His ascension He has been seated at the right Hand of the Father (Eph. 1:20-21, Heb. 10:12-13) and can only be seen through visions (i.e. visions of the apostle John, Rev. 1:9...)

--not until His second coming will He walk on the earth again

--the picture of Him walking in the furnace is a reflection of the path of suffering before Him on the path to the cross...

--later in the book of Daniel the stunning "70 Weeks" prophecy pinpoints the exact day that Christ enters Jerusalem for the last time before His crucifixion

- Christ's suffering on the cross saves us from suffering through eternity in the fires of hell!
 - Luke 12:4-5: "And I say to you, My friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. 5 But I will show you whom you should fear: Fear Him who, after He has killed, has power to cast into hell; yes, I say to you, fear Him!"
 - Rev. 20:15: "...and anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire." *(past tense used because context of verse is the apostle John's vision)*
 - John 3:16-17: "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, 17 **that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.**"
 - when we believe in Christ – "trust" in Christ (Eph. 1:13) – for the forgiveness of sins, we enter a personal relationship with Him... He said, "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. 6 If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned."
- God is personally involved in the lives of His children... personally fighting for His children as the Angel of the Lord, personally dying for His children on the cross, personally sending the Holy Spirit to take His place on earth and dwell inside His children...

II. CHRIST IS THE CENTRAL THEME OF OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECY...

--The Bereans searched the Old Testament Scriptures to make sure what Paul preached was true

--Acts 17:10--12: "Then the brethren immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea. When they arrived, they went into the synagogue of the Jews. 11 **These were more fair--minded** than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and **searched the Scriptures [the Old Testament] daily** to find out whether these things were so."

--What did the apostles and disciples of the New Testament preach?

--they simply echoed the message that Jesus Christ first preached on the Road to Emmaus after His resurrection:

--Luke 24:13-27: "... 25 Then He said to them, 'O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in **all that the prophets have spoken!** Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?' **And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.**"

--Acts 9:20--22: "Immediately he [Saul] **preached the Christ in the synagogues, that He is the Son of God.** 21 Then all who heard were amazed, and said, 'Is this not he who destroyed those who called on this name in Jerusalem, and has come here for that purpose, so that he might bring them bound to the chief priests?' 22 But Saul increased all the more in strength, and confounded the Jews who dwelt in Damascus, **proving that this Jesus is the Christ.**"

--Acts 17:2-3: "Then Paul, as his custom was, went to them, and for three Sabbaths **reasoned with them from the Scriptures**, explaining and demonstrating that the Christ had to suffer and rise again from the dead, and saying, 'This Jesus whom I preach to you is the Christ.' And some of them were persuaded..."

--Acts 18:28: "he [Apollos] vigorously refuted the Jews publicly, **showing from the Scriptures that Jesus is the Christ.**"

--Jesus Christ fulfilled over 300 Old Testament prophecies...

--*There are over 300 predictions about the Messiah to be found in the Old Testament. According to the law of compound probability, the chance of their coming true is represented by a fraction whose numerator is one, and the denominator eighty--four followed by nearly one hundred circles [in other words, impossible]. One might almost as well expect by accident to dip up any one particular drop out of the ocean as to expect so many prophetic rays to converge by chance upon one man, in one place, at one time. God has put especially upon these prophecies as to His Son the stamp of absolute verity and indisputable certainty, so that we may know whom we have believed. Mistakes in so solemn a matter are fatal and God meant that none should be possible.* (from "All the Messianic Prophecies of the Bible")

--example: born in Bethlehem (Mic. 5:2; Matt. 2:1)... flight to Egypt (Hosea 11:1; Matt. 2:13-15).. flight to Nazareth (Isaiah 11:1; Matt. 2:19-23) ... fulfillment caused by events completely out of Joseph and Mary's control

- contemporary expectation of what the coming Messiah would be like
 - similar problem the church has constantly faced: people's view of scripture was clouded by traditions that God never instituted...
 - Jesus Christ did not fit the mold they desired and therefore they rejected Him... the religious leaders of Jesus' day focused only on select Old Testament passages about the Messiah that fit their preconceived ideas that He would be a political deliverer who would liberate them from the Roman empire.
 - step 1: first coming... Jesus defeated sin and established internal spiritual kingdom
 - step 2: second coming... Jesus will defeat physical powers and establish external physical kingdom on the foundation of the internal kingdom
 - Israel as a nation wanted to skip step 1, thus they didn't see their need for forgiveness and their need for new life from within
 - God summarized these foundational truths through the prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel:
 - Jeremiah 31:31-34: "Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah — 32 not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them, says the LORD. 33 But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: **I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; ... For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.**"
 - Ezekiel 11:19, 36:22-32
 - the apostle Paul quoted the Jeremiah passage and spoke of it's fulfillment...
 - Hebrews 9:7-12
 - many classic New Testament passages stem from the fulfillment of forgiveness and new life...
 - ex: 2 Cor. 5:17: "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new."
 - typical reaction of the religious leaders to Jesus fulfilling the promise of new life and forgiveness of sins:
 - Luke 7:36-39: "Then one of the Pharisees asked Him to eat with him. And He went to the Pharisee's house, and sat down to eat. 37 And behold, a woman in the city who was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at the table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster flask of fragrant oil, 38 and stood at His feet behind Him weeping; and she began to wash His feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head; and she kissed His feet and anointed them with the fragrant oil. 39 Now when the Pharisee who had invited Him saw this, he spoke to himself, saying, "**This Man, if He were a prophet, would know who and what manner of woman this is who is touching Him, for she is a sinner.**" [if Simon would have carefully read the prophets he would know that the Messiah came to forgive sinners]
 - Jesus pointed out the absence of the internal foundation by calling the religious leaders *white washed tombs*
 - Matthew 23:27-28: "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness. 28 Even so you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness."
 - only after we receive new bodies will we possess the external righteousness that the religious leaders of Jesus' day tried with utter failure to achieve; when we receive new bodies the internal kingdom of the Spirit will be perfectly expressed in our lives (our lives will no longer be characterized by the battle between the flesh and the spirit)
 - Galatians 5:5: "For we through the Spirit eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness by faith."
- Examples of how sermons preached by that apostles were rooted in the Old Testament:
 - 1 Peter 1:10-12
 - Acts 2:14-46; 4:1-22; 6:8-7:60; 13:13-41; ...
 - the entire New Testament is rooted in the Old Testament...*