

Bible Study 2022-2023

Class #26

4/11/23

Matthew 9 (Cont)*

- **Matthew 9:4-8** *“But Jesus, knowing their thoughts,...they were afraid, and they glorified God who had given such authority to men”*
 - The “**son of man**” here is from **Daniel 7:13***
 - This is all about the fulfillment of **King Nebuchadnezzar’s** dream of the four kingdoms that precede the Kingdom of God
 - Discuss the prophecy of **Daniel 7:13**
 - This small stone not cut by human hands becomes the great mountain of the Church (**Daniel 2:31-45**)

Matthew 9 (Cont)*

- The reference to “the son of man” approaching the throne of the ancient of days is obviously a messianic passage
- This is very similar to the references to **Ezekiel’s** prophesy which said a descendent of David will return to shepherd God’s people (**Ezekiel 34:23**)*
- The Messiah will return to the throne in Jerusalem when the Kingdom of Israel is reestablished
- The Jews of the 1st century would have known **Daniel 7**, as this book was one of the most well-known books of the Old Testament
- The reason for this is that **Daniel** prophesied in **Daniel 9:24*** that all his prophesies would be fulfilled after 490 years

Son of Man*

- The term “**son of man,**” could be understood in the following five different ways:
 - A human being
 - The son of Adam (man)
 - A prophet (Ezekiel, Elijah, Jeremiah)
 - The messiah
 - The divine figure and messiah from **Daniel 7:13-14**
- The key to understanding the importance of the term “Son of Man” can be seen in the often used phrase, “He who has ears to hear let him hear,” which allowed everyone to interpret “son of man” from his own point of view (**Mt 13:43 ***)

15 Daniel 605-535 BC Exile

- Almost all we know about Daniel comes from his book
- An Exilic prophet (along with Ezekiel and Jeremiah)
- Was a small boy (approximately 14 years old) when taken into exile during the 3rd year of King Jehoiakim (605 BC)
- Was exiled along with a cross section of prominent citizens, craftsmen, and other prominent young men of Jerusalem
- His books gives a real taste of the exile
- Prophesied over a long period of time (70 years) with various visions

Daniel (Cont)

- **Daniel 2:1-30**

- King *Nebuchadnezzar* had a troubling dream
- He refused to discuss what it was about and demanded that his wise men tell him his dream and its meaning
- They told him that this was impossible, so he commanded that they be executed
- Daniel stepped forward and told the king that the God in heavens, who knows everything, enabled him to interpret the king's dream *

Daniel (Cont)

- We are looking at **two different dreams** that basically **say the same thing** about four human kingdoms
 - Babylonian
 - Medo-Persians
 - Greeks
 - Romans
- During the time of the fourth kingdom a little stone will appear and destroy it all and then expand into a massive kingdom which will remain forever (Dn 2:34) *

Daniel (Cont)

- **Daniel 7**

- We are presented with **another dream, this time of Daniel** during the time of **King *Belshazzar*** that was parallel to King *Nebuchadnezzar's* dream in Daniel

Daniel 8

Beast

Lion

Bear

Leopard

Beast w iron teeth

Daniel 2

Empire

Babylon

Medo-Persian

Greek

Rome

Daniel (Cont)

Daniel 2:31-35

Daniel understood that the king's dream was about a statue reflecting the coming empires

Statue

Gold

Silver

Bronze

Iron

Empire

Babylon

Medo-Persian

Greek

Rome

This statue will be destroyed by a small rock "uncut by human hands"

The dream also covers the time from Daniel to Christ

Daniel (Cont)

- Assyrian Empire 853-605
- Babylonian Empire 605-539
- Medo-Persian Empire 539-331
- Greek Empire 331-63
- Roman Empire 63 BC – 330 AD

Daniel

- The Fifth empire will arise from a small “stone not made by human hands” which will become the great “kingdom of God” (which is the Church)
- A “**stone**” for us today is a rock you find in your garden
- For the Jew of that day a stone was considered to be part of major building material
- They quarried stone for building purposes
- A stone “not cut by human hands” was a stone that did not come from a human quarry

Daniel

- This **stone** hit the statue on its clay and iron foot, causing it to completely collapse and eventually be blown away in the wind like chaff on the threshing floor
- There will be nothing left but this little rock, which will then grow into a massive mountain that will fill the whole earth *

Matthew 9 (Cont)

- Thus, **Daniel** was a very important text for what was being reported by the gospel writers concerning Jesus, after His ascension, sending out the Apostles to baptize all nations
- Tragically, most people today do not see the connection between these two things
- The church, however, has been screaming about this connection from the time of the Apostles until now
- All are able to participate in the resurrection through the resurrection of Jesus
- Father suggested we read the story of Philip and the Ethiopian, in the **Book of Acts**

Matthew 9 (Cont)

- In this story, **Luke** was preaching about the resurrection of Jesus which caused the Ethiopian to seek Baptism which was the process for participation in His resurrection
- Paul discusses this further in **Romans 6**
- It is in Baptism that we receive the laying on of hands which gives us the gifts of the Holy Spirit so we can receive the body and blood of Jesus enabling us to be raised from the dead
- This is the Good News!
- This is about the connection between sins being forgiven and the resurrection

Matthew 9 (Cont)

- **Matthew 9:5-8** *“For which is easier, to say,...who had given such authority to men”*
 - In the story of the man raised from his paralysis, we can see the image of the resurrection
 - The Greek says that he was “standing up,” which is almost the same Greek word as used for to be raised (resurrection)
 - *Anastemi* – to stand up
 - *Anastasis* - resurrection
 - The early church Fathers zeroed in on the passages where Jesus raised people from a lying position to a standing position as a reference for the resurrection of Jesus

Matthew 9 (Cont)

- “To men” can also mean to “mankind”
- Some speculate that this is about the Sacrament of Confession
- It is, by the Sacrament of Confession, that the early church understood the restoration of one’s baptismal grace
- They did not anticipate one would have to go to confession as they were supposed to never sin again
- But, if you did sin, there was a plan B which was a non-water baptism

Matthew 9 (Cont)

- This, however, was very demanding, as penance could be very long in duration
- The Bishop would examine your case and consider whether he would or would not give you absolution
- For serious sins (like adultery), he could impose a penance that may last from one to ten years or more
- Sometimes, he would only give absolution on the person's death bed, after they had prayed for repentance
- He might tell the penitent to stand in front of the church every week and say: "I am an adulterer" to every person who walked by

Matthew 9 (Cont)

- Further, the person could not receive communion during that time of penance
- Father pointed out how common confession has become for us today
- But the primary sacrament for forgiving sins was Baptism
- Confession was simply plan B if one messed up after Baptism
- Father reminded us of the passages which say that God has given this authority to men (plural)