



Beck, Robert. Sunday Homilies: Cycle B 2009.

Handout for week of 11/16/18 John 18: 33-37 & Dan. 7: 13-14

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Daniel 7: 13 I saw in the night visions, and, behold, there came with the clouds of heaven one like unto a son of man, and he came even to the Ancient of days, and he was brought near before Him. 14 And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.

#### COMMENTARY:

The book of Daniel was written when the Hellenist emperor of Syria was forcing Jerusalem to forego their traditions, and their God. The book is a work of resistance, inspiring and empowering Israel to stay true to what it believes. The book as a whole puts forward the affirmation that God has not forgotten Israel, despite what things look like. For a people down, it is a way of looking up. Pg. 199.

The second main part of the book in the Hebrew Bible (vii-xii) is taken up with four visions which Daniel describes in the first person. The first of these visions (ch. vii) is referred to the first year of Balthasar's reign, and offers a close parallel to the dream set forth and explained in the second chapter of the book. The nightly vision was of four several beasts coming out of the sea, and symbolical of the Gentile powers judged in due time by "the Ancient of days", and finally replaced by the universal and everlasting Messianic kingdom. Like the first, the second vision (ch. viii) is ascribed to the reign of Balthasar, and represents worldly powers under the figure of animals. Daniel sees a ram with two horns (the Medes and the Persians) pushing victoriously towards the west, north and south, until it is struck by a he-goat (the Greeks) with a great horn (Alexander) between its eyes. This great horn is soon broken in its turn, and gives place to four others (the Greek kingdoms of Egypt, Syria, Macedonia, and Thrace), from one of which grows out a "little horn", namely Antiochus Epiphanes. This prince is not, indeed, named by the Angel Gabriel, who explains the vision to Daniel, but is clearly designated by the description of the doings of the "little horn" against the host of heaven and its prince ([God](#)), desecrating "the sanctuary", interrupting the daily sacrifice for about three years and a half, and finally "broken without hand". The next chapter contains the prophecy of the seventy weeks, which is referred to the first year of Darius, the son of Assuerus. As Daniel was supplicating [God](#) for the fulfilment of His promises of mercy in Jeremiah, xxix, 10 sq., or xxv, 11, he was favoured with the vision of the Angel Gabriel. The heavenly messenger explained to him how the seventy years of desolation foretold by Jeremiah should be understood. They are seventy weeks of years, falling into three periods of seven, sixty-two, and one weeks of years, respectively. The first period one of seven weeks, or forty-nine years, will extend from the going forth of "the word" for the rebuilding of Jerusalem to "an anointed one, a prince". During the second, of sixty-two weeks or four hundred and thirty-four years, the Holy City will be built, though "in straitness of times". At the end of this period "an anointed one" will be cut off, and the people of a prince who shall come will "destroy" the city and the sanctuary, he will make a firm covenant with many for one week (or seven years), and during a half of this week he will cause sacrifice and oblation to cease and the abomination of desolation to be set up, until he meets with his fate. The last vision, ascribed to the third year of Cyrus, is recorded in chapters x-xii. Its opening part (x-xi, 1) gives a description of the vision with a reference to Media, Persia, and Greece. The second part (xi) announces many events connected with four Persian kings, with Alexander and his successors and more particularly with the deeds of a king of the North, i.e. Antiochus Epiphanes, against Egypt, the Jews, the Temple, etc., until he should come to an end. The conclusion of the vision (xii) declares how Michael (the [guardian angel](#) of Israel) will deliver the people. Mention is made of a [resurrection of the dead](#), followed by rewards and punishments. For 1290 days, or about three and one half years, the daily sacrifice will cease and the abomination of desolation will be set up. Blessed is he who continues steadfast till 1335 days.