

Who Is the Ancient of Days in Daniel 7?

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Daniel 7, a hotbed for eschatological theorizing, continues to baffle commentators, past and present.

The solution to the identity of the Ancient of Days is in my opinion, one that is without controversy.

The most common designation this obviously Divine character is God himself. This view largely stems from the reading of the text.

Variant renderings are:

The Son of Man comes to the Ancient of Days
The [Son of Man](#) comes as the Ancient of Days

In the first rendering the Father is meant. In the second it refers to the Son. Can we solve this debate of *Who is the Ancient of Days in Daniel 7?*



Have you ever overlooked the obvious when it was right in front of you? Objects like eyeglasses sitting on your desk, but you search all over the house because you can't find them.

Recently, I had difficulty finding the exit in the airport. Over the weekend, I flew to San Francisco, CA from Memphis.

The first stop was Minneapolis. It was a long trek through the airport to the terminal. I made it with no problem.

From there, it was off to San Francisco. Again, no problem navigating my way through the airport.

On the return trip, I flew into Detroit. Again, another long trek for my connecting flight. Even took the shuttle without getting lost.

But, making my way back to Memphis, I could not recognize what was right in front of me, the exit to baggage claim.

Instead, I took a circuitous scenic stroll through the airport before figuring out I was headed the wrong way.

The exit was so obvious I missed it. But, I turned around and retraced my steps and the within a few steps of the gate from which I exited the plane was the baggage terminal.

Well, that's the way today's topic is, a few steps away. Follow the article and I will serve as your tour guide to the solution to a problem that baffles many.

The answer lies in how one approaches the text of [Daniel 7:13](#)^L. The clues supporting the solution we offer can be verified from several passages in the New Testament.

But first, take a look at the clues from the text which are:

- The natural division in Daniel 7.
- The inspired interpretation in the chapter
- The evidence from the gospels
- The evidence from the Apocalypse

The Natural Division

The question, [“Who is the Ancient of Days in Daniel 7?”](#), is answered by noting the natural division of the chapter.

The chapter is divided into two main segments. The first is the dream, 1–16. The second is the interpretation of the dream, 17–28.

To interpret divine dreams requires divine inspiration. As noted in Daniel chapter 2, **“There is a God in heaven who reveals secrets.”**

God had made known to Daniel the interpretation of the image in chapter two. (2:19, 28). Why should we expect anything different here?

Daniel's own words express his utter inability to interpret the dream.

“I, Daniel was grieved in my spirit within my body, and the visions of my head troubled me.” (v. 15)

How did the prophet spell apocalyptic relief? He asked God for the answer. Simple enough? We think so.

“I came near to one of those who stood by, and asked him the truth of all this. So he told me and made known to me the interpretation of these things.” (7:16).

Ah!, What a revelation? What an ingenious method for understanding the scriptures. Just ask God for the answer.

Daniel yet walked away with a headache after hearing the meaning of the dream, but now its cause is not from ignorance or not knowing.

Rather, it is from knowing what the dream meant. What follows in verses 16–27, is God’s answer to Daniel.

Luckily for us, the clues to the identify of the Ancient of Days is found in this section.

Whatever may be the obscurity in translating the Hebrew in verse 13, is eliminated by the more lucid text in verses 21–22:

“I was watching; and the same horn was making war with against the saints, and prevailing against them until the Ancient of Days came, and a judgment was made in favor of the Most High, and the time came for the saints to possess the kingdom.

In the vision, the saints are Christians who engage in battle against the little horn. There is no possible way this could happen in A.D. 30.

Many want to make it the Ascension of Christ to the Father, but their was no war going on between Christians and their enemy.

Why, because there was no enemy of Christians prior to Christ’s ascension ([Acts 1:11](#)^L). Why? It’s because there were no Christians before he ascended to the Father.

Thus, no judgment could be rendered to stop an ongoing battle against the saints (Christians) and the little horn at that time.

That forever rules out Pentecost of A.D. 30 as a viable solution.

The battle continues until a judgment is rendered in the saints favor against the little horn with they were at war.

The focus is the eschatological judgment resulting in the kingdom being awarded in their favor. See [Matthew 25:31–34](#)^L. At the coming of the Son of Man, the saints inherit the kingdom.

Thus, according to the interpretation in the vision, it is the **Ancient of Days** who comes in judgment. That refers to Christ, not the Father.

Further evidence for this view are the parallels texts in the gospels. [Matthew 24:30](#)^L, speaks of the coming of the Son of Man in judgment upon Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

The text is quoted from [Daniel 7:13](#)^L. Jesus, in this verse, identifies himself as the Son of Man who comes as the Ancient of Days in judgment.

Because the Jews knew this figure represented a Divine being in the apocalyptic imagery, is evidence from Caiaphas' charge that Christ, again referring to the Danielic text, blasphemed.

But Jesus kept silent, And the high priest answered and said to Him, I put you under oath by the living God: Tell us if You are the Christ, the Son of God!”

Jesus said to him, It is as you said. Nevertheless, I say to you, hereafter you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven.”

Then the high priest tore his clothes, saying, ‘He has spoken blasphemy!...(Matthew 26:64^L, 65^L)

The text is a direct allusion to [Daniel 7:13](#)^L, and the coming of the Son of Man. Jesus claim to be the Ancient of Days, hence a divine being resulted in his conviction of a crime worthy of crucifixion.

Evidence from Revelation

Finally, the book of Revelation gives clues as to the true identify of the Ancient of Days. Once again, there can be no mistake that Christ is the reference.

Consider the description of the Ancient of Days in [Daniel 7:9](#)^L. He adorns a garment white as snow, and hair like pure wool.

Compare the vision in Revelation:

Chapter 1:13, shows the High Priest, i.e. the Most High, among the seven lamp stands, and in their midst, one like the Son of Man. . .

Observe the attire.

“. . . clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band.

His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes like a flame of fire;

His feet were like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of many waters.”

This is the description of the Ancient of Days. The identity is unmistakable. The Son of Man is the Jesus, the Christ.