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End Times Berean Watchman Report - Interpreting Prophecy - Part 2

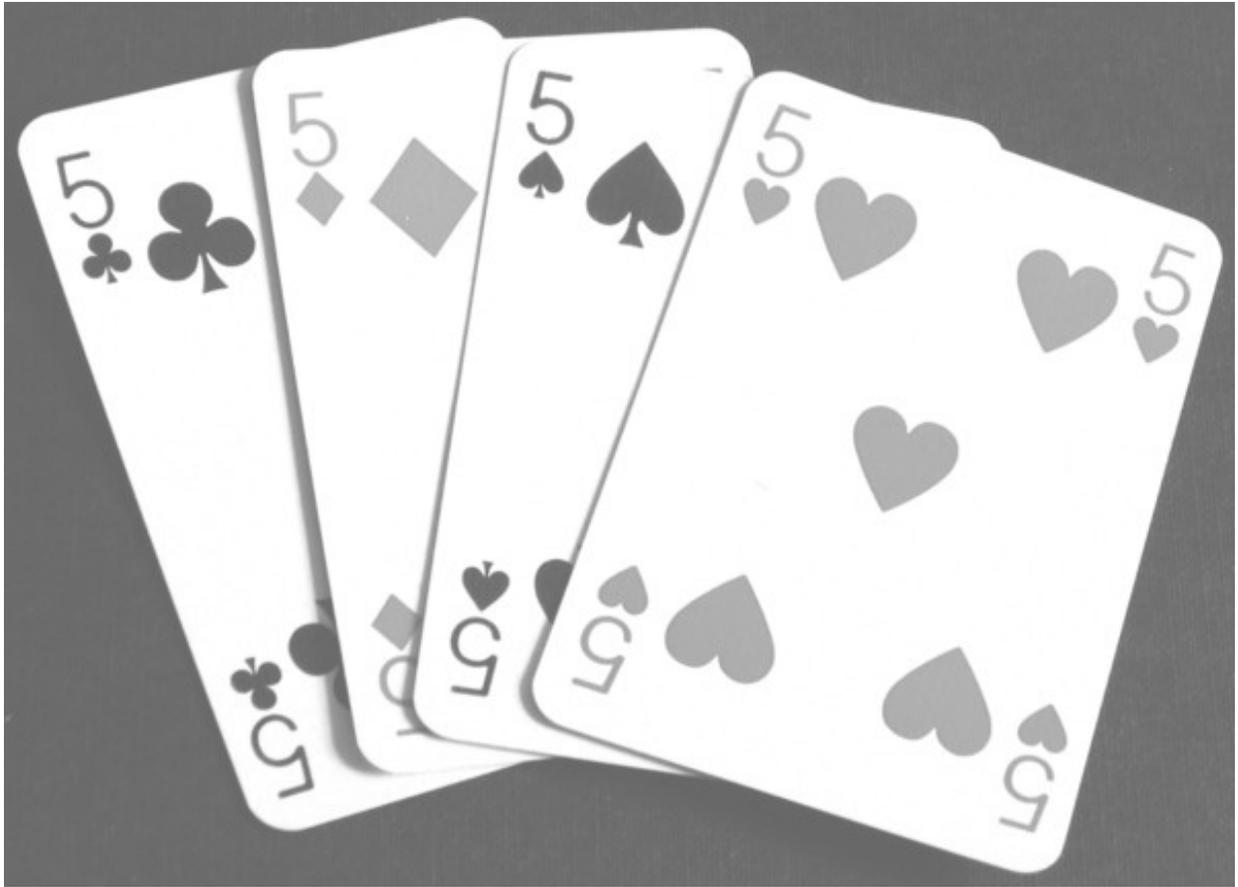
By [Dr. Christian Widener](#) • [Issue #14](#) • [View online](#)

January 28th, 2022

Welcome to another End Times Berean Watchman Report!

This is the second part of the series on how to interpret prophecy, using examples taught in Scripture. The lessons are from the first chapter in my next book, No More Delay.

Similar Images or Ideas Are Generally Related



Four of a Kind

This idea is a well-known Jewish principle for interpretation called *Getzerah Shawah*, or the relating of passages based on similar words or word pictures. It is also referred to as a verbal analogy or verbal parallel. For prophecy, this means that similar images of events should be seen as connecting different passages of Scripture together, as we did previously in the example of the branch. *It's like saying that when you find matching cards with the same rank, they should go together.*

There are many possible examples that could be used to illustrate this idea; but the “Son of Man” image, which is found mentioned

sparingly in the Old Testament but many times in the New Testament, is a great one. The most recognizable messianic use of the title in the Old Testament comes from the book of Daniel.

In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. – Daniel 7:13

In the vision we are told that there was one “like a son of man.” By itself, the expression literally just means a human man. And in fact, the title is used extensively in the book of Ezekiel, when God is addressing the prophet, as a “son of man.” However, the son of man in Daniel’s vision was seen “coming on the clouds of heaven,” giving this human-looking person the qualities of God. The reference to riding on or being surrounded by clouds tells us that the referent is divine.

*There is no one like the God of Jeshurun, **who rides across the heavens** to help you and **on the clouds** in his majesty. – Deuteronomy 33:26*

*The Lord wraps himself in light as with a garment; he stretches out the heavens like a tent and lays the beams of his upper chambers on their waters. **He makes the clouds his chariot** and rides on the wings of the wind. He makes winds his messengers, flames of fire his servants. – Psalm 104:2-4*

*Sing to God, sing in praise of his name, **extol him who rides on the clouds**; rejoice before him—his name is the Lord. – Psalm 68:4*

*Above the vault over their heads was what looked like a throne of lapis lazuli, **and high above on the throne was a figure like that of a man**. I saw that from what appeared to be his waist up he looked like glowing metal, as if full of fire, and that from there down he looked like fire; and brilliant light surrounded him. **Like the appearance of a rainbow in the clouds** on a rainy day, so was the radiance around him. **This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord**. When I saw it, I fell facedown, and I heard the voice of one speaking. – Ezekiel 1:26-28*

We also read that God would raise up a son of man for himself in Psalm 80. It speaks of the establishment of Israel as a choice vine in the land, and the overall context is the establishment, judgment, and restoration of Israel. However, in verse 17, we see an image that I take to have a double meaning that applies to God's promised Messiah, Jesus Christ, the Son of Man.

Let your hand rest on the man at your right hand, the son of man you have raised up for yourself. – Psalm 80:17

When all these passages are examined carefully, the idea of a divine “Son of Man”—who is the Son of God, sitting at his right hand, and riding on the clouds—is seen across all these

...and coming on the clouds... as seen across all these scriptures, even though the descriptions are not identical. To make these connections, one must recognize the verbal analogy, not the exact wording. Some may have difficulty with that; but we know that these connections were well understood by the chief priests and teachers of the law because of the reaction recorded in Mark 14. Jesus was questioned about being the Messiah, “the Son of the Blessed One,” by the high priests. He answered them by replying that he was the Son of Man who would come on the clouds of heaven—the fact that the high priest tore his robes after Jesus said that indicates that his claim was fully understood.

Again the high priest asked him, “Are you the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed One?”

“I am,” said Jesus. “And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven.” The high priest tore his clothes. “Why do we need any more witnesses?” he asked. – Mark 14:61-63

The New Testament is very clear that Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of the Son of Man images given in the Old Testament (see Matthew 24:30 and Revelation 1:12-20). Jesus is the “exact representation” of God’s being (Hebrews 1:3). This means that, while Jesus took on flesh and became a man, he has always been the visible embodiment of the invisible God. In fact, Jesus is the image of God that existed before man was made, and in whose image it was said: “Let us make man in our image,

according to our likeness (Genesis 1:26).” Jesus affirmed this by telling the Jews that he existed before Abraham (John 8:58).

The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven. – Hebrews 1:3

Then God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.” God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. – Genesis 1:26-27 NASB

Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, I am.” – John 8:58

Making these connections is very important for understanding who the “Son of Man” is as revealed in both the Old and New Testaments. Without making connections by similar analogy, the fullness of the image may not be understood. Furthermore, when an image presents itself in an unexpected location, it is important to consider the possibility of an association. For example, the image of a son of man seated on the clouds in Revelation chapter 14 will either challenge one’s understanding of when God gathers his elect, or it will call into question the timing of the

vision with respect to the surrounding judgments. The only other possibility is to just ignore the obvious parallels with the passages of Scripture we've just listed here and pretend that there could be no association between this passage and Matthew 24, for example.

*I looked, and there before me was a white cloud, **and seated on the cloud was one like a son of man** with a crown of gold on his head and a sharp sickle in his hand. Then another angel came out of the temple and called in a loud voice to him who was sitting on the cloud, "Take your sickle and reap, because the time to reap has come, for the harvest of the earth is ripe." So he who was seated on the cloud swung his sickle over the earth, and the earth was harvested. – Rev-elation 14:14-16*

My personal view is that there is long pause of time (between six months and two and half years) between verse 16 and the next verse; but we are not specifically told that in the text. In fact, we are not even told what happens to those harvested in verses 14-16. It is only by connecting that passage to earlier passages that we can have any insight into who they are and what their fate may be. We do know what happens to those collected in the second harvest, though. Nobody will want to be in that one...

Still another angel, who had charge of the fire, came from the altar and called in a loud voice to him who had the sharp sickle, "Take your sharp sickle and gather the

clusters of grapes from the earth's vine, because its grapes are ripe." The angel swung his sickle on the earth, gathered its grapes and threw them into the great winepress of God's wrath. They were trampled in the winepress outside the city, and blood flowed out of the press, rising as high as the horses' bridles for a distance of 1,600 stadia. – Revelation 14:18-20

Therefore, the ability to connect similar passages by analogy—under the principle of *getzerah shawah*—is another important tool for understanding prophecy the way Jesus and his disciples did. However, I should note here that there are two main mistakes that can be made with this principle. The first one is failing to recognize the analogy, therefore missing the connection with other passages. The second is wrongly associating passages that are similar but not really related. Both are exegetical mistakes, or errors of interpretation. I wish that there was an easy way to distinguish when those kinds of mistakes are made. The way I do that, practically, is to look at the big picture implications of recognizing or denying the associations. I then try to discern which is more in line with the rest of Scripture and what I know about God. But in general, I think the burden of proof is on denying associations of similar passages, not on the affirming of them.

In the News...

There have been some interesting developments lately that are in

There have been some interesting developments lately that are in line with recognizing the riding of the next three horses. First, Biden pulled diplomatic families out of Ukraine, which signals at least some tacit acceptance that Russia will soon invade Ukraine and that the US will stand by and let it happen.

Families of US Embassy personnel in Ukraine ordered to begin evacuating as soon as Monday: officials | Fox News



The State Department has ordered families of U.S. Embassy personnel in Ukraine to begin evacuating the country as soon as Monday, U.S. officials tell Fox News.

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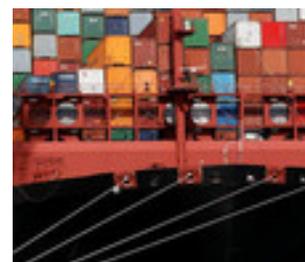
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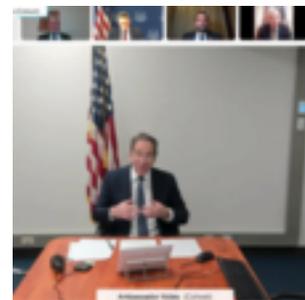


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This is still just a lot to watch and see on, but the trajectory isn't good, and it hasn't changed.

Next week we'll look at how prophecies can stop in the middle of

sentence. In other words, how even a single sentence could contain multiple events over a long period of time.

Till then, keep watching.

Maranatha!

End Times Berean – Research on Bible Prophecy, Biblical Archaeology, and Apologetics from Author Dr. Christian Widener



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Original content from researcher and author Dr.

Christian Widener on Bible prophecy, biblical archaeology and the scientific defense of Scripture. Want to know what you should be watching to know where we are RIGHT NOW in Bible Prophecy? Click the button below to get my FREE RESOURCE: Watchman...

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By Dr. Christian Widener

Keep up-to-date on specific trends and events which help us know where

we are in the Bible's last days timeline.



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