those who discussed the passage before 1880, including most of the rabbinical writers and even including some of the most noted liberal scholars, held that it was a prediction of an individual Messiah, there has been a marked change during the last hundred years. Many recent discussions, including some by conservative scholars, have declared that in Daniel 7:13-14 the "one like a son of man" represents "the saints of the Most High."

In 1971 an English New Testament scholar, R. T. France, wrote as follows: "Since T. W. Manson's *The Teaching of Jesus* (1931) the emphasis has fallen largely on the corporate aspect of the figure, sometimes to the total denial of the individual."[2]

Two arguments have been advanced in support of this view. In the first place it was said that since the four beasts represent empires the "one like a son of man" must also represent a body of people. However, it should be pointed out that in the Aramaic original Daniel 7:17 does not say that the four beasts represent four kingdoms but that they represent four kings. The Aramaic word for kingdoms occurs in verses 14, 18, 22, 23, and 24 and three times in verse 27, but in verse 17 the Aramaic word for "king" is used, making it clear that the four beasts represent kings or dynasties rather than large groups of people. This is paralleled in Daniel's explanation of the four empires in chapter 2, where he says to Nebuchadnezzar, "You are that head of gold" (v. 38).

The corporate interpretation was also said to be proved by the fact that verses 18, 22 and 27 predict that "the saints" will enjoy a glorious future, but several facts militate against taking these wonderful promises as proof that "son of man" is a figure for the saints rather than a promise of an individual deliverer:

1) In the book of Daniel there is not always an exact parallel between vision and interpretation. This is particularly clear in chapters 7 and 8 (see chart on pp. 140-142). In chapter 7. when Daniel asks "one of those standing there" to tell him "the true meaning of all this"