

Bible Study – Daniel

Week 9 – Chapter 7

I. Daniel 7:1-3

In the first year of King Belshazzar of Babylon, Daniel had a dream and visions of his head as he lay in bed. Then he wrote down the dream: ² I, Daniel, saw in my vision by night the four winds of heaven stirring up the great sea, ³ and four great beasts came up out of the sea, different from one another.

- A. Chapter 7 begins about 14 years before the feast that took place in Daniel 5. This likely occurred around 553 BC.
- B. Prophecy is given to man for two reasons
 - a. To give man knowledge of future events.
 - b. For God to demonstrate who the true and false prophets are. A true prophet's prophecy is always 100% accurate.
- C. The Great Sea usually refers to the Mediterranean Sea, but here it may refer to people and nations.
- D. The Four winds is indicative of North, South, East, and West. This indicates that the havoc will be universally felt.
- E. The Four Beasts represent the same nations that were discussed in Chapter 2.
 - a. Nebuchadnezzar saw the vision from man's point of view because he was a pagan. (large statue that is glorious in its splendor)
 - b. Daniel sees future from God's point of view because he was God's prophet. (Beasts, wild, bloody, and out of control)

II. Daniel 7: 4

⁴ The first was like a lion and had eagles' wings. Then, as I watched, its wings were plucked off, and it was lifted up from the ground and made to stand on two feet like a human being; and a human mind was given to it.

- A. The King of Beasts was used to describe Babylon.
- B. There were statues of winged lions guarding the gates of the royal palace of Babylon. Known through archeology and Biblical references.
 - a. Lion - Jeremiah 4:7; 49:19, 22; 50:17, 44
 - b. Eagle - Jeremiah 49:22; Lamentations 4:19; Ezekiel 17:3; Habakkuk 1:8
- C. Corresponds with Head of Gold
- D. Plucking of the wings may refer to Neb's madness. Then God lifted him up and restored his mind.

III. Daniel 7:5

⁵ Another beast appeared, a second one, that looked like a bear. It was raised up on one side, had three tusks in its mouth among its teeth and was told, “Arise, devour many bodies!”

- A. This is the Medo-Persian Empire. The one side that is raised up is the Persians because they had a greater importance than the Medes. – Daniel 8:20
- B. The three tusks in its mouth likely refer to the nations it vanquished.
 - a. Babylon, Egypt, Lydia

IV. Daniel 7:6

⁶ After this, as I watched, another appeared, like a leopard. The beast had four wings of a bird on its back and four heads; and dominion was given to it.

- A. This is the Empire of Greece under Alexander the Great.
- B. Leopard (or Panther) is characterized by speed and thirst for blood. Alexander conquered many nations very swiftly and with ease.
- C. The four heads likely refer to the four generals the kingdom was divided among after Alexander died.
 - a. Cassander – Greece and Macedonia
 - b. Lysimachus – Thrace and Asia Minor
 - c. Ptolemy – Egypt and Palestine
 - d. Seleucus – Syria and the Middle East

V. Daniel 7:7-8

⁷ After this I saw in the visions by night a fourth beast, terrifying and dreadful and exceedingly strong. It had great iron teeth and was devouring, breaking in pieces, and stamping what was left with its feet. It was different from all the beasts that preceded it, and it had ten horns. ⁸ I was considering the horns, when another horn appeared, a little one coming up among them; to make room for it, three of the earlier horns were plucked up by the roots. There were eyes like human eyes in this horn, and a mouth speaking arrogantly.

- A. This is the Roman Empire and also refers to the “Revived” Roman Empire. The beast is not given the description of an animal because it was so different and terrifying that it didn’t resemble one.
- B. A Horn refers to either a King or a Kingdom
- C. The Little Horn is the Antichrist.
- D. The Antichrist displaces 3 kings when he comes to power. This is not a violent displacement, but rather a gradual one and done through political means.
- E. The Antichrist speaks words that blaspheme against God
- F. The 10 horns may not signify 10 nations; it could also refer to a number of completeness.

VI. Daniel 7:9-12

⁹As I watched, thrones were set in place, and an Ancient One took his throne, his clothing was white as snow, and the hair of his head like pure wool; his throne was fiery flames, and its wheels were burning fire. ¹⁰A stream of fire issued and flowed out from his presence. A thousand thousands served him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood attending him. The court sat in judgment, and the books were opened. ¹¹I watched then because of the noise of the arrogant words that the horn was speaking. And as I watched, the beast was put to death, and its body destroyed and given over to be burned with fire. ¹²As for the rest of the beasts, their dominion was taken away, but their lives were prolonged for a season and a time.

- A. The Ancient of Days is God, and after a time, He sits in judgment. He is in control of the situation and is watching the scene unfold according to His will.
- B. White as snow indicates His absolute moral purity
- C. Pure wool hair indicates His Eternal Nature
- D. The stream of fire shows His judgment coming from the throne
- E. The Books keep record of the Holy Saints and the Sins of those who have not repented.
- F. Daniel is shocked at the blasphemies being spoken by the little horn.
- G. The dominion is taken away from this kingdom and not the other because the other kingdoms were not destroyed; they were absorbed by the kingdom that conquered them. When the Antichrist's kingdom falls, God takes away dominion so He can give it to Christ. All vestiges of the old rule will be completely wiped away.

VII. Daniel 7:13-14

¹³As I watched in the night visions, I saw one like a human being coming with the clouds of heaven. And he came to the Ancient One and was presented before him. ¹⁴To him was given dominion and glory and kingship, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that shall not pass away, and his kingship is one that shall never be destroyed.

- A. Some versions say "Son of Man". This is a Messianic prophecy referring to Jesus.
- B. Clouds were associated with deity in the ancient world.
- C. Jesus identified Himself in this manner in Mark 14:61-62
- D. His Kingdom is Everlasting.

VIII. Daniel 7:15-18

¹⁵As for me, Daniel, my spirit was troubled within me, and the visions of my head terrified me. ¹⁶I approached one of the attendants to ask him the truth concerning all this. So he said that he would disclose to me the interpretation of the matter: ¹⁷"As for these four great beasts, four kings shall arise out of the earth. ¹⁸But the holy ones of the Most High shall receive the kingdom and possess the kingdom forever—forever and ever."

- A. The Angels helped Daniel to understand what he saw.
- B. The Holy Saints shall receive the kingdom and Christ shall be our King forever. (Just as it was originally before the Jews complained that they needed a Human King and not God)

IX. Daniel 7:19-20

¹⁹ Then I desired to know the truth concerning the fourth beast, which was different from all the rest, exceedingly terrifying, with its teeth of iron and claws of bronze, and which devoured and broke in pieces, and stamped what was left with its feet; ²⁰ and concerning the ten horns that were on its head, and concerning the other horn, which came up and to make room for which three of them fell out—the horn that had eyes and a mouth that spoke arrogantly, and that seemed greater than the others.

- A. The Teeth of Iron and claws of bronze indicate the viciousness of this Kingdom and how it would tear and shred its victims
- B. The Antichrist will come on the scene as a lesser entity at first, but will eventually gain immense power.

X. Daniel 7:21-25

²¹ As I looked, this horn made war with the holy ones and was prevailing over them, ²² until the Ancient One came; then judgment was given for the holy ones of the Most High, and the time arrived when the holy ones gained possession of the kingdom. ²³ This is what he said: “As for the fourth beast, there shall be a fourth kingdom on earth that shall be different from all the other kingdoms; it shall devour the whole earth, and trample it down, and break it to pieces. ²⁴ As for the ten horns, out of this kingdom ten kings shall arise, and another shall arise after them. This one shall be different from the former ones, and shall put down three kings. ²⁵ He shall speak words against the Most High, shall wear out the holy ones of the Most High, and shall attempt to change the sacred seasons and the law; and they shall be given into his power for a time, two times, and half a time.

- A. (Pre-Tribulation view) The Antichrist will rise up and seek to destroy the Tribulation Saints.
- B. God will allow this to happen for 3 ½ years (time, times, half a time) – Revelation 12:14 (1260 days, w/ 360 days a year), Revelation 13:5 (42 months)
- C. The Fourth kingdom will be different in its size and power.
- D. All resistance to its rule will be crushed
- E. 10 kings will emanate from this nation
- F. The little horn is referred to as:
 - a. Man of Lawlessness – 2 Thessalonians 2:3
 - b. Antichrist – 1 John 2:18
 - c. Beast – Revelation 13:1
- G. Because the little horn rises afterward, the nation will have already been formed before he arrives on the scene.

- H. The Antichrist will be greater in power, intelligence, and arrogance than anyone before him.
- I. He will change the seasons and the laws of the nations. How is a week measured?

XI. Daniel 7:26-28

²⁶Then the court shall sit in judgment, and his dominion shall be taken away, to be consumed and totally destroyed.²⁷The kingship and dominion and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the holy ones of the Most High; their kingdom shall be an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey them.”²⁸ Here the account ends. As for me, Daniel, my thoughts greatly terrified me, and my face turned pale; but I kept the matter in my mind.¹

- A. At the return of Christ, God destroys this 4th empire and sets up his everlasting Kingdom.
- B. This vision parallels the vision of Neb in chapter 2. God did something similar to this with Pharaoh. He gave Pharaoh two dreams to show him that the matter had already been firmly decided. – Genesis 41
- C. Sometimes prayer and repentance can defer the judgment of God. This vision is not something that can be changed.

XII. Similarities to Revelation

- A. Much of the same symbolism is employed to describe both empires. The term “beast” is used for the empire and its leader (cf. Dan 7:7, 11, 19, 23; Rev 13:1–2, etc.; 17:3, etc.).
- B. Both kingdoms are opposed to God, and their leader blasphemes his name (cf. Dan 7:25; Rev 13:1, 5–6).
- C. Both beasts have ten horns (cf. Dan 7:7, 20, 24; Rev 13:1; 17:3, 12, 16).
- D. Both empires persecute the saints (cf. Dan 7:25; Rev 13:7).
- E. Both empires have great power for three and one-half years (cf. Dan 7:25; Rev 13:5).
- F. Both empires are destroyed when Christ returns and establishes his kingdom (cf. Dan 7:26–27; 2 Thess 2:8; Rev 19:19–20).

¹ *The Holy Bible : New Revised Standard Version* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1989), Da 7:1–28.