

Daniel Chapter 7

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Outline of Chapter 7

- Vision seen by Daniel, 7:1-14.
 - Four kingdoms.
 - God.
 - Son of Man.
- Vision interpreted by an angel, 7:15-27.
- Vision impacted Daniel, 7:28.

Confusion about Kings

- Xerxes
- Artaxerxes
- Ahasuerus
- Cyrus
- Darius
- Belshazzar
- Darius
- Cambyses
- And many others...

Untangling The Confusion

- **Neo-Babylonia**
- 626-539 BC
- Nabopolassar
- Nebuchadnezzar (605-562)
- Amel-Marduk (562)
- Neriglissar
- Labashi-Marduk
- Nabonidus + Belshazzar
- **Medo-Persia (dates BC)**
- 560-330
- Cyrus the Great (559-530)
 - Darius over Babylon
- Cambyses II (530-522)
- Bardiya (522)
- Darius I (522-486)

Untangling The Confusion

- **Medo-Persia, cont. (BC)**
- Xerxes I (486-465)
 - Aka Ahasuerus, Esther 1:1
- Artaxerxes I (465-424)
 - Ezra 7:11, Neh. 2:1
- Xerxes II (424)
- Sogdianus (424-423)
- **Medo-Persia, cont. (BC)**
- Darius II (423-405)
- Artaxerxes II (405-358)
- Artaxerxes III (358-338)
- Artaxerxes IV (338-336)
- Darius III (336-330)

Untangling The Confusion

- **Macedonian/Greek Empire**
- 359-323 BC
- Philip II (359-336)
- Alexander the Great (336-323)
 - Aka Alexander III of Macedon.
 - Tutored by Aristotle.
- The kingdom split four ways after he died

Time of the Vision, 7:1

- Daniel tells us the time is the first year of Belshazzar, which is 553 BC.
- This is 14 years before Daniel 5. It is also before Daniel 6 and 9.
 - The chapters in chronological order: 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 5, 9, 6, 10-12.

Writing of the Vision

- Daniel wrote what he saw, in summary form.
- This is why we can have it in our possession.
- In the writing, God superintended the human writer so that every word was recorded perfectly accurately, without error, omission, or addition. This doctrine we call *inspiration*.

Initial Part of the Vision, 7:2-3

- Daniel saw 4 winds, the Great Sea, and 4 beasts.
- The four winds are the “winds of heaven.”
 - *Four* refers to the four compass directions.
 - Winds are controlled by the sovereign God. God is in control of all things, and He stirs up the world to bring about His purposes. This may reflect the role of God’s Spirit as “breath”/“wind” (רוּחַ, πνευμα in Greek).

Initial Part of the Vision, 7:2-3

- The Great Sea is the Mediterranean, but it is a metaphor representing the sea of humanity.
- The beasts rise out of the sea, that is, kingdoms that arise out of humankind (7:17).
 - There is a diversity of these kingdoms since there is such great diversity among humanity.



Review: Image in Daniel 2

- Head = Babylon and Nebuchadnezzar
- Chest and arms = Medo-Persia
- Waist and thighs = Greece

- Legs = Rome
- Feet of iron and clay = Divided Rome

Vision in Daniel 7



- Lion = Babylon
- Bear = Medo-Persia
- Leopard = Greece
- Dreadful beast = Rome
- Ten horns = Divided Rome
- 11th horn = Antichrist

The First Beast, v. 4

- Not a lion, but *like* a lion. It also had eagle's wings. This is Neo-Babylonia and its main king.
 - Lion: See Jeremiah 4:7. Fierce. Strong. Lions are not present in Judea today, but a real danger in OT times. Remember Samson and David killed lions.
 - Wings: Speed, like *blitzkrieg*.
- Changed into a man: Nebuchadnezzar, ch. 4.

The Second Beast, v. 5

- Powerful like a bear, but awkwardly lopsided.
 - Two sides, one bigger than the other, like the two arms of ch. 2. This is the Medo-Persian empire.
 - Three ribs: three kingdoms that this bear had devoured: namely Lydia, Babylon, and Egypt.
 - The command to eat much flesh is God's direction to the kingdom to grow large.

The Third Beast, v. 6

- This was like a leopard, with wings and 4 heads.
 - Following the previous, this is Alexander the Great, whose conquest was mighty and with great speed.
 - His army of 30,000 trained soldiers swept through the known world. He bypassed Jerusalem after the priests showed him these prophecies about himself.
 - Defeated Egypt (remember Alexandria).

More on the Third Beast, v. 6

- The four heads refer to the break-up of his kingdom after his untimely death by four generals:
 - Antigonus – Babylon and Syria.
 - Ptolemy Soter – Egypt.
 - Cassander – Macedonia, north of Greece.
 - Lysimachus – Thrace and Bythinia, east of Macedonia, northern Turkey, near the Black Sea.
 - This will become relevant again in ch. 10-12.

Intermission

- Remember that this is all predictive prophecy, written decades and centuries before much of it came to pass.
 - Some has yet to be fulfilled.
- God is in control of world history. He moves it as He wishes. He can tell what will be.

The Fourth Beast, v. 7

- This beast was terrifying in appearance, and very strong.
 - The iron teeth point our attention to this as the Roman empire. It was devastating.
 - It was different than the other beasts. (It lasted about 1000 years, much longer than the others.)
 - It had 10 horns. Explanation later. See Rev. 17:12.

Comparing Daniel 2 and 7

- Similarities

- Both have a pattern of 4 earthly kingdoms plus the kingdom of Christ.
- Both have a second kingdom with two parts.
- Both have a fourth kingdom with 10 parts.

- Differences

- One vision was given to Nebuchadnezzar 50 years earlier; the other was to Daniel.
- One is an image of a man; the other a vision of wild beasts.
- An 11th horn is not in ch. 2.

The Figurative Nature of Beasts

- The marvelous image of chapter 2 is from man's perspective. The beasts are how human kingdoms look from God's perspective.
- The change of the lion's nature from beast to man may be an indication that Nebuchadnezzar was regenerated.

Importance

- The material here is obviously repeated from chapter 2. The implication of this is that God wants His followers to know what is coming in the future.
 - Pharaoh's dream was repeated (see Gen. 41:32).
- This is God's program for world history.

The Little Horn, v. 8

- This is new information, not contained in ch. 2, about a little horn.
 - It arose amongst the 10, and took out 3 of them.
 - The eyes show that it represents a man, and its mouth was speaking pompous (great, boastful) words. This is the Antichrist.
- Daniel was perplexed by this (v. 19-20).

Change of Perspective

- After the little horn, things are pretty depressing.
- The change of scenery to a heavenly courtroom reminds us that God is in charge and will have His way in all things.
- Don't focus on the "down here" stuff.

Thrones Placed, v. 9

- This pictures the entrance of God into the world scene and the inauguration of the kingdom of God on earth. See Psalm 2.
- Multiple thrones indicates a shared rule, with Christ and His saints.
 - See, for example, Matthew 19:28; Rev. 20:4.

A New Title for God

- The Ancient of Days is a title for God. It appears only in Daniel 7:9, 13, 22.
 - It also appears in the hymn “Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise.”
 - And in the hymn “Ancient of Days, Who Sittest, Throned in Glory.”
 - Indicates the eternality of God = infinite wrt time.

Appearance of God, v. 9-10

- This is one of few Biblical texts that describes the “physical” appearance of God, at least as He appeared in the vision to Daniel.
- Notice the white garment and white hair.
- He is not “father time.”
- Flaming throne with burning wheels and a fiery stream. Fire = purity and judgment.

Appearance of God, Part 2

- Angelic ministers numbering in the hundreds of thousands ministered and stood before Him around the throne.
- The end of v. 10 mentions that “books were opened.” These books seem to be records of history or, perhaps, of the works of men.

The Seating of God

- Verse 9 says that the Ancient of Days was seated.
- Verse 10 adds that “court” was seated, indicating that all the members of the court were present and ready. Court is in session!
- This indicates a judgment setting.

Close Observation, v. 11

- Daniel watched carefully in the vision, seeing:
 - The pompousness of the little horn.
 - The slaying of the beast. We bounce back from the horn to the entire beast upon which the horn was found.
 - The destruction of the beast's body.

Bigger Picture, v. 12

- The other three beasts were removed from power.
- But their lives were prolonged. How this happens is that each is incorporated into the following beast, not just snuffed out entirely. See remnants of earlier beasts in Rev. 13:2.

Vision of the Son of Man, v. 13-14

- This title is a favorite of Jesus for Himself. See Matthew through John, e.g. Matt. 8:20.
- Ezekiel was also called this name by God. See Ezekiel 2:1.
- Only a hard heart would deny that this refers to the historical figure Jesus Christ.

Vision of the Son of Man, v. 13-14

- “Son of Man” indicates His deity, and also His humanity.
- He comes with the clouds of heaven. See Matthew 24:30 and 26:64.
- He comes to God the Father and receives a kingdom. See Luke 19:12, Rev. 5:7, Psalm 2.

The Unending Universal Kingdom

- Verse 14 says that the Son of Man will have a world-encompassing kingdom. It will last forever. It will never pass away (from the inside) or be destroyed (from the outside).
- This is the stone cut out without hands (Daniel 2:34, 45).

Symbolic Prophecy Not Too Hard

- We have just taken a very symbolic section of Scripture and untangled it fairly well.
- Granted, we are correlating from later in Daniel 7 and 8 which we haven't gotten to yet in our series, and from Revelation.
- But we *can* understand this stuff, and literally!

Daniel's Reaction, v. 15-16

- Sometimes when we understand Scripture, it gives us great joy.
- Other times, like this one, it brings distress and a desire to know more.
- Daniel asked one of the angels for assistance. He was curious and teachable. You be too.

Asking Honest Questions is Good

- We benefit because Daniel asked a question: the answer is written down for us.
- This is just like we benefit when we read the Lord's answer to his disciples' questions.
- Maybe we need to ask someone around us to help us understand Scripture. It is OK to do so.

Very Brief Answer, v. 17-18

- The four beasts “are” symbolic representations of four kings and—by simple extension—their kingdoms.
- In the end, God’s people will receive the kingdom and rule it forever. The righteous will conquer the unrighteous. See Rom. 4:13.

Daniel Had More Questions, 19-22

- Daniel reviews what he saw about the fourth beast. It was “very different.” We learn that it had bronze nails. It smashed everything.
- Daniel also wanted to know about the 11th horn and why it uprooted three others, and appeared greater than the others.

Daniel Had More Questions, 19-22

- The angel had just said the saints would receive the kingdom... (v. 18).
- But the 11th horn made war against the saints and prevailed.
- How could both be true? Daniel grasped that it had to do with the judgment scene of the Ancient of Days who ruled for the saints.

Extended Answer, v. 23-27

- The fourth kingdom will somehow envelop the entire earth and conquer it.
- 10 kings will come out of this kingdom (see Rev. 12:3, 13:1, 17:3-16). Then an 11th horn, different from the first 10. This is Antichrist. He is satanically empowered.

Identifying the 10 Kings

- Daniel wanted to know about these ten horns. The angel answered that the ten horns are ten kings that will arise out of this kingdom.
- As to further identification, dispensational scholars generally do not offer ideas. We know they are after Rome and may extend up until now or may be a league of nations entirely future.

Identifying the 10 Kings

- One “historicist” scholar—who thinks all of this prophecy was fulfilled in the past—identifies the kings as the realms of the Anglo-Saxons, Franks, Burgundians, Visigoths, Vandals, Bavarians, and Ostrogoths, among others, in the period 400 to 600 AD.

Identifying the 10 Kings

- At least three of these kings must be present in the future end-time because the Antichrist arises out of them.
- Revelation 17:12 indicates the 10 horns (probably the same ones as Daniel) represent 10 kings who had not yet reigned as of 95 AD.

Antichrist in Daniel 7:25

- He blasphemes God (Rev. 13:5-6).
- He persecutes believers. Awfully so. (13:7).
- He will prevail over God's people for 3.5 *times*, which we understood from our study in Daniel 9 to mean 3.5 prophetic years. (13:5).

Antichrist: Times and Law

- He wants to change times and law.
- He knows he has 3.5 years, because of this prophecy and other Scripture. He is going to do everything in his power to change that.
- He will change the laws, meaning he will make wrong to be right and right to be wrong.

The Antichrist in Revelation

- The Antichrist is a main character in ch. 6-19.
- The believers he persecutes are Jews and Gentiles after the rapture, particularly in the second half of the Tribulation.
- Note the 7 years from Revelation 11:3 (first half, 3.5 yrs) and 12:6 (second half, 3.5 yrs).

The Antichrist in Revelation

- Notice specifically Revelation 13 again, this time verses 1-4.
- The beast there has features like a leopard, bear, and lion. Sound familiar?

The Antichrist in Other Scripture

- 1 John 2:18, 22; 4:3; 2 John 7. Those who deny Jesus, or that He is Messiah, or that He came in the flesh—all such share the spirit of Antichrist.
- 2 Thess. 2:1-12 is an extended passage about him, the “man of sin.” He will be a great deceiver, but will be destroyed by the Lord.

The Antichrist in 2 Thessalonians 2

- For us: don't be troubled or deceived.
- A complete apostasy happens first. The restrainer has been moved out of the way.
- Then the man of sin is revealed. That spirit of lawlessness that will give rise to him is already operational and "ready to go."

The Antichrist in 2 Thessalonians 2

- He exalts himself above God. He will be a smooth deceiver.
- Many will follow him in his and their love of unrighteousness. God will hand them over to his deception. But some will be saved (Rev. 5:9-11).
- The Lord will destroy him and condemn his followers.

The Antichrist in Other Scripture

- Isaiah 26:20-21 is about the time of tribulation, specifically focusing on Israel.
- Isaiah 27:1 follows up with a mention of the destruction of Leviathan the serpent, and of the dragon who lives in the sea. These seem to refer to the Devil and Antichrist.

Judgment on Antichrist, v. 26

- Back in Daniel 7...the judgment scene portrayed in v. 9-10 and 26 shows the courtroom where the Antichrist will be taken from power and rendered unable to take that power again.

Kingdom for God's People, v. 27

- This kingdom truth is a wonder of wonders. Forever the kingdom will belong to “the people”—but not just “the people”—the “saints of the Most High.”
- Believers will be completely ascendant as they reign with Christ. Every land on the earth will serve God under the reign of the king-saints.

Longer Term Effects on Daniel, 28

- Daniel was still troubled by what he saw:
 - The devastation of the earth, the persecution of the saints, the judgment scene, the defeat of the little horn, the roller coaster ride up to the mountain-top of the kingdom glory...
- All of this was overwhelming.

Example of Daniel

- Revelation from God *moved* Daniel's heart.
- He was troubled. It affected his countenance.
- Go and be like Daniel!
- He kept the matter in his heart. There was no one to share it with...but readers of his book!
- Be thankful that the saints will prevail. But know that a time of great testing is coming for our brothers. We will miss it. They will suffer it.