

# Daniel

## Chapter Seven

### In Daniel:

**Chapter 1-6—Historical facts given in chronological order**

**Chapter 7-12—dreams and visions given in chronological sequence**

**Chapter 7—takes place in 1<sup>st</sup> year of Belshazzar**

**Chapter 8—3<sup>rd</sup> year of Belshazzar**

**Chapter 9—1<sup>st</sup> year of Darius the Mede**

**Chapter 10-12—3<sup>rd</sup> year of Cyrus**

**1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Visions came during Babylonian Period (before Belshazzar's feast)**

**3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Visions came during Persians rule (vision of Chapter 9 preceded the lions den)**

**4<sup>th</sup> Vision—chapters 10-12—last dated event of book**

- Chapters 1-6—gives Daniel's background/credentials—nationality, religion, character, wisdom granted by God
- The God of the miraculous in chapters 1-6—is the God who knows the future
- Chapters 1-6—written in 3<sup>rd</sup> person except for 10:1—everything after 7:2 is 1<sup>st</sup> person
- Chapter 7—most important chapter in Book of Daniel—one of the most important chapters in OT
- Transition in chapter 7 from historical to dreams/visions
- Chapter 7 joins the two parts of the book together
  
- **Symbolism—key element in biblical apocalyptic literature—usually the meaning for the symbol is found in the text itself—if not—in other parts of scripture**

### **Daniel 7:1-3**

**In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon Daniel saw a dream and visions in his mind as he lay on his bed; then he wrote the dream down and related the following summary of it. Daniel said, "I was looking in my vision by night, and behold, the four winds of heaven were stirring up the great sea. And four great beasts were coming up from the sea, different from one another."**

- First year of Belshazzar—dates the vision—king is approximately 37 years old—historical records indicate this would be 553-551 BC
- If Daniel was 15 when taken into exile—he would be 67 years old here
- In chapter 2—Daniel prophesies four world empires and the Second Coming of Christ
- Visions in mind as he lay on his bed—Zech 1:8
- Four winds—Zech 2:6, 6:15
- Four winds—4 directions of earth—indicates that havoc is universal
- Wind represents judgments released—Rev 7:1, Zech 6:5, Zech 7:14, Hos 8:7—by God upon all ungodly nations (includes operation of evil forces upon mankind—continually stirring up—creating strife/trouble)
- Sea—regularly stands for peoples or nations of the earth in the symbolism of scripture—sinful humanity is compared to the sea in Isaiah 57:20. Sea is symbolic of polluted, turbulent humanity (unrest, chaos, turmoil)
- Great sea—in vs 3-4, beasts came out of sea/ vs 17, beasts are from the earth—so 'sea' is symbolic of the earth—beasts will arise=4 earthly kingdoms will arise
- Stirring up—bursting forth—sudden
- Four great beasts—great in power and size—four kingdoms will arise from the earth—same as empires in Daniel 2—different from one another—each beast is successively meaner than predecessor (in statue—increasing inferiority of parts—moral degeneration)

### **Daniel 7:4-8**

**"The first was like a lion and had the wings of an eagle. I kept looking until its wings were plucked, and it was lifted up from the ground and made to stand on two feet like a man; a human mind also was given to it. And behold, another beast, a second one, resembling a bear. And it was raised up on one side, and three ribs were in its mouth between its teeth; and thus they said to it, 'Arise, devour much meat!' After this I kept looking, and behold, another one, like a leopard, which had on its back four wings of a bird; the beast also had four heads, and dominion was given to it. After this I kept looking in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast, dreadful and terrifying and extremely strong; and it had large iron teeth. It devoured and crushed, and trampled down the remainder with its feet; and it was different from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns. While I was contemplating the horns, behold, another horn, a little one, came up among them,**

**and three of the first horns were pulled out by the roots before it; and behold, this horn possessed eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth uttering great boasts.**

- **First—Lion=Golden Head=Babylon (2:38)**

- Lion—Rev 13:2—had large wings like an eagle
- Nebuchadnezzar was symbolized as a Lion and Eagle elsewhere: Lion (Jer 4:7, 49:19, 50:17, 44)---Eagle (Jer 49:22, Lam 4:19, Ezek 17:3, Hab 1:8)
- Statues of winged lions found in ruins of Babylon—Lions adorn Ishtar Gate
- Wings torn off—king's insanity/ loss of power
- Standing on 2 feet/human mind/ human heart given=humanitarian rule after his insanity
- Lifted from ground—God raised king to place of honor

- **Second—Bear—Silver Arms=Medo-Persia (2:32)**

- Noted for great size and fierceness in battle
- Raised up on one side—one side is larger—one part of empire is greater than the other—Persia is dominant in alliance
- Bear is devouring mouthful before pursuing more prey—3 ribs in mouth=conquests of empires/nations
- Medo-Persia had experienced 3 major conquests: Babylon (539 BC)—Lydia (546 BC)—Egypt (525 BC)

- **Third Beast—Leopard—Bronze belly/thighs—Greece (2:32)**

- Leopard has wings like a bird on its' back—4 heads
- Leopard—beast of prey—speed and thirst for blood
- Four wings on back—increase the speed of an already swift beast
- Dominion given—authority to rule
- Greece was quick in their conquests/lust for territory
- Alexander the Great invaded Asia Minor in 334 BC and within 10 years—at age 32—he had conquered entire Medo-Persian Empire (as far as India)—He then wept because there was nowhere else to conquer
- 4 wings—signify all 4 quadrants of the earth—world domination
- 4 heads—in scripture—heads=rulers or governments (Dan 2:38, Is 7:8-9, Rev 13:3,12)
- 4 Heads—one Empire will become 4 Kingdoms
- Alexander died in 323 BC and is succeeded by 4 Generals
  - 1) Antipater—Greece and Macedonia
  - 2) Lysimachus—Thrace and Asia Minor
  - 3) Seleucus I Nicator—Syria, Babylon, and much of Middle East
  - 4) Ptolemy I Soter—Egypt and Palestine

- **Fourth Beast—Terrifying—Iron and Clay/Legs—Feet—Toes—Rome ( 2:33, 40-43)**
- Frightening/powerful—iron teeth—to devour prey
- Crushes/shatters/ breaks in pieces (Dan 2:34-35, 40, 44. 7:10, 23)
- Any fragments of victim remaining—crushed under its feet
- Iron: rule of 1 man---Clay: crowd
- This beast does not resemble any 'created' animal
- Rome superseded Greece as greatest world power—possessing a power and longevity the world had never known
- Nations were crushed under iron boot of Roman legions—extent of its domination surpassed the influence of the previous 3 empires
- 10 horns/like heads—symbolize kings or kingdoms in scripture (Rev 13:1, 17:12, Ps 132:17, Zech 1:18)—in this place—it represents kings
- 10 horns=10 toes
- Little horn arises among the 10—small at first—grows larger and overpowers 3 previous horns—imposing
- 3 kings/horns will be overcome by 1 king/horn (when 3 resist his quest to rule/overthrow them—they finally capitulate)
- Uprooted—violent overthrow (uprooted rulers are kings in their own right when they are violently overthrown)
- Empire of 10 horns then comes under dominion of Little Horn (7:24)
- This king will conquer 3 kingdoms or nations that will resist him—then gain control of the empire (Dan 11:36-37, II Thes 2:3-12, Rev 13:5-6)
- He is the antichrist—the one whom satan will take up full residence in bodily form
- 10—can mean 10 nations or—complete—in power/sovereignty (Rev 13:3,7,8,12)
- 10 horns—confederation of kings that come from old Roman Empire—This federation's dominion will immediately precede the Return of Christ—and be destroyed by the Kingdom of God (7:11,13-14,21-22,26-27)
- Little Horn—ruler will be brilliant (eyes like a man) and arrogant (mouth speaking arrogantly)
- Eyes=human personality—instruments of observation/learning—symbolic of intelligence, insight and wisdom (Zech 3:9, 4:10, Rev 4:6, 5:6)—This Little Horn will be extremely intelligent, clever, arrogant, blasphemes true God—Entire world comes under his spell
- No one overcame Rome—it fell apart into separate nations
- In Daniel—emphasis is not on origin of Roman Empire—but the end times (period of 10 horns)
  
- First 3 Beasts already fulfilled
  
- Fourth Kingdom—Rome—already appeared on the scene once—will return—appearance of Horns

## **Daniel 7:9-10**

**I kept looking until thrones were set up, and the Ancient of Days took His seat; His vesture was like white snow, and the hair of His head like pure wool. His throne was ablaze with flames, its wheels were a burning fire. A river of fire was flowing and coming out from before Him; thousands upon thousands were attending Him, and myriads upon myriads were standing before Him; the court sat, and the books were opened.**

- God's court convenes—sentence of judgment on Little Horn and his kingdom is carried out
- Vs 7-8—antichrist is blaspheming God of Heaven
- Vs 9-10—Sovereign Lord upon the throne calmly preparing for Judgment
- Ancient of Days—Eternal God—Great Judge—Chief Justice of the Universe
- Hair—white like wool—can symbolize ancient wisdom—the way a Lamb appears
- Clothing—white as snow—absolute moral purity (Is 1:18, Rev 1:14)—because He is Holy—He judges sin
- Throne—flaming with fire/wheels burning-ablaze
- Fire is symbolic of judgment (throne fully ablaze—wrath of God being poured out on the wicked)
- River of fire—God's judgment poured forth on the wicked—kingdom of the Little Horn—destruction by fire/demolition of lowest part of statue/toes—end comes suddenly
- Wheels on throne—seen elsewhere—chariot—Ezek 1 and 10
- Thousands/myriads—innumerable heavenly host
- Books opened—God's memory of deeds, words, thoughts of all mankind (Ex 32:32, Dan 12:1, Lu 10:20, Rev 20:12)—reward and loss
- Judgment of antichrist takes place at Second Coming

## **Daniel 7:11-12**

**Then I kept looking because of the sound of the boastful words which the horn was speaking; I kept looking until the beast was slain, and its body was destroyed and given to the burning fire. As for the rest of the beasts, their dominion was taken away, but an extension of life was granted to them for an appointed period of time.**

- Beast slain—evil empire destroyed
- Empire/leader—both judged when beast is slain
- Other beasts—first 3 empires—had authority taken away—but allowed to continue (length of life given for period of time)—Their dominance ceased—but continue absorbed within the next empire
- Fourth empire—completely destroyed and replaced by Kingdom of God

## **Daniel 7:13-14**

**I kept looking in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven One like a Son of Man was coming, and He came up to the Ancient of Days and was presented before Him. And to Him was given dominion, glory and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations, and men of every language might serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion which will not pass away; and His kingdom is one which will not be destroyed.**

- One like a son of man—one who is in human form (all that Adam failed to be)
- Clouds often associated with deity in the ancient world
- Movement is from heaven toward earth
- Given=coronation of son of man by Ancient of Days
- Crowned as Sovereign/ Eternal Ruler
- Speaks of mankind—not heavenly host
- Son of man=King and Deity (Jews believe that this is about the promised Messiah)
- Mark 14:61-62—Jesus identifies Himself as Son of Man sitting at right hand of Mighty One—coming with the clouds
- Psalm 2:6-9—receives a universal kingdom
- Matthew 28:18
- Vs 13—most quoted verse from Daniel—quoted in NT

## **Daniel 7:15-18**

**As for me, Daniel, my spirit was distressed within me, and the visions in my mind kept alarming me. I approached one of those who were standing by and began asking him the exact meaning of all this. So he told me and made known to me the interpretation of these things: These great beasts, which are four in number, are four kings who will arise from the earth. But the saints of the Highest One will receive the kingdom and possess the kingdom forever, for all ages to come.**

- My spirit was distressed—prophets who received extensive revelation often suffered from it (Jer 4:19, Ezek 3:15, Zech 9:1, 12:1, Dan 8:27, 10:1, 10, 11, 15, 18)
- Vision portrays violent overthrow of governments/chaos—causes Daniel stress
- Daniel makes inquiry—seeks interpretation of vision
- Angels often convey interpretations (Dan 9:21, 10:10, Zech 1:9, 2:3, Rev 17:7)
- Interpreter: Four beasts coming out of sea=4 kingdoms that will arise from the earth (of humanity)
- Vs 18—Kingdom of God
- After four empires run their course—saints will receive/possess the Kingdom of God in fulness

## **Daniel 7:19-20**

**Then I desired to know the exact meaning of the fourth beast, which was different from all the others, exceedingly dreadful, with its teeth of iron and its claws of bronze, and which devoured, crushed, and trampled down the remainder with its feet, and the meaning of the ten horns that were on its head, and the other horn which came up, and before which three of them fell, namely, that horn which had eyes and a mouth uttering great boasts, and which was larger in appearance than its associates.**

- Daniel expresses special interest in 4<sup>th</sup> Beast (vs 19-22)
- Daniel is given insight to the 4<sup>th</sup> Beast (vs 23-26)
- 4<sup>th</sup> Beast different from the others—power greatly surpasses the previous 3 kingdoms
- 4<sup>th</sup> Beast has bronze claws—horns on head--

## **Daniel 7:21-24**

**I kept looking, and that horn was waging war with the saints and overpowering them until the Ancient of Days came, and judgment was passed in favor of the saints of the Highest One, and the time arrived when the saints took possession of the kingdom. Thus he said: "The fourth beast will be a fourth kingdom on the earth, which will be different from all the other kingdoms, and it will devour the whole earth and tread it down and crush it. As for the ten horns, out of this kingdom ten kings will arise; and another will arise after them, and he will be different from the previous ones and will subdue three kings.**

- Horn wages war against the saints—defeating them—successfully persecuting believers (Rev 13:7)
- Persecution will continue until Ancient of Days comes—rendering justice on their behalf
- When Christ returns we will rule with Him
- 4<sup>th</sup> Beast—this Empire will differ in power/duration from the others
- 10 horns=10 kings who will come from the 4<sup>th</sup> Beast
- Since Christ's return brings end to the rule of these horns—these 10 kings must reign until the end of the age—they reign contemporaneously as one Empire since all exist together (Rev 17:12-13)—Out of the old Roman Empire—there will arise 10 kings/kingdoms that will constitute a new Roman Empire at the end of the age.
- Little Horn—Vs 8, 11, 20-22—a king of the last days called 'man of lawlessness (II Thes 2:3), antichrist (I John 2:18), and Beast (Rev 13:1)
- Another will arise after them—Empire will already be formed by first 10 kings—then antichrist arises and takes preeminence—3 of the 10 will resist his power and are overcome

## Daniel 7:25-28

**And he will speak out against the Most High and wear down the saints of the Highest One, and he will intend to make alterations in times and in law; and they will be given into his hand for a time, times, and half a time. But the court will sit for judgment, and his dominion will be taken away, annihilated and destroyed forever. Then the sovereignty, the dominion, and the greatness of all the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be given to the people of the saints of the Highest One; His kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom, and all the dominions will serve and obey Him. At this point the revelation ended. As for me, Daniel, my thoughts were greatly alarming me and my face grew pale, but I kept the matter to myself.**

- He will speak against the Most High
- Antichrist will demand allegiance/worship from humanity (II Thes 2:4, Rev 3:8-12)
- Vs 25—oppress the saints=wear down=daily harassment—making their lives miserable
- Religious freedom abolished
- Economic pressure applied
- Changes set times/laws—set times (holidays)—laws (moral boundaries)
- Suppressing religious freedom is a pattern with dictators (Antiochus IV, Nero, Domitian, Stalin, Hitler)
- Antichrist will attempt to remove all previous influence of Christ—a total secular society
- Vicious attitude toward believers—who bear the image of God
- Time, times, ½ a time= 3 ½ years
- Daniel 12:11-12 days listed equal 3 ½ years
- Rev 13:5—42 months=3 ½ years
- Daniel 9:27—7—broken in middle= 3 ½ years
- Religious activities are stopped midway through final 7 years
- Persecution—Great Tribulation—Judgments listed in Revelation 14-19—on earth
- Revelation 13 and 17—10 horned confederacy led by Beast

Beast used for Empire/Leader	Dan 7:7,11,19,23	Rev 13:1-2
Opposes God/Blasphemes	Dan 7:25	Rev 13:1, 5-6
Persecutes the saints	Dan 7:25	Rev 13:7
Great Power for 3 ½ years	Dan 7:25	Rev 13:5
Destroyed when Christ returns	Dan 7:26-27	Rev 19:19-20

Daniel Chapter 2-----Statue—gleaming metal---4 kingdoms seen from man’s perspective

Daniel Chapter 7-----Beasts—4 kingdoms from God’s perspective—destructive

Genesis 41—Pharaoh had 2 dreams to depict the same truth

Reason the dream was given in two forms (Gen 41:32)—it is firmly decided by God—it will happen soon

# Daniel Chapter Seven-----Workbook

## **Project:**

Take time to observe something in nature each day. Keep a journal of any spiritual insights.

## **Harmonize:**

Read Revelation 1. How are the descriptions of God found in Daniel 7 and Revelation 1 similar? How are they different?

## **Dig:**

- 1) At what time in history did the vision of the 4 Beasts take place? Which empire was ruling?
  
- 2) Where was the action in this dream initiated from?
  
- 3) Four beasts are mentioned in verses 4-7. What is similar about the four? What differs?
  
- 4) What phrase is repeated numerous times in chapter seven?
  
- 5) Is Daniel observing what is taking place on earth or in the heavens? How can you tell?
  
- 6) What identities/names for God are given in this chapter?

7) Who is given dominion over the course of chapter seven?

8) How did Daniel respond to receiving the dreams/visions?

9) Who are the beasts?

10) What do we learn about the Kingdom of God and the saints in this chapter?

**Discuss:**

1) How much do you know about end time events? How did you learn this?

2) What are some good ways to begin to understand prophetic language?

3) How can we navigate the study of 'end time' events without fear?

**Point of Prayer:**

Pray for those who struggle with fear, anxiety, panic attacks in your small group.

**Integrate:**

What other scriptures come to mind as you read this chapter?

**Application:**

- 1) Which verses in chapter seven stir your faith?
- 2) Which verses in chapter seven trouble you in some way?
- 3) Has the Lord ever shown you something before it happened? Why?
- 4) Are you most likely to gather with others or isolate during a time of suffering?
- 5) Have you endured a trial that you felt unprepared for? Why were you unprepared?
- 6) Do you keep a journal? How has this benefitted you? Others?
- 7) How do you recognize when someone is physically fit? Emotionally fit? Spiritually fit?
- 8) Have you put God to the test in the midst of suffering? (Exodus 17:7)
- 9) What image could best describe an element of suffering you have endured?
- 10) What movie title best describes the present conditions of the world around you?