

DANIEL: Life in the Present; Hope for Our Future

Chapter 7 The Future Past: The Four Beasts

(Daniel Chapter 7; 2 Peter 3:3-15; Revelation 13:1-7)

Context: This is 15 years before the end of Babylon under Babylonian rule. Ch. 7 parallels Ch. 2 in its Vision of the next four main world Gentile powers to conquer the world. Ch. 2 (nebuchadnezzar's dream) is from a human perspective with Daniel interpreting. Ch. 7 is the same sequence from a heavenly perspective and an Angel is the interpreter. The end of the Vision focuses on God as Sovereign Ruler, giving the Kingdom of the world to Jesus, and then describing the rise of the Anti-Christ in the end of days.

¹⁸ “[^{1a1}At this point the revelation ended. As for me, Daniel, my thoughts were greatly alarming me and my [^{1a1}face grew pale, but I kept the matter [^{1a1}to myself.”= **freaked out. Confusing. Unsure of what to do with this??**

Eschatology: The Study of the End Times

Three views to interpretation Apocalyptic Revelation:

BIBLICAL PROPHECY: The Book of Daniel is the **KEY** to all O.T. and N.T. prophetic revelation. The Prophecy within Daniel is indispensable to any eschatological system.

- **A-millennialism** (=most of the Book of Revelation is symbolic – not future; no rapture; No 7 year Tribulation; no 1000 year Millennial reign of Christ before the end of this world).
- **Post-Millennialism** (=we are currently living in the 1000 year reign of Christ, where the world increasingly becomes better, more righteous, and then Jesus returns).
- **Pre-Millennialism** (=The prophecies of Revelation are still future; there will be a rapture of the church, 7 years of great, unprecedented tribulation on this earth, then Jesus returns for a reprieve for 1000 years of Christ' rule on this earth, then the war of Armageddon with satan, the last, final judgment of all people ever born, then a New Heaven and New Earth).

READ Daniel Chapter 7: Daniel's First Vision - The Four Beasts

In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon Daniel saw a dream and visions [^{1a1}in his mind as he lay on his bed; then he wrote the dream down and related the [^{1a1}following summary of [^{1a1}it. ² Daniel [^{1a1}said, “I was looking in my vision by night, and behold, the four winds of heaven were stirring up the great sea. ³ And four great beasts were coming up from the sea, different from one another. [Babylon] =⁴The 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 [^{1a1}mind also was given to it. ⁵ And behold, another beast, a second one, resembling a bear. [Persia] 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!’ [Persian conquests of Babylon, Lydia (Greece), and Egypt]. ⁶ After this I kept looking, and behold, another one, like a leopard, [Greece] which had on its [^{1a1}back four wings of a bird; the beast also had four heads, and dominion was given to it. [Four heads = the four divisions of Macedonian Empire after Alexander the Great died given to his four generals: Cassander, Ptolemy, Antigonus, and Seleucus] = powerful prophecy fulfilled 230 years later.

⁷ After this I kept looking in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast, [Rome] 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. [**Horn** = power. It is the power of an animal. It represents kings w/power.] ⁸ 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, [^{1a1}this horn possessed eyes like the eyes of a man and a mouth uttering great *boasts*.

The Ancient of Days Reigns – God the Father as Supreme, and Sovereign over ALL

⁹ “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* [^{1a1}ablaze with flames,

its wheels *were* a burning fire. ¹⁰ "A river of fire was flowing And coming out from before Him; (Cf. Ezekiel 1) Thousands upon thousands were attending Him, And myriads upon myriads were standing before Him; (Cf. Rev. 7,14) The court sat, [heavenly court] And the books were opened. Books = judgment (cf. Rev. 19:12)

'And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and ¹¹books were opened; and another ¹²book was opened, which is *the book of life*; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the ¹³books, according to their deeds." – Judgment of God.

¹⁴ Then I kept looking because of the sound of the ¹⁵boastful words which the horn was speaking; I kept looking until the beast was slain, and its body was destroyed and given to the burning ¹⁶fire. ¹⁷ 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.**
- There is a remnant of these empires, countries, languages, and cultures still upon the earth. (**Persia/Iran; Greece; Roman** influence – in the European Union; Romance Languages (French, Spanish, Italian, Romanian, Romanesch – still very much alive!)

The Son of Man Presented

¹⁸ "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. ¹⁹ "And to Him was given dominion, Glory and ²⁰a kingdom, That all the peoples, nations and *men of every* ²¹language Might serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion Which will not pass away; And His kingdom is one Which will not be destroyed. – As a judgment on the earth, God the Father gives the Son the reign back of the earth, His Kingdom.

Revelation 11:15-16 "Then the seventh angel sounded; and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdom of the world has become *the kingdom* of our Lord and of His ²²Christ [Messiah]; and He will reign forever and ever." ²³ And the twenty-four elders, who sit on their thrones before God, fell on their faces and worshiped God, ²⁴ saying, "We give You thanks, O Lord God, the Almighty, who are and who were, because You have taken Your great power and have begun to reign."

- There is a divine plan for the Lord to have allowed satan a temporary time to reign on this earth (John 10:10) and lead in the destruction of humanity. = difficult to understand. But God is sovereign even over this season of loss and destruction.
- God uses the brokenness of humanity, sin, pain, and destruction as tools to lead people to salvation (for their eternal blessing, though through temporal pain and loss). Nothing gets our attention like pain/suffering = need

READ 2 Peter 3:3-15: "Know this first of all, that in the last days mockers will come with *their* mocking, following after their own lusts, ⁴ and saying, "**Where is the promise of His coming?** For *ever* since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation." ⁵ For ⁶when they maintain this, it escapes their notice that by the word of God *the* heavens existed long ago and *the* earth was formed out of water and by water, ⁷ through which the world at that time was destroyed, being flooded with water. ⁸ But by His word the present heavens and earth are being reserved for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.⁹ **The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.**
¹⁰ But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and ¹¹its works will be ¹²burned up. ¹³ Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, ¹⁴ looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat! ¹⁵ But according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells. ¹⁶ Therefore, beloved, since you look for these things, **be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless,** ¹⁷ and regard the patience of our Lord *as* salvation" – **in God's timing, this season of the church age is for salvation**

The Vision Interpreted

Daniel 7:15 “As for me, Daniel, my spirit was distressed ^[m]within me, and the visions ^[m]in my mind kept alarming me. ¹⁶ I approached one of those who were standing by and began asking him the ^[m]exact meaning of all this. = [ANGEL] So he told me and made known to me the interpretation of these things: ¹⁷ “These great beasts, which are four *in number*, are four kings *who* will arise from the earth. [Babylon, Persia, Greece, Rome] =Daniel Ch. 2

¹⁸ But the ^[m]saints of the Highest One will receive the kingdom and possess the kingdom forever, ^[m]for all ages to come.’ – Kingdom of God on the earth is at first a spiritual kingdom; then it will become an earthly kingdom, then a heavenly Kingdom.

¹⁹ “Then I desired to know the ^[m]exact meaning of the fourth beast, which was different from all ^[s]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, [Today, Rome and its power has passed]

***Still FUTURE:** ²⁰ 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 ^[m]which was larger in appearance than its associates. ²¹ I kept looking, and that horn was waging war with the ^[m]saints and overpowering them ²² *until* the Ancient of Days came and judgment was ^[m]passed in favor of the ^[m]saints of the Highest One, and the time arrived when the ^[s]saints took possession of the kingdom.

²³ “Thus he said: “The fourth beast will be a fourth kingdom on the earth, [Rome] which will be different from all the *other* kingdoms and will devour the whole earth and tread it down and crush it. = great Empire made of slaves

²⁴ As for the ten horns, **out of this kingdom ten kings will arise;** = ten European Countries,

and another will arise after them, = The antichrist (who will be the one World Ruler) and he will come from the European States (Union).

and he will be different from the previous ones and will subdue three kings. (= overthrow three main countries)

²⁵ He will speak ^[m]out against the Most High and wear down the ^[m]saints of the Highest One, **and he will intend to make alterations in times and in law;** = man of lawlessness (antichrist will be a law unto himself= autocrat)

and ^[m]they (Jews who believe; new Christians) will be given into his hand for a ^[ab]time, ^[ac]times, and half a ^[ad]time. **(3.5 years of the Great Tribulation)**

Revelation 13:1-7 “Then I saw a beast coming up out of the sea, having ten horns and seven heads, and on his horns *were* ten diadems, and on his heads *were* blasphemous names. ² And the beast which I saw was like a leopard, and his feet were like *those* of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. And the dragon gave him his power and his throne and great authority. ³ I saw one of his heads as if it had been ^[b]slain, and his fatal wound was healed. And the whole earth was amazed *and followed* after the beast;⁴ they worshiped the dragon because he gave his authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, “Who is like the beast, and who is able to wage war with him?” ⁵ There was given to him a mouth speaking ^[c]arrogant words and blasphemies, and authority to act for **forty-two months** (3.5 years) was given to him. ⁶ And he opened his mouth in blasphemies against God, to blaspheme His name and His tabernacle, *that is*, those who ^[d]dwell in heaven. ⁷ It was also given to him to make war with the ^[e]saints and to overcome them, and authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation was given to him. ⁸ All who dwell on the earth will worship him, *everyone* whose name has not been ^[f]written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who has been slain.”

Daniel 7:26 But the court [in heaven] will sit *for judgment*, and his (antichrist's) dominion will be taken away, ^[ae]annihilated and destroyed ^[af]forever. ²⁷ Then the ^[ag]sovereignty, the dominion and the greatness of *all* the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be given to the people of the ^[ah]saints of the Highest One; (1000 year reign on this earth) His kingdom *will be* an everlasting kingdom, and all the dominions will serve and obey Him.’

28 "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." = freaked out. Confusing. Unsure of what to do with this??

Significant Prophecies & Theology of the End-Times Within Daniel

- The Future history of Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome. (**Where is America in Prophecy?**)
- The Seven years of Tribulation in the end-times.
- The Activities of the Anti-Christ
- The reality and roles of Angels
- The reality of Resurrection

10 Key Events in Eschatology

- **The Time for Israel** (In Covenant relationship with God; Israel's disobedience; punishment; Then Messiah came)
- **The Church Age** (The resurrection of Jesus AD 33 to **Present**; the age of Grace = salvation – The CHURCH suffers)
- **The "Birth Pangs"** (Wars, Famine, Plagues, Earthquakes, Natural Disasters, Apostasy, New World Order = \$, Laws)
- **The Anti-Christ will arise & The Rapture of the Church** (The true Church, born-again Christians **will not** endure the wrath of God meant for the lost world, for Israel, and for those who will be saved)
- **The 7 Year Tribulation on *this* earth** (massive, world-wide destruction and judgment upon the earth)
- **The Second-Coming of the Messiah, Jesus Christ, upon *this* earth** (the whole world will see His return w/Believers)
- **The Millennial Reign** (1000 years of Christ's rule upon this earth; the O.T. Promises are fulfilled to Israel)
- **Satan is loosed, Battle of Armageddon** (satan and the world forces of evil are forever conquered)
- **The Great White Throne Judgment** (the unbelieving, lost from all time are judged; devil given to hell, 'Gehenna')
- ***This* Earth passes away; New Earth & New Eternal City of Jerusalem Revealed** – (we live, explore, work, worship, & enjoy God forever in both Heaven and the New Earth)

APPLICATION:

God has a plan for this world; throughout history, God has been working out His plan and purposes. YOU are part of that.

- What has God used in this life to bring you to Him?
- How does our future victory through Christ in Heaven, give you strength for the temporary pain/loss now?
- For the current injustices throughout the world?
- Is God calling you to be justice to the world? Or Grace?