

Daniel's Visions

Daniel 7:1-14

I. Introduction:

A. New Section

1. The Book of Daniel has 12 chapters. 1st 6 chapters contain the personal history of Daniel's life & service while captive in 2 pagan kingdoms. Last 6 chapters are prophetic.
2. In these chapters, chapters 7-12, Daniel recorded visions that God gave him.
3. Not only did God give him these visions, but he gave him the interpretation as well.
4. These visions were received while he was serving the kingdoms of the first 6 chapters.

B. Importance

1. Some scholars have referred to Daniel's visions as the skeleton or frame upon which the Book of Revelation hangs.
2. Last half of Daniel contains an overview of human history from the 6th century B.C. to the millennial kingdom of Christ at the end of the tribulation.
3. These chapters reveal the time of the Gentiles all the way to the kingdom of Christ.

II. Daniels' Vision (Daniel 7:1)

A. Date of the Vision

1. The revelation Daniel received from God began in the 1st year of Belshazzar, 553 B.C.
2. Daniel personally testifies to when he received these visions.
3. Liberal scholars, who attack veracity of God's word's, date Daniel ~ 200 years later.
4. Critics say Daniel was writing history, after the fact rather than writing prophesy, speaking of events and kingdoms, before they came along.
5. Daniel clearly states the date when these visions came to him from God.
6. Wrote Down The Dream: Daniel was faithful & accurate in recording God's revelation

III. What Daniel Saw (Daniel 7:2-3)

A. What Daniel Saw

1. Daniel's vision begins with 4 winds of heaven breaking upon & stirring the Great Sea.
2. The natural view would be wind breaking upon the Mediterranean Sea and stirring up the waves into a storm. But what Daniel saw was spiritual.
3. – The Great Sea:
 - a. The Great Sea represents the masses of Gentile nations.
 - b. See other passages. (**Psalm 65:7**) (**Revelation 17:15**)
4. – Wind
 - a. The word for wind (*ruach*) is often translated spirit.
 - b. Daniel saw spiritual agents of God, most likely angels, stirring up the Gentile nations
 - c. This angelic influence moved these Gentile nations to do the will and plan of God.
 - d. God is sovereign over worldly affairs which is clearly seen in this passage.
5. – Four Beasts
 - a. From among the Gentile masses Daniel saw 4 four beasts arise, each representing a Gentile nation or kingdom and each corresponding to nations represented in Nebuchadnezzar's dream in chapter 2.
 - b. Kingdoms represented by the image in chapter 2 are in Daniel's vision as beasts.
 - c. Observation: There is a reason the same nations are described in 2 different ways.

(1) – Man’s View

- a. In Nebuchadnezzar’s dream, Gentile kingdoms are seen from man’s perspective.
- b. Man sees great & awe-inspiring kingdoms of glory and power.
- c. Thus the head of Gold, chest & arms of Silver, thigh of Bronze, & legs of Iron.

(2) – God’s View

- a. God sees the reality of these kingdoms. They’re brute beasts who kill & destroy.
- b. They are proud and merciless. They are wicked and evil.
- c. Application: God sees us for who we really are. We can clean up on the outside, but we are sinners on the inside. We are not inherently good!

IV. The Four Beasts (Daniel 7:4-7)**A. Four Kingdoms**

- *These four kingdoms are seen in chapter 2.*

1. – Lion with Wings

- a. The winged lion represented the Babylonian Empire.
- b. Many of the Babylonian monuments discovered have winged lions on them.
- c. Winged lion often represented the king who was the head of the empire.
- d. Pointing to, when God humbled Nebuchadnezzar (chapter 4, are the references; “Wings plucked, Standing like a man, & A man’s heart.”
- e. Nebuchadnezzar was likely saved through his experience. A “man’s heart” may indicate a change from how ruthless he was prior to his salvation.

2. – A Bear

- a. 2nd beast looked like bear that was raised up on one side & had 3 ribs in its mouth, as if it has consumed 3 prey. Being raised on 1 side refers to Medo-Persian alliance.
- b. Persia quickly became the dominate nation. The 3 ribs represent kingdoms Persia conquered which are the Egyptians, Babylonian Empire & the Lydian Kingdom.
- c. Arise, Devour Much Flesh: Persian empire was commanded to expand and dominate empires. God directs nations & controls who is dominate in the world.
- d. The *Wind* that moved on the great sea & agitated nations is God’s angels active in the world, carrying out His divine will. God’s sovereign over world affairs.

3. – Leopard

- a. 3rd beast Daniel saw come from among the Gentile masses was a leopard.
- b. But this leopard had two unique characteristics. It had 4 wings & 4 four heads
- c. 3rd beast represents Alexander the Great & the Macedonian army, the Greeks.
- d. Wings indicate swiftness with which Alexander & his army could move & conquer.
- e. Alexander conquered the entire Persian Empire in one military campaign.
- f. 4 heads represent 4 leading generals of his army; Antipater, Lysimachus, Seleucus, & Ptolemy. When Alexander died, his kingdom was divided among these 4 men.
- g. The most famous of these generals was Seleucus in Asia and Ptolemy in Egypt.

4. – Dreadful Beast

- a. The 4th fourth beast Daniel saw was non-descript. It didn’t look like known animal.
- b. However, it was most powerful & dreadful of the 4. This beast had “**iron teeth**” by it devoured, trampled, & broke residue in pieces. It represents Roman Empire.
- c. The Roman Empire ruled for 100’s of years & and was most dominate kingdom to exist in the Mediterranean region.

B. Prophetic

- 1. Daniel received this vision in the 6th century B.C., while captive in Babylonian Empire.

2. God revealed to Daniel successive Gentile world powers that would rule throughout the time of the Gentiles. Each kingdom came & went just as God said they would.
3. The Persians conquered the Babylonians. The Greeks conquered the Persians.
4. The Romans conquered everyone.

C. Time of the Gentiles

1. Time of the Gentiles began when Jerusalem & the temple were destroyed in 586 B.C.
2. The time of the Gentiles will end when Jesus returns at the Battle of Armageddon.
3. The time of the Gentiles includes the entire church age, the age we live in now.

V. The Last Gentile Kingdom (Daniel 7:7-8)

A. Ten Horns

1. The end of verse 7 goes from the ancient Roman Empire to the future Roman Empire.
2. Roman Empire was never officially conquered; it fell apart from within.
3. During the tribulation, after the church is raptured, old Roman Empire will be revived under the antichrist. Antichrist is introduced for 1st first time in the Bible in this passage.
4. Ten horns are ten kings or leaders in the revived Roman Empire. (**Daniel 7:24**)
5. Ten kings or world leaders will become a confederate in the tribulation.
6. Another horn (antichrist) will uproot 3 of the kings & take their place and kingdoms.
7. He will then have power over the remaining seven kings. (**Daniel 7:8b**)
8. Antichrist will be the leader of the revived Roman Empire, the last Gentile kingdom.

VI. God's Judgment (Daniel 7:9-14)

A. The Kingdom of Christ

1. Daniel's vision closes with judgment and the introduction of the kingdom of Christ.
 - a. The Ancient of Days on His throne, God.
 - b. His garment white as snow, His purity and holiness.
 - c. His hair white like wool, His wisdom.
 - d. Fire issued from His throne in judgment.
 - e. 1,000's, tens of thousands surround the throne of God as they worship & serve Him.
 - f. The books were opened, sin is recorded in heaven.
 - g. The beast, the antichrist speaks against God and is cast into the fire.
 - h. Jesus, one like the Son of Man appears.
 - i. He is given an eternal kingdom.
 - j. He is given dominion over His kingdom forever.

B. Conclusion

1. That is how human history will end.
2. Everything Daniel saw in this vision has come true to this point in history.
3. What remains is the rapture of the church, the tribulation, the kingdom age, and the Great White Throne judgment.
4. Two Points
 - a. – The Kingdom of Christ will come one day.
 - b. – The saints of God will rule with Him.