

DANIEL

Chapter SEVEN

Lesson Number Twelve

One of the grandest of prophetic panoramas is found in the seventh chapter of Daniel, and it was written in the sixth century B.C. Over twenty-five centuries are compressed into less than thirty verses! Ford, Desmond, Daniel and the Coming King

Daniel having finished the historical part of his book, and committed to writing what was necessary concerning himself and his three companions, and concerning Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, and Darius the Mede, proceeds to the prophetic part.

This begins in the first year of Belshazzar's reign, (seventeen?) years before his death, and the fall of the

Babylonish monarchy last mentioned; for so long Belshazzar reigned, according to Josephus; and with which agrees the canon of Ptolemy, who ascribes so many years to the reign of Nabonidus, the same, with Belshazzar:

Belshazzar began to reign, according to Bishop Usher, Dean Prideaux, and Mr. Whiston, in the year of the world 3449 A.M., and 555 B.C.; and in the first year of his reign Daniel had the dream of the four monarchies, as follows:

"THE BOOK OF DANIEL" - The Vision Of The Four Beasts (DANIEL 7:1-28)

INTRODUCTION:

1. The book of Daniel naturally divides itself into two parts... In our introductory lesson, we described these parts as:

**1) God's providence in history Daniel
Chapter 1:1 thru Chapter 6:28;**

2) God's purpose in history - Daniel

7:1-12:13;

2. The second half of the book contains four visions seen by Daniel...

a. The vision of the four beasts - Daniel

7:1-28;

b. The vision of the ram and the goat -

Daniel 8:1-27;

c. The vision of the seventy weeks -

Daniel 9:1-27;

d. The vision of the time of the end -

Daniel 10:1-12:13;

-- In which God reveals to Daniel many things about His purpose and plan in history, regarding the spiritual nation of Israel and the everlasting kingdom.

[In this lesson we shall consider "The Vision Of The Four Beasts", found in Daniel 7:1-28; We begin by noting...]

I. THE VISION DESCRIBED (Daniel 7:1-8)

Daniel 7:1-8 “In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon, Daniel saw a dream and visions of his head as he lay in his bed. Then he wrote down the dream and told the sum of the matter. Daniel declared, “I saw in my vision by night, and behold, the four winds of heaven were stirring up the great sea. And four great beasts came up out of the sea,

different from one another. The first was like a lion and had eagles' wings. Then as I looked its wings were plucked off, and it was lifted up from the ground and made to stand on two feet like a man, and the mind of a man was given to it. And behold, another beast, a second one, like a bear. It was raised up on one side. It had three ribs in its mouth between its teeth; and it was told, 'Arise, devour much flesh.' After this I looked, and

behold, another, like a leopard, with four wings of a bird on its back. And the beast had four heads, and dominion was given to it. After this I saw in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast, terrifying and dreadful and exceedingly strong. It had great iron teeth; it devoured and broke in pieces and stamped what was left with its feet. It was different from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns. I considered the horns, and

behold, there came up among them another horn, a little one, before which three of the first horns were plucked up by the roots. And behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great things.”

A. DATE OF THE VISION...

- 1. Received by Daniel in the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon - Daniel 7:1;**
- 2. This would be about 550 B.C., when Belshazzar became co-regent with his father Nabonidus.**

B. DETAILS OF THE VISION...

1. Part One: The four beasts from the sea - Daniel 7:2-8;

a. The four winds of heaven stirring up the Great Sea (Mediterranean Sea?)

1) The "sea" may symbolize the mass of humanity as we see in -

Isaiah 17:12 “Ah, the thunder of many peoples; they thunder like the thundering of the sea! Ah, the roar of nations; they roar like the roaring of mighty waters!” (ESV)

Revelation 17:15 “And the angel said to me, “The waters that you saw, where the prostitute is seated, are peoples and multitudes and nations and languages.” (ESV)

2) The "four winds of heaven" may be forces God uses to control and even destroy -

Jeremiah 49:36; “And I will bring upon Elam the four winds from the four quarters of heaven. And I will scatter them to all those winds, and there shall be no nation to which those driven out of Elam shall not come.”

Jeremiah 51:1 “Thus says the LORD:
“Behold, I will stir up the spirit of a
destroyer against Babylon, against the
inhabitants of Leb-kamai, (those who in
heart rose up against me)” (ESV)

**b. Four great beasts coming up out of the
sea.**

1) The lion with eagle's wings

a) Whose wings were plucked off

The lion with eagle's wings



b) Made to stand on two feet like a man

c) A man's heart given to it -- The lion represents Babylon; the wings possibly symbolizing the co-regency of Nabonidus and Belshazzar, a kingdom shown to be remarkably fragile - (Believers' Study Bible)

Jeremiah 51:30 “The warriors of Babylon have ceased fighting; they remain in their strongholds; their strength has failed; they have become women; her dwellings are on fire; her bars are broken.” (ESV)

The plucking off of the lion's wings symbolizes the subduing of his pride and the reduction of his power during the time Nebuchadnezzar was reduced to living like a beast of the field (Daniel 4).

The description of a “mind of a man” being “given to it” also may allude to the restoration of Nebuchadnezzar's sanity after his seven-year dementia.

2) The bear with ribs in its mouth

a) Raised up on one side

b) Three ribs in its mouth between its teeth

c) Told to "Arise, devour much flesh!" - The bear represents the Medo-Persian empire; that it raises on one side may reflect the Persian dominance, the three ribs in its mouth may illustrate its victories over Egypt, Syria, and Babylon (BSB)

The bear with ribs in its mouth



3) The winged, multi-headed leopard

a) With four wings and four heads

b) To whom dominion was given -- The leopard represents the Greek empire of Alexander the Great; the wings may symbolize its rapid conquest, the four heads prophetic of its division by four generals after Alexander's death (BSB)

The winged, multi-headed leopard



4) The dreadful and terrible beast

- a) Exceedingly strong, with huge teeth**
- b) Devouring, breaking in pieces, trampling residue with its feet**
- c) Different from all the beasts before it**

Unlike the other three, it is not compared with any animal

The dreadful and terrible beast



Revelation 13:1-2 “And I saw a beast rising out of the sea, with ten horns and seven heads, with ten diadems on its horns and blasphemous names on its heads. And the beast that I saw was like a leopard; its feet were like a bear's, and its mouth was like a lion's mouth. And to it the dragon gave his power and his throne and great authority.” (ESV)

Lets take a closer look?

d) With ten horns;

1/ Before whom three of the first horns were plucked from their roots

2/ In which were the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking pompously -- This beast represents the Roman empire; the ten horns and little horn may represent emperors or kings who ruled during events involving the establishment of God's kingdom.

Revelation 17:12 “And the ten horns that you saw are ten kings who have not yet received royal power, but they are to receive authority as kings for one hour, together with the beast.” (ESV)

Daniel 2:44 “And in the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed, nor shall the kingdom be left to another people. It shall break in pieces all these kingdoms and bring them to an end, and it shall stand forever,”

e) Another little horn coming up among them... Daniel 7:8 “I considered the horns, and behold, there came up among them another horn, a little one, before which three of the first horns were plucked up by the roots. And behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great things.” (ESV)

No other has appeared in the Roman empire, to whom the characters of this horn agree, but antichrist or the pope of Rome, he may be well thought to be intended. (John Gill).

Irenaeus, an ancient Christian writer, who lived in the second century, interprets it of antichrist.

And Jerom on the place says, that this is the sense of...

"all ecclesiastical writers, that when the Roman empire is destroyed, there shall be ten kings who shall divide it among them; and an eleventh shall arise, a little king, who shall conquer three of the ten kings; and having slain them, the other seven shall submit their necks to the conqueror:" Who he further observes is not a devil or demon, but a man, the man of sin, and son of perdition; so as that he dare **“to sit in the temple of God, 2**

Thessalonians 2:4", making himself as if he was God: now to the Roman antichrist everything here said answers: he is a "horn", possessed of power, strength, authority, and dominion, of which the horn is an emblem; a "little" one, which rose from small beginnings, and came to his ecclesiastic power, from a common pastor or bishop, to be a metropolitan of Italy, and then universal bishop;

“...And behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man...”

his insight into the Scriptures he makes pretension to, setting himself up as an infallible judge of them, and of all controversies: though they seem better to design what he really has than what he pretends to; and may denote his penetration and sagacity, his craft and cunning, and sharp looking out to get power and dominion, temporal and spiritual;

“...and a mouth speaking great things.”

As that he is Christ's vicar on earth, Peter's successor, head of the church, and universal bishop; that he is infallible, and cannot err; that he has all power in heaven, earth, and hell; that he can forgive sin, grant indulgences, make new laws, and bind the consciences of men; dispense with the laws of God and men; dispose of kingdoms, and remove and set up kings at pleasure, with many others of the like kind;

Revelation 13:5 “and there was given to him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and there was given to him authority to continue forty and two months.”

John Gill - For forty two months, reckoning thirty days to a month, as the eastern people did, make just 1260 days, for these things are all contemporary: hence it appears, that 1260 prophetic days, that is, years, contain the whole period of antichrist's reign and continuance; so that could we tell where they began, it might be exactly known when his reign will end; but for want of knowing the former, the best of calculators have failed in the latter: but seeing the time when he was made universal bishop by Phocas bids fair for the time of his open appearance, and the beginning of his reign, and of his blasphemy, which was in the **year 859**, to which, if we **add 1260**, the expiration of his reign will fall in the year **1866**; so that he may have upwards of an hundred and twenty years yet to continue; but of this we cannot be certain; however, the conjecture is not improbable.

John Gill (23 November 1697 – 14 October 1771) ENGLISH Baptist pastor and, biblical scholar, and theologian who held to a firm Calvinistic soteriology.

Born in Kettering, Northhamptonshire, he attended Kettering Grammar School where he mastered the Latin classics and learned Greek by age 11. He continued self-study in everything from logic to Hebrew, his love for the latter remaining throughout his life.

QUESTIONS And/or
OBSERVATIONS

Prayer Time