

The Four Beasts

Daniel 7:1-8

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Daniel 6:1-17 Summary: God saved Daniel from the lion’s den resulting in King Darius honoring God. Those governors and satraps who conspired against Daniel were thrown into the lion’s den along with their families.

What applications were there from this discussion?

- God delivered Daniel from the Lion’s den and won over King Darius and others as a result.
- Sin always has consequences & conspiring against God will not end well.
- Sin impacts others, especially those close to us
- Integrity matters and is rewarded by God

Chapter 7 opens a different section of the Book of Daniel

- First 6 Chapters was history illuminated by prophecy
- Second 6 Chapters emphasize the prophetic with a historical background

Vision of the Four Beasts, Daniel 7:1-8

In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon, Daniel had a dream and visions of his head while on his bed. Then he wrote down the dream, telling the main facts. ² Daniel spoke, saying, “I saw in my vision by night, and behold, the four winds of heaven were stirring up the Great Sea. ³ And four great beasts came up from the sea, each different from the other. ⁴ The first was like a lion, and had eagle’s wings. I watched till its wings were plucked off; and it was lifted up from the earth and made to stand on two feet like a man, and a man’s heart was given to it. ⁵ “And suddenly another beast, a second, like a bear. It was raised up on one side, and had three ribs in its mouth between its teeth. And they said thus to it: ‘Arise, devour much flesh!’ ⁶ “After this I looked, and there was another, 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. ⁷ “After this I saw in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, exceedingly strong. It had huge iron teeth; it was devouring, breaking in pieces, and trampling the residue with its feet. It was different from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns. ⁸ I was considering the horns, and there was another horn, a little one, coming up among them, before whom three of the first horns were plucked out by the roots. And there, in this horn, were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking pompous words.

What parallels do we see between this vision in Chapter 7 and Nebuchadnezzar’s dream in Chapter 2?

Daniel 2	Kingdom	Daniel 7
Gold	Babylon	Lion
Silver	Medo-Persian	Bear
Brass	Greece	Leopard
Iron	Rome	Beast w/ iron teeth
Feet/10 Toes	Antichrist	10 Horns

What does this vision of the 4 beasts add that Nebuchadnezzar’s dream did not have?

- Nebuchadnezzar’s Statue dream focused on the military power & glory of the Gentile Empires during “The times of the Gentiles” (Luke 21:24)
- Daniel’s Beast dream emphasized the predatory and greedy character of these four Empires during “The times of the Gentiles”
- This dream provides more specific details and events that were to come into existence

v2 – What does the four winds of heaven stirring up the great sea represent?

The “four winds” represent the contest among princes for world Empires and dominance

- These “four winds” from heaven are God’s providential power by which He directly controls them Himself, in the origin, activities, and the demise of the World Empires

The “great sea” stands for the populace – the unorganized mass of Gentile humanity (Isaiah 60:5; Matt 13:47; Luke 21:25; Rev 13:1)

Revelation 17:1 – “One of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and said to me “come, I will show you the punishment of the great prostitute, who sits on many waters.” [Apostate Christianity in the latter days]

Why was the lion with eagle wings used to describe the Babylonian Empire?

- The lion is considered the king of the beasts, and the eagle the king of the birds; therefore, the kingdom of Babylon, which was signified by the golden head of the great statue, was the first and noblest of all kingdoms’ and was the greatest of them all.

- The wings of the eagle also denote the rapidity with which the lion, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, made his conquest
- The emblem of Babylon was a “lion with wings”, usually in a crouched position (griffin)

What do the wings of the lion being torn-off, made to stand like a man with a man’s heart represent?

This may refer to the taming of Nebuchadnezzar’s pride

- He had acted like a fierce and raving lion
- God struck him with insanity and he lived like a beast in the field
- After 7 years, God restored him by giving him a man’s heart causing him to become humane, humbled, and pious

What did the second beast represent?

This was the Medo-Persia Empire

How did the bear and its description apply to the Medes and Persians?

- The Medes and Persians are represented by a bear on account of their cruelty and thirst for blood
- Medo-Persia amassed hundreds of thousands of indentured soldiers from the newly conquered nations and continued to crush their enemies. This massive army even took their families along with them when they moved.

What might the bear raised up on one side represent?

The bear was “lop-sided” because Persia was the strongest of the two – the Medes were subservient.

What might be the “three ribs in its mouth”?

This possibly refers to the threefold dominion of the Second Empire: Media, Persia, and Babylon as encompassing the conquered Empire.

What did the third beast represent?

This is the Macedonian or Greek Empire

How did a leopard and its description apply to the Greek Empire?

- Leopards took their prey by surprise due to their camouflage and swiftness. This described Alexander the Great and the Macedonian armies.
- The four wings on the leopard emphasized the swiftness of the conquering Greek Empire

No nation or empire had equaled the conquest of Alexander, who in twelve years subdued part of Europe and all of Asia

What did the four heads of the leopard represent?

This signifies the divisions of Alexander’s Empire after his death in 323 BC at 32 years old. The Grecian Empire was divided up between Alexander’s four generals:

- General Lysimachus: Asia Minor (Thrace, Bithynia, Pergamum)
- General Cassandra: Macedonia and Greece
- General Ptolemy: Egypt, Libya, Palestine
- General Seleucus: Syria, Persia

Why does it say in verse 6 that “dominion was given” to the third beast?

Alexander’s army was only 30,000 – 32,000 strong

- The Persian empire fell at Alexander’s feet because God caused it to happen

Why do you think God raised up the Greeks to conquer the Medo-Persian Empire?

- Instead of making them slaves and treating the captives cruelly, Alexander required them only to embrace the Greek culture and language
- Alexander was being used to accomplish God’s purpose by making Hellenistic Greek the language of the world

What was the importance of the Greek language?

Alexander simplified classic Greek to facilitate controlling his army...

- This simplified Greek language was used for business, trade, and international communications. It became so universally used, even Rome could not change it.
- An important, widely used translation of the Old Testament, the Septuagint was in Greek
- Thus, when Jesus the Messiah came, the infinitely valuable message about what God had done was able to quickly be spread far and wide using Alexander’s creation – Hellenistic Greek, commonly known as Koine Greek.

What did the fourth beast represent?

This is the dreadful, terrible and exceedingly strong Roman Empire

What did this fourth beast do?

This Empire broke the former three kingdoms into pieces and stomped the residue

- The Greek Empire became a Roman province, 168 BC
- The Kingdom of Pergamum was subdued in 133 BC
- The Kingdom of Syria was subdued about 65 BC
- The Egyptian Kingdom was subdued about 30 BC

All that was under the Grecian Empire was absorbed into the mighty Roman Empire

What became of the Roman Empire?

- The Western leg of the old Roman Empire was never conquered. It simply fell apart morphing into the city-states and colonies of Europe. It ceased to be a ruling Empire in 476 AD.
- The Eastern leg of the Roman Empire with the capitol of Constantinople became known as the Byzantine Empire and it was conquered by the Ottoman Empire in 1453. The Ottoman Empire was conquered by the European remnants of the Roman Empire in World War 1. It was divided up into the Muslim nations of the Mid-East.

What does the 4th beast having 10 horns tell us?

This represents the ten kings who will rule the world and yield their sovereignty to the Antichrist...

Revelation 17:12-13 – *The ten horns which you saw are ten kings who have received no kingdom as yet, but they receive authority for one hour as kings with the beast. These are of one mind, and they will give their power and authority to the beast.*

Is there significance to describing this fourth beast as also being the kingdom of the Antichrist?

Notice that the little horn does not represent a fifth kingdom: it grows out of the head of the fourth beast and is the last stage of the development of the fourth Beast - the Revived Roman & Ottoman Empires.

What is the little horn?

This is the Antichrist that will come from the revived fourth beast

What makes way for the little horn?

Three of the ten world rulers are eliminated. One could speculate that these rulers do not support the Antichrist and will be removed from the One World Political System by the Antichrist...

Daniel 7:24 – *The ten horns are ten kings who shall arise from this kingdom. And another shall rise after them; he shall be different from the first ones, and shall subdue three kings.*

Why is the little horn described as having eyes like the eyes of a man and a mouth speaking pompous things?

- The Antichrist is a man, but he is controlled and probably even possessed by Lucifer himself. So, while he is a man, he is the personification of Satan.

- The pompous or great words he speaks will be to persuade people to follow him. He will be a consummate politician.
- And he will be boldly blasphemous:
Daniel 11:36 – *he shall exalt and magnify himself above every god, shall speak blasphemies against the God of gods*
- Blasphemy characterizes the spirit of the Antichrist:
Revelation 13:6 – *Then he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, His tabernacle, and those who dwell in heaven.*

What great things will the Antichrist will speak of?

John 8:44 – *The devil... does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him... for he is a liar and the father of [lies]*

He will deceive people about many things...

- What happened to the people taken in the rapture?
- Human origins... panspermia?
- Where humanity is headed: technological immortality
- Why the Bible is wrong
- Why Christ followers are enemies of the state
- What humanity needs to do to have peace
- Why he is worthy of worship (he is the light-bringer)
- Solutions to mankind's problems: racism, inequality, war, climate change

Are we seeing the deceptive spirit of Antichrist today?

- As biblical values are being cast aside, the end justifies the means so it is more and more accepted that the government lying to the people is the new normal.
- Spin-doctors are praised as being shrewd manipulators of the public.
- The media promotes a narrative intended to mold public opinion using Orwellian techniques such as doublespeak that deliberately obscures, disguises, distorts, or reverses the meaning of words.
- Propaganda applying the technique described as "The Big Lie" in Adolf Hitler's book, "Mein Kampf." If you boldly tell a big lie often enough, the public will come to believe the lie rather than consider that their beloved government would so blatantly mislead them.

What are some examples of doublespeak?

- Planned Parenthood (prevents parenthood)
- Investment (taxes)
- Mostly peaceful protests (businesses are burned down)
- Contribution (a political donation or bribe)
- Quantitative easing (printing money)
- Non-performing assets (debts, bad loans)
- Hate speech (contradicting the politically correct narrative)

- Extremism (questioning the “official” version of reality)
- Ethnic cleansing (genocide)
- Climate change denier (opposes New World Order)
- Social justice (favoring one group over another)
- White privilege (embrace socialism)
- Sustainable development (embrace globalism)
- Globalism (embrace one world government)
- Progressive (globalist)
- MAGA supporter (anti-globalist)

Why are people so gullible to be swayed by propaganda?

- Every generation thinks they are smarter than the last and not subject to being manipulated by propaganda. The problem is that despite people thinking they are better than those who came before them, history still does repeat itself.
- They don’t have a “super-conscience”, the presence of the Holy Spirit that helps us know the truth...
1 Corinthians 2:14 – the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.
- As G.K. Chesterton wisely said, “When men choose not to believe in God, they do not hereafter believe in nothing, they then become capable of believing in anything.”

So, what applications do we see in this study of Daniel’s vision of the four beasts?

The book of Daniel in particular, and all of Scripture in general, has to be from God because it is history written in advance...

Isaiah 46:9-10 – Remember the former things of old, for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are not yet done, saying, ‘My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure,’

God is in control of history... we don’t want to be on the wrong side of God because we will thus find ourselves on the wrong side of history.