

The Fourth Beast

Daniel 7:9-28

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Daniel 7:1-8 Summary: God revealed to Daniel a vision of four beasts representing kingdoms that parallel those represented by the different materials in Nebuchadnezzar's statue dream. The statue dream focused on the military power & glory of the Gentile Empires while the beast dream emphasized the predatory and greedy character of these same Empires during "The times of the Gentiles."

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.

Vision of the Ancient of Days, Daniel 7:9-14

⁹ "I watched till thrones were put in place, and the Ancient of Days was seated; His garment was white as snow, and the hair of His head was like pure wool. His throne was a fiery flame, its wheels a burning fire; ¹⁰ A fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him. A thousand thousands ministered to Him; Ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him. The court was seated, And the books were opened. ¹¹ "I watched then because of the sound of the pompous words which the horn was speaking; I watched till the beast was slain, and its body destroyed and given to the burning flame. ¹² As for the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away, yet their lives were prolonged for a season and a time. ¹³ "I was watching in the night visions, and behold, One like the Son of Man, coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him. ¹⁴ Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom the one which shall not be destroyed.

What did Daniel see in this vision?

This is Christ returning to earth to end the "Time of the Gentiles" and destroy Satan's One World Political System.

Who is the "Ancient of Days"?

This is Almighty God, God the Father because the God the Son is referred to separately in verse 13 as One like the Son of Man.

Why is God described as looking like an old man?

- He is old... Ancient of Days. But that does not mean he is feeble as an old mortal man would be.
- Once upon a time, old folks were revered because of wisdom that can only come with age. But we are living in time where long recognized values are being rejected as being out dated.

What were these wheels that were a burning fire?

- What are wheels used for? Transportation... they represent that God is moving; He has limitless energy and takes action faster than we can imagine.
- When it looks like He is not moving fast enough for us, we should remember that His delay is for our own good.

v10 – What do you suppose was this fiery stream that came forth before God?

My study Bible makes reference to a passage that sheds light on this:

Psalm 50:3 – *Our God shall come, and shall not keep silent; A fire shall devour before Him, and it shall be very tempestuous all around Him.*

This fiery stream is probably commands of God that will result in the destruction of the Tribulation that is necessary for the Millennial Kingdom to be established.

What were the millions ministering and the hundreds of millions before God?

This probably refers to the holy angels and the saints who trusted in God's provision for their salvation.

What were the books that were opened?

Must be some sort of record that was to be considered for the judgment of the Tribulation. Certainly, the Book of Life would probably be among these books since there was getting ready to be a lot of death and souls would need to

be directed to either torments in Hades or to Christ in heaven.

v11 – Why did Daniel keep watching the fourth beast?

Because of the pompous words he was speaking... Daniel might have wondered why God didn't strike him down, and then He did. The beast was slain and body destroyed in the flame.

v12 – How is it that the other beasts had their dominion taken away yet their lives were prolonged?

While their kingdom came to an end, most of the people themselves and aspects of their culture continued on thorough out the Time of the Gentiles.

v13-14 – What is described in verses 13 and 14?

The return of Jesus to the earth to establish His Millennial Kingdom.

What is the significance of the term, “Son of Man”?

- The phrase “*One like the Son of Man*”, as pertaining to God, does not occur anywhere else in the Old Testament.
- This term is a reference to the Son of God as the Second Person of the Trinity becoming the Son of Man in His redemptive work on the cross and when He returns, to set up His Millennial Kingdom on earth
- Jesus often used this term for Himself...
Matthew 24:30 – *At that time the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and all the nations of the earth will mourn.*
- What Daniel saw he described as, “*One like the Son of Man*”, a person who was God incarnated as a man...
Jesus the Messiah

How can it say His kingdom shall not pass since the Millennial Kingdom will have an end?

The end of the Millennial Kingdom is only the beginning of the Eternal State. There may be a new heavens and earth but the same King of kings will rule over it.

Daniel’s Visions Interpreted, Daniel 7:15-28

¹⁵ *“I, Daniel, was grieved in my spirit within my body, and the visions of my head troubled me. ¹⁶ I came near to one of those who stood by, and asked him the truth of all this. So he told me and made known to me the interpretation of these things: ¹⁷ ‘Those great beasts, which are four, are four kings which arise out of the earth. ¹⁸ But the saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom, and possess the kingdom forever, even forever and ever.’ ¹⁹ “Then I wished to know the truth about the fourth beast, which was different from all the others, exceedingly dreadful, with its*

teeth of iron and its nails of bronze, which devoured, broke in pieces, and trampled the residue with its feet; ²⁰ and the ten horns that were on its head, and the other horn which came up, before which three fell, namely, that horn which had eyes and a mouth which spoke pompous words, whose appearance was greater than his fellows. ²¹ “I was watching; and the same horn was making war against the saints, and prevailing against them, ²² until the Ancient of Days came, and a judgment was made in favor of the saints of the Most High, and the time came for the saints to possess the kingdom. ²³ “Thus he said: ‘The fourth beast shall be a fourth kingdom on earth, which shall be different from all other kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, Trample it and break it in pieces. 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. ²⁵ He shall speak pompous words against the Most High, shall persecute the saints of the Most High, and shall intend to change times and law. Then the saints shall be given into his hand for a time and times and half a time. ²⁶ ‘But the court shall be seated, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and destroy it forever. ²⁷ Then the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven, Shall be given to the people, the saints of the Most High. His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him.’ ²⁸ “This is the end of the account. As for me, Daniel, my thoughts greatly troubled me, and my countenance changed; but I kept the matter in my heart.”

Who did Daniel ask to help him interpret his dream?

- Daniel was troubled because he did not understand the meaning of the visions (v15), so he asked someone who was standing there (an angel, v16)
- Daniel has been God’s agent in revelation and in interpreting other’s dreams, but hereafter an angel interprets Daniel’s dream and visions. (Dan 7:16; 8:15-17; 9:20-23; 10:10-14)

So, what was the interpretation of the dream?

- The four beasts, like the statue of Nebuchadnezzar, represents four Empires that would rule the world
- The ten horns of the fourth beast represent ten kings who would rise within the fourth empire
- The “little horn” symbolized another ruler, who would supplant three of the ten
- The “little horn” would oppose God and persecute His people for a specific time (3 ½ years, Dan 7:25)

v21 – What does the pompous little horn do?

He persecutes the saints... the Tribulation believers will experience intense persecution from the world government. They'll be considered enemies of the state.

- John, in Revelation 6:9 (opening of the Fifth Seal) sees the martyred in heaven under the altar of God wanting retribution for their murders... They get a white robe as a token promise of retribution.

v22 – Who comes to rescue the saints?

The Ancient of Days... while this term is applied to God the Father earlier, here it applies to God the Son who executes the will of the Father.

Who are the saints who will possess the kingdom?

These are Jewish and Gentile believers who are resurrected prior to the Millennial Kingdom who rule on earth with Christ. This also effectively applies to the mortal Jewish believers who survive the Tribulation to enter the Millennial Kingdom. Israel will be the most preeminent nation on earth during the Millennial Kingdom...

Isaiah 2:2-4 – Now it shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; And all nations shall flow to it. Many people shall come and say, "Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, and we shall walk in His paths." For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. He shall judge between the nations, and rebuke many people; They shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.

Note: that last verse is inscribed on the U.N building (the hope of the nations is peace that will only be realized during the Millennial Kingdom)

v23 – How will the Fourth Beast be different from all the others?

From an article by Bradford Reaves in 3/26 Prophecy Watcher magazine, "When Prophets Struggle for Words."

- The 4th Beast will be more than a geopolitical alliance; it will be a global theocratic empire, shaped by data, surveillance, artificial intelligence, global digital currency, and instantaneous worldwide control.
- It behaves like a living organism yet operates like a machine.

v24 – How will the Little Horn be different from the ten horns that rule the world?

- The only thing mentioned here is the pompous words that he speaks. His bold blasphemy against God certainly sets him apart.
- We also know from other passages about the Antichrist that he is empowered and probably possessed by Satan.

v25 – What other words are used as an alternative translation for "persecute" here?

"Wear-out" ...this is an apt description of the kind of "soft" persecution we are seeing in this country today. The enemies of God are relentless causing many followers of Christ to give up and just "go along to get along."

What do you think it means that the Antichrist, "shall intend to change times and law"?

- *Changing times* – The spirit of Antichrist is a historical revisionist to fit the narrative that serves his agenda. Darwinism is a form of historical revisionism. Also, I'm sure it must irk Satan to have mankind basing our calendar on the advent of Christ... maybe he tries to institute the Islamic lunar calendar instead.
- *Changing law* – The spirit of Antichrist certainly has a problem with any law that is based on the Law of God so maybe the Little Horn institutes shariah law as a substitute.

How long will the saints be persecuted by the Little Horn?

A time, times and half a time ...this has to be 3½ years based on the timeline given in other passages for the Tribulation with the Abomination of Desolation at the midpoint. It is also the time-frame the Jews are supernaturally protected...

Revelation 12:14 – *the woman was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time, from the presence of the serpent.*

v26 – What is the court that will take away the dominion of the Little Horn?

That is the Ancient of Days who will prevail against the Antichrist at Armageddon. His attending angels and saints will be with Him...

"Then the sovereignty, power and greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be handed over to the saints." (v27)

This is a reference to the eternal Kingdom which appears first in Millennium (Rev 20) and then extends into eternity

v28 – Why do you think Daniel was troubled by this vision of the future?

- The prospect of intense persecution for God’s people is certainly troubling.
- There would be a lot of painful change on the way to kingdom of God on earth.
- He probably realized that he would not be around in his mortal body to see it.

What did Daniel do with this vision of the future?

He kept the revelation private not sharing it with others. But he did record it in Scripture so that others could benefit from it.

How should we regard the prospect of persecution?

We should expect it as part of living a faithful life in Christ...

John 15:20 – Remember the word that I said to you, ‘A servant is not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you.

God will bring good from our persecution using it to extend His kingdom...

Matthew 5:11-12 – Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven

Where are we in the timeline of Daniel’s revelation of the future?

We are in the time of the Fourth Beast.

- Scripture indicates that the Roman Empire will prevail through the rise and fall of the Antichrist.
- We can see the stage being set for the global government of the Antichrist in the yielding of national sovereignty to avoid wars, facilitate commerce, deal with climate change and a pandemic.
- All nations not on board with the global vision will be trampled underfoot of the fourth beast.

What observations & applications can be made from this vision of the future given to Daniel?

- The dream of Daniel in this chapter portrayed the same thing as the dream of Nebuchadnezzar in Daniel 2 --- the course of Gentile world dominion from the time of Babylon captivity of the Jews to the second coming of Christ.
- During this time of history, the Gentiles will have supremacy in the world, and Jerusalem and Israel will be trodden down by the Gentiles.
- Daniel 2 portrayed Gentile world dominion as it appears to rebellious man; therefore, it presented that dominion as a brilliant, glorious human image (Nebuchadnezzar’s statue)

- Daniel 7 portrayed Gentile world dominion as it appears to God; therefore, it presented Gentile dominion’s true, inward nature – that of wild voracious beast!

Bible quotations are from the New King James Version and some of my commentary is from David Guzik in BlueLetterBibl.org.