

## DANIEL 2&7 Kingdoms and the Kingdom

### 1. Context

- a. In 605BC Nebuchadnezzar led the army of his father Nabopolassar against the allied forces of Assyria and Egypt. He defeated them at Carchemish near the top of the Fertile Crescent. This victory gave Babylon supremacy in the ancient Near Middle East.
- b. Later that year Nabopolassar died and Nebuchadnezzar became king of Babylon and invaded Judah. He took some royal and noble captives to Babylon (Daniel 1:1-3) including Daniel, plus some of the vessels from Solomon's temple (2 Chron. 36:7).
- c. This was the first of Judah's three deportations in which the Babylonians took groups of Judahites to Babylon. The king of Judah at that time was Jehoiakim (2 Kings 24:1-4)
- d. In 597BC he invaded again and took most of Judah's remaining leaders and the rest of the national treasures. This included Ezekiel (2 Kings 24:10-17; 2 Chron 36:10)
- e. The third and final deportation took place in 586BC when Zedekiah, who was then Judah's puppet king, rebelled against Babylon by making a treaty with Pharaoh under pressure from Jewish nationals (Jer 37-38) After an 18 month siege, Jerusalem fell and Nebuchadnezzar returned, burned the temple, broke down the city walls and took all but the poorest of the Jews captive to Babylon, including Zedekiah (2 Kings:24:18 – 25:24)
- f. Daniel was only a teenager when he arrived in Babylon and continued in office as a public servant at least until 538 B.C. (1:21) and as a prophet at least until 536 B.C. (10:1). Thus the record of his ministry spans 70 years, the entire duration of the Babylonian Captivity. He probably lived to be at least 85 years old and perhaps older.

### 2. Language and outline

- a. Daniel wrote 2:4b—7:28 in the Aramaic language. This literary change gives the reader a clue that this part is a distinct section of the book. The content of this section also identifies it as special. It concerns the future history of the Gentiles during "the times of the Gentiles" (Luke 21:24). Aramaic was the common language of the world in which Daniel lived when he wrote. It is natural that he would have recorded what concerns the world as a whole in the language of the Gentiles.
- b. Chapters 8 to 12 are written in Hebrew and describe predominantly Jewish concerns and God's plans for Israel.
- c. Chapters 1 to 6 tells us the historical story of Daniel's life in exile in Babylon whereas chapters 7-12 records the visions that Daniel received whilst there.

### 3. Prophecy to the gentiles

- a. Chapter 2, whilst historical narrative also includes Nebuchadnezzar's dream which Daniel's vision in chapter 7 confirms and elaborates on.
- b. Since both chapter 2 and 7 are written in Aramaic we know that the content of both relate to the times of gentile domination. As we will see these two chapters prophecy much of what has already happened in history but also what is yet to come.

- c. In 603 BC, while Daniel was a young man, possibly in his late teens, God gave him prophetic insight into the four world empires/kingdoms that He revealed to Nebuchadnezzar in a dream (Dan. 2). Daniel received his first vision, recorded in Daniel 7, in 553, about 50 years later.
- d. Daniel 7 is Daniel's first of four visions in Daniel 7-12. It highlights how God will use four world empires for His purpose of bringing Israel to salvation and preparing them for world leadership, while He purifies His Church and establishes His kingdom on earth. It also reveals the certainty of victory and the intensity of the battle that Israel and the Church will have in the end times as they stand together against the evil that will manifest in the Antichrist's empire.
- e. In chapter 2 Nebuchadnezzar saw four kingdoms represented by precious metals in a statue of a glorious man (2:31-45). The head was gold, the chest and arms were silver, etc. Nebuchadnezzar saw these kingdoms from **man's perspective**—as glorious, like gold and silver. In Daniel 7:1-8 Daniel saw these same kingdoms, but from **God's perspective**—as wild beasts that devour all that are in their path.
- f. Daniel 7 expands on Daniel 2 with two main sections:
  - i Daniel 7:1-14 is the actual vision that Daniel was seeing which includes:
    - (1) Four beasts from the Great Sea
    - (2) The heavenly court and the Ancient of Day's throne of fire
    - (3) The little horn's resistance
    - (4) The coming of the Son of Man
  - ii Daniel 7:15-28 is the explanation of the vision from the angelic messenger
    - (1) The interpretation of the vision – vv. 15-27. Three predominate themes are addressed:
      - (a) The fourth beast and the little horn
      - (b) The persecution of the saints
      - (c) God's judgment which causes the saints to possess the kingdom
    - (2) Daniel's response to the vision – v. 28

## 4. Earthly historical kingdoms in Daniel 2 and 7

- a. King Nebuchadnezzar had a dream which deeply troubled him. The fact that this dream so unnerved the king and left him so troubled is an indication that the king knew this dream had some significance to the nature of his kingdom.

<sup>31</sup> "You saw, O king, and behold, a great image. This image, mighty and of exceeding brightness, stood before you, and its appearance was frightening. <sup>32</sup> The **head** of this image was of **fine gold**, its **chest and arms of silver**, its **middle and thighs of bronze**, <sup>33</sup> its **legs of iron**, its **feet partly of iron and partly of clay**. <sup>34</sup> As you looked, **a stone was cut out by no human hand**, and it **struck the image on its feet of iron and clay**, and broke them in pieces. <sup>35</sup> Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold, all together were broken in pieces, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away, so that not a trace of them could be found. But the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.

- b. Having joined with his friends in prayer Daniel receives the interpretation in a vision in the night.

<sup>37</sup> **You, O king, the king of kings, to whom the God of heaven has given the kingdom, the power, and the might, and the glory,** <sup>38</sup> *and into whose hand he has given, wherever they dwell, the children of man, the beasts of the field, and the birds of the heavens, making you rule over them all—you are the head of gold.* <sup>39</sup> *Another kingdom inferior to you shall arise after you, and yet a third kingdom of bronze, which shall rule over all the earth.* <sup>40</sup> *And there shall be a fourth kingdom, strong as iron, because iron breaks to pieces and shatters all things. And like iron that crushes, it shall break and crush all these.* <sup>41</sup> *And as you saw the feet and toes, partly of potter's clay and partly of iron, it shall be a divided kingdom, but some of the firmness of iron shall be in it, just as you saw iron mixed with the soft clay.* <sup>42</sup> *And as the toes of the feet were partly iron and partly clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly brittle.* <sup>43</sup> *As you saw the iron mixed with soft clay, so they will mix with one another in marriage but they will not hold together, just as iron does not mix with clay.* <sup>44</sup> *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,* <sup>45</sup> *just as you saw that a stone was cut from a mountain by no human hand, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold. A great God has made known to the king what shall be after this. The dream is certain, and its interpretation sure."*

c. This interpretation is seen again in Daniel's vision in Daniel 7.

<sup>3</sup> *And four great beasts came up out of the sea, different from one another.* <sup>4</sup> *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.* <sup>5</sup> *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.'* <sup>6</sup> *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.* <sup>7</sup> *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.*

d. In Daniel 7 Daniel saw four winds stirring the Mediterranean Sea, bringing upheaval to the nations (7:1-3).

- i In scripture the Great Sea is the Mediterranean Sea (Num. 34:6-7; Josh. 1:4; 9:1; 15:12, 47; 23:4). The sea represents the kingdoms of man being filled with chaos (Isa. 57:20). The empires that are highlighted in this vision are nations near the Mediterranean Sea—nations in the Middle East, Europe, and North Africa.
- ii The four winds of heaven symbolise spiritual forces, both angelic and demonic, that stirred up the nations of the Middle East, Europe, and North Africa, etc. This represents God's orchestration of history in appointing nations to rise and fall.

e. **The Babylonian Empire**

- i The **Head of Gold and the lion with eagles wings** - Represents Nebuchadnezzar King of the Babylonian Empire 605-539 BC (66 years). The lion (Jer. 4:7; 49:19; 50:17, 44) and the eagle (Jer. 49:22; Lam. 4:19; Ezek. 17:3; Hab. 1:8) were both used in the Scripture to describe the Babylonian Empire.
- ii **Like a lion**: This speaks of being strong, majestic, and courageous.
- iii **Had eagle's wings**: This speaks of military speed.
- iv **Its wings were plucked off**: This speaks of being humbled.
- v **A man's heart was given to it**: This speaks of being domesticated.

- vi **It was made to stand:** This speaks of standing like a man, instead of like a lion, which cannot attack or devour others when standing on two feet.
- vii The reference to the wings being plucked off, being made to stand on two feet like a man, and being given a man's heart, is seen in Nebuchadnezzar's experience in Daniel 4.

## f. Medo-Persian Empire 539-331 BC (208 years)

- i **The chest and arms of silver and the bear with ribs in its mouth** represent the Medio-Persian empire. An alliance of the Medes and the Persians culminated in a united Empire.
- ii Medo-Persia was like a fierce bear, with slow but steady military progress. The beast raised on one side represented the greater strength of Persia; it coincides with the two-horned ram of Daniel 8, whose one horn was larger than the other. In 550 BC, Cyrus the Great conquered the Medes, and Persia took control of the empire. Darius the Mede and Cyrus king of Persia were both rulers during the lifetime of Daniel.
- iii The three ribs in its mouth represented the three major kingdoms it conquered as it rose to power: Lydia (546 BC), Babylon (539 BC), and Egypt (525 BC). God mandated that Persia arise and conquer more nations i.e. arise, devour much flesh

## g. Greek Empire 331-146 BC (185 years)

- i **Belly and thighs of bronze and the leopard with four wings** represents the Greek Empire. Under the leadership of Alexander the Great, Greece conquered territory from Greece in the West to Egypt in the South and across the whole of the Middle East to India in the East. When Daniel says that this kingdom ruled "over the whole earth" it means that it extended over the known earth at the time.
- ii The leopard is known for its quickness and its cunning and Greece was fierce, agile, fast, and cunning. Having four wings of a bird spoke of its amazing speed in military conquest. After the death of Alexander the Great, four of his generals divided up his kingdom into four separate kingdoms signified by the four wings and also the four notable horns of Daniel 8:8.
- iii The Greek government and culture pervaded the ancient world. Alexander did not simply conquer kingdoms militarily, he won them over to the Greek language and way of life thus having great dominion.

## h. Roman Empire 146 BC – 476 AD (West) – 1453 AD (East)

- i **Legs of Iron and the initial description of the fourth beast** represent the Roman Empire. This was the most brutal and strong of the world empires, ruling the nations with an iron hand and shattering all resistance like an iron club. It was merciless in its conquest. (nb Daniel's description: breaks, smashes, breaks into pieces, crush, break).
- ii Daniel tells us this kingdom would crush and break all the others (2:40 and 7:7) – ie each succeeding empire would absorb the previous one. Rome would be an expression of the brutality and moral decline of each previous empire.

## 5. End times kingdom in Daniel 2 and 7

- a. **Feet and toes of iron and baked clay and the continuing aspects of the fourth beast** represent a divided kingdom. Although, as a whole, the kingdom would be strong, it would have weakness inherent in it. The peoples will represent one kingdom, although they will not remain united – ie they will never truly become one people, they will maintain separate cultures and their own national identities.
- i There are 2 opinions regarding the feet of the statue and what they represent:
    - (1) Further description of the ancient Roman Empire
    - (2) Symbolic of a future Roman Empire in the last days
  - ii This difference of opinion rests upon how you interpret the stone in the dream. The stone is universally accepted as Jesus, but does it represent his first or second coming? Some see the stone crushing the kingdoms at the first coming, then expanding as a **spiritual kingdom** that fills the earth. Others see the stone as Jesus' **physical reign** on the earth established immediately following his second coming
  - iii If the four kingdoms of the statue were all earthly and physical in nature then the context indicates a physical earthly rule of Jesus. If the kingdom described in v44 refers to Jesus's physical earthly kingdom set up at his second coming, then the feet of the statue must represent an earthly empire existing immediately prior to Jesus' return. In that case it could not be ancient Rome.
  - iv If the stone from heaven represents the kingdom of God thoroughly destroying all earthly kingdoms when Messiah comes, as seems true, then it appears inconsistent to view that kingdom as beginning with Christ's first coming. Rather, it fits better Christ's second coming.
  - v Jesus' kingdom is pictured as filling the whole earth: when one looks at the crime, atrocities, and injustices of this present world it is difficult to sense that the kingdom of God has now filled the earth. The vast majority do not submit to his authority.

*It was different from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns. (7:7)*

- b. The two feet with ten toes are parallel to the ten horns and they represent the ten-king confederation under the Antichrist. (Dan. 2:41-42; 7:7, 20, 24; Rev. 12:3; 13:1; 17:3, 7, 12, 16). A ten-nation confederation will align with the Antichrist. The ten end-time nations are symbolized here by ten horns; in Daniel 2 they are seen as ten toes (2:41-42; 7:7, 20, 24; Rev. 12:3; 13:1; 17:3, 7, 12, 16).
- c. Daniel was deeply troubled by the terror of this beast (7:15, 28). If we are not troubled by what Daniel shared about the Antichrist, then it means that we have not yet understood what he saw. Iron teeth speak of the ability to devour anything—unstoppable. The huge, massive teeth emphasise its overwhelmingly destructive power.
- d. Trampling the residue with its feet speaks of continuing to trample a nation after it is already defeated. The Antichrist will show no mercy or kindness towards those he conquers; he is ruthless and cruel. He will crush and trample everything not initially destroyed in the hostile military takeover.

- e. The Antichrist's empire will be different from the historic empires as it is energised by demonic power. It will function in a new order of evil, cruelty, and supernatural demonic power. Daniel emphasised four times that the Antichrist is different from all other kingdoms (7:7, 19, 23, 24).

<sup>2</sup>*The dragon [Satan] gave him [Antichrist] his power, his throne, and great authority... (Rev. 13:2)*

- f. While focusing on the ten horns, Daniel saw a little horn (7:8).

<sup>8</sup>*"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." (Dan. 7:8)*

- g. A little horn speaks of a political leader who starts out "little," or with a small sphere of authority and influence, as a seemingly insignificant regional leader. The fact that the little horn is mentioned four times (7:8, 11, 20, 21) tells us how important this detail is.
- h. The little horn is the Beast of Revelation and the man of sin in Paul's teaching (2 Thes. 2:3). He is also the wicked prince who will take away the sacrifice in the temple (8:11; 9:27; 11:31; 12:11; Mt. 24:15). The little horn of Daniel 7 is the same little horn of Daniel 8:9 and is the despicable person of Daniel 11:21.
- i. Hitler is an example from recent history of a leader who started out as a "little horn," an insignificant regional leader, who became a "big horn," a major world leader. In 1928 he ran for political office in Germany and received only 2% of the vote. Then, within five years (1933), he became chancellor of Germany. His rise to power came suddenly.
- j. In this horn were eyes like a man, which speaks of great intelligence. The Antichrist will speak pompous, arrogant words. These arrogant words will create fear (threats) and/or excitement (false promises) in the nations. His arrogant words are emphasized four times in this chapter (7:8, 11, 20, 25).

<sup>8</sup>*"In this horn [was]... a mouth speaking pompous words." (Dan. 7:8)*

- k. He shall speak blasphemies against the true God (11:36). He will claim things about himself that are shocking, as he speaks with terrible boldness against God (7:8, 11, 20, 25; 2 Thes. 2:4). He shall speak of "great things"—things so unique and extraordinary, as well as new things never heard of before (Rev. 13:5).

<sup>5</sup>*He was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies... <sup>6</sup>*he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, His tabernacle...* (Rev. 13:5-6)*

- l. Three of the first horns or kings will be plucked out by the roots, or killed, in a violent overthrow led by the Antichrist. This is part of how he will seize control of the ten-nation confederation and come onto the world stage as a leader. When these three world leaders are killed, the Church will understand it as a prophetic sign of the times.

<sup>8</sup>*"... there was another horn, a little one, coming up among them, before whom three of the first horns were plucked out by the roots." (Dan. 7:8)*

- m. The Antichrist will first come up "among them" (7:8) as a peer, then he will "arise after them" (7:24) and seize control of the ten-nation confederation.

- n. This beast has three stages: the *ancient empire* (146 BC–AD 1453); the end-time *confederation* made up of ten kings, and the Antichrist’s *dictatorship* ruling over the ten-nation confederation. The ancient Roman Empire prophetically foreshadowed, or pictured, the Antichrist’s empire.
- i ***Ancient Roman Empire***: This includes the western (146 BC–AD 476) and eastern (AD 330–1453) divisions of the empire. The Eastern Roman Empire, also called the Byzantine Empire, lasted for 1,000 years after the fall of Rome and the Western Roman Empire. The Eastern division was started either by Diocletian in AD 285 or Constantine in AD 330, when the capital transferred from Rome to Byzantium, later known as Constantinople and Nova Roma (New Rome), and today as Istanbul in Turkey. It was the most powerful economic, cultural, and military force in Europe at the time.
- (1) In seeing that the Roman Empire did not end in AD 476, but continued until AD 1453 in its eastern division, we see that Antichrist’s empire may have historic roots in Islamic nations. The eastern Roman Empire covered part of the Middle East. In 1453, the Eastern Roman Empire fell to the Ottoman Empire, with its dominant Islamic rule and culture.
- (2) The Antichrist may come from the geographic territory associated with the eastern division of the Roman Empire (8:9). This overlaps with the region where Antiochus ruled the Seleucid Empire—the overlap includes Syria and parts of Turkey and Babylon (Iraq), etc.
- ii ***Ten-nation confederation***: An end-time empire will arise that will initially be under ten kings, covering geographic areas that include some territory from the eastern and western divisions of the ancient Roman Empire, geographically and ethnically.

<sup>24</sup>“The ten horns are ten kings who shall arise from this kingdom.” (Dan. 7:24)

<sup>12</sup>“The ten horns which you saw are ten kings... they receive authority for one hour as kings with the beast [Antichrist]. <sup>13</sup>...they will give their power...to the beast.” (Rev. 17:12-13)

- iii ***The dictatorship of the Antichrist***: The Antichrist will “arise after” the ten-nation confederation is in power. He will arise to subdue or remove three kings (7:24), leading a violent overthrow of the government to seize control of the ten-nation confederation by having three of the kings killed.

<sup>24</sup>“The ten horns are ten kings who shall arise...and another shall rise after them; he [Antichrist] shall be different from the first ones, and shall subdue three kings.” (Dan. 7:24)

## 6. God’s Sovereign Leadership Over History (Dan. 7:9-10)

<sup>9</sup>“As I looked, thrones were placed, and the Ancient of Days took his seat; his clothing was white as snow, and the hair of his head like pure wool; his throne was fiery flames; its wheels were burning fire.<sup>10</sup> A stream of fire issued and came out from before him; a thousand thousands served him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him; the court sat in judgement, and the books were opened.

- a. Daniel saw a vision of God sitting on His throne (7:9) immediately after he saw the terrible beast, which represents the Antichrist’s empire (7:7-8). God will allow the Antichrist to be raised up to accomplish God’s purpose. God’s sovereign plan, Satan’s rage, and the sinful choices of people are all involved in the Antichrist’s reign of terror.

<sup>28</sup>And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God... (Rom. 8:28)

- b. All authority in heaven and on earth belongs to Jesus (Mt. 28:18). God has the authority to set into place the leaders of the nations to serve His purposes (Dan. 4:17; Rom. 13:1-4).

<sup>18</sup>“All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.” (Mt. 28:18)

<sup>1</sup>There is no authority except from God... the authorities that exist are appointed by God...

<sup>4</sup>He is God’s minister, an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil. (Rom. 13:1-4)

- c. God raised up Pharaoh in Moses’ day as the most powerful man on earth (Ex. 9:16; Rom. 9:17). He raised up an evil Assyrian leader named Sennacherib to judge Israel in 721 BC (Isa. 10:5). In 586 BC, He raised up Nebuchadnezzar and Babylon to discipline Israel (Jer. 22:7; 25:9, 12; 27:6; 43:10; Hab. 1:5-7). Then God raised up evil Persian kings to judge the Babylonians (Isa. 13:3-5).

<sup>17</sup>The Scripture says to Pharaoh, “I have raised you up, that I may show My power in you, and that My name may be declared in all the earth.” (Rom. 9:17)

- d. Daniel saw that the saints were “given” into the Antichrist’s hand by God (7:25). The Antichrist will be “given” or “granted” authority to make war with saints (Rev. 13:5-7). The phrase “*it was given*” (or its equivalent), referring to God, is used often in the books of Daniel and Revelation (Dan. 2:23, 37, 38; 4:16; 5:28; 7:4, 6, 14, 25, 27; Rev. 6:2, 4, 8; 9:1, 3; 11:2; 13:5, 7, 14-15).

<sup>25</sup>“He...shall persecute the saints...the saints shall be given into his hand...” (Dan. 7:25)

<sup>5</sup>He [Antichrist] was given...authority [by God] to continue for forty-two months...<sup>7</sup>It was granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them. Authority was given him [by God] over every tribe, tongue, and nation...<sup>14</sup>And he [False Prophet] deceives...by those signs which he was granted to do ...<sup>15</sup>He was granted power to give breath to the image of the beast... (Rev. 13:5-15)

- e. Daniel saw the sovereign Lord seated in His heavenly court, and the books were opened (7:9-10).
- f. The name **Ancient of Days** depicts the Father’s eternal nature as the One who establishes His plans from the perspective of eternity. This name is used three times in the Bible—all in Daniel 7. We cannot understand the intensity of evil and suffering in God’s end-time plan without seeing that He establishes His plans with eternity in view. He has the last word on every nation and person.
- g. God’s garments and hair are as **white as snow**. His garments speak of His deeds; His head speaks of His wisdom and purity in governing. All the Father’s thoughts, actions, and plans are totally pure and perfectly wise. Jesus also appeared with white hair (Rev. 1:14).

<sup>8</sup>...fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. (Rev. 19:8)

- h. God’s **throne** is the governmental center of the created order, guaranteeing that His plans will come to pass. His throne is a main theme in the book of Revelation, referred to forty times, with seven throne scenes (Rev. 4:2-5:14; 7:9-17; 11:15-19; 14:1-5; 15:2-8; 19:1-8; 21:1-22:9). God’s throne is the place of greatest fascination, intimacy, celebration, safety, and protection.
- i. The Father is **seated** in total confidence and security. None can successfully challenge Him.
- j. A **stream of fire** comes from the throne, and a sea of glass mingled with fire is before the throne. The saints gather together on the sea of glass in God’s fire (Rev. 15:2).

<sup>2</sup>I saw something like a sea of glass mingled with fire, and those who have the victory over the beast...standing on the sea of glass, having harps of God. (Rev. 15:2)



- k. All of God's enemies will stand before His throne (Rev. 20:11-15). God's throne is the place of great danger for His enemies. Divine decrees go forth from there to punish evil (2 Thes. 1:9).

<sup>11</sup>I saw a great white throne...<sup>12</sup>I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God... the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books...<sup>15</sup>Anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire. (Rev. 20:11–15)

- l. **The books were opened.** These are God's books which contain a detailed account of every believer and unbeliever (Ex. 32:32; Ps. 139:16; 87:6; Dan. 7:10; 12:1; Lk. 10:20; Phil. 4:3; Rev. 3:5; 13:8; 17:8; 20:12, 15; 21:27). Here the words and deeds of the Antichrist (little horn) are under review (7:11-12). The pompous words of the Antichrist (7:8) bring a strong response from God's court in heaven.
- m. **Thrones were put in place and the court was seated.** Daniel saw God's court in session (7:9, 10, 26) with the Judge seated to evaluate the nations. In the midst of chaos on earth is the all-powerful throne of God. The heavenly court administers God's decrees concerning the earth. History is not spiraling out of control.
- n. John's vision of the throne in Revelation 4-5 expands on what God showed Daniel. We gain more understanding if we take time to read both passages together.

## 7. The Destruction of the Antichrist (Dan. 7:11-12)

<sup>11</sup>"I looked then because of the sound of the great words that the horn was speaking. And as I looked, the beast was killed, and its body destroyed and given over to be burned with fire. <sup>12</sup>As for the rest of the beasts, their dominion was taken away, but their lives were prolonged for a season and a time.

- a. God decrees that the Antichrist and his empire will be destroyed at Jesus' second coming (7:11-12). The Antichrist's arrogant claims will be heard in God's court leading to decrees of judgment issued against him. Daniel emphasizes his arrogant words four times (7:8, 11, 20, 25). Daniel describes the Antichrist as being slain, destroyed, and consumed (Dan. 7:11, 26).

<sup>11</sup>...the beast was slain, and its body destroyed and given to the burning flame...<sup>26</sup>But the court... shall take away his dominion, to consume and destroy it forever. (Dan. 7:11, 26)

- b. Paul described the Antichrist's defeat using the same verbs as Daniel—consume and destroy. John saw the Antichrist being captured and "slain" by throwing his body into the lake of fire.

<sup>8</sup>The lawless one [Antichrist] will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming. (2 Thes. 2:8)

<sup>20</sup>The beast was captured, and... cast alive into the lake of fire... (Rev. 19:20)

## 8. The coming of the Son of Man (7:13.14)

<sup>3</sup>"I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him. <sup>14</sup>And 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 one that shall not be destroyed.

- a. In Nebuchadnezzar's dream in chapter 2 he saw a stone that was not cut by human hands that struck the image on its feet and broke them into pieces. The rock that struck the image speaks of Jesus and His eternal kingdom (2:35, 44-45). The stone being cut without hands means that it has a divine origin. The stone will consume all the other kingdoms and shall stand forever (2:44). This is

the Messianic Kingdom inaugurated at Jesus' second coming. This coming Kingdom will be triumphant over all others; it will crush and shatter all earthly kingdoms.

- b. In Daniel 7 Daniel is given revelation of the Son of Man. He sees the Father's eternal plan to give all the kingdoms of this world to a Man—His Son.

<sup>15</sup>*And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!" (Rev. 11:15)*

- c. Jesus used the term **Son of Man** over sixty-five times to describe Himself. He identified Himself as the Son of Man of Daniel 7:13, who sits at the right hand of God and will return to the earth on clouds of heaven. (Mt. 16:27, 24:30, 26:64; Mk. 8:38, 13:26, 14:62; Lk. 9:26, 21:27, 22:69).
- d. Jesus will come to the earth on heavenly clouds and will be seen by every person (Zech. 9:14; 12:10; Mt. 24:30; 26:64; Rev. 1:7). Daniel must have been shocked to see a human standing near to the Ancient of Days.

<sup>30</sup>*The sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven [the sky], and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. (Mt 24:30)*

<sup>7</sup>*Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him...and all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. (Rev. 1:7)*

- e. To this Man was given dominion over all the nations on earth - all peoples, nations, and languages will serve and love Him. The end-time Church will declare that Jesus' dominion is everlasting; they will declare this in the face of the Antichrist's false promises of his own global dominion.

## 9. First Question: Victory Assured (Dan. 7:16-18)

<sup>15</sup>*As for me, Daniel, my spirit within me was anxious, and the visions of my head alarmed me. <sup>16</sup>I approached one of those who stood there and asked him the truth concerning all this. So he told me and made known to me the interpretation of the things. <sup>17</sup>These four great beasts are four kings who shall arise out of the earth. <sup>18</sup>But the saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom and possess the kingdom for ever, for ever and ever.'*

- a. Daniel was grieved and troubled by the fourth beast's power, violence, and arrogance (7:15) and he asks to know the truth or the full implications of the vision. The first part of the angel's interpretation focuses on the four beasts (7:17) but assures Daniel of the sure victory of the saints (7:18).
- b. The angel said that the four beasts are four kings (7:17). The angel expanded his answer by saying that the four beasts are also kingdoms (7:23). Four kingdoms will arise out of godless humanity to try to take dominion of the earth, but God will take it from them and give it to the saints. These kingdoms arise out of the earth (7:17), instead of coming up from the sea as stated in 7:3.
- c. The victory of the saints is assured (7:18). The saints will replace wicked rulers in ruling the earth. They will govern every area of society during the Millennium and will reign on the earth forever. Seeing our eternal reign with Jesus affects our view of our labors and sacrifice in this age.

<sup>10</sup>*...and have made us kings and priests to our God; and we shall reign on the earth. (Rev. 5:10)*

## 10. Second question: fourth beast, ten horns, and another horn (Dan. 7:19-20, 23-25)

<sup>19</sup>*Then I desired to know the truth about the **fourth beast**, which was **different** from all the rest, exceedingly terrifying, with its teeth of iron and claws of bronze, and which devoured and broke in pieces and stamped what was left*

with its feet, <sup>20</sup>and about the **ten horns that were on its head**, and **the other horn that came up** and before which **three of them fell**, the horn that had **eyes and a mouth that spoke great things**, and that seemed greater than its companions.

- a. Daniel's second question had three parts. He wanted to know the full implications about the **fourth beast**, especially why it was so different from the others, and also what the consequence for Israel would be, because it was exceeding dreadful (7:19). Next he asked about the **ten horns**, and finally he asked about the **little horn** (7:20).
- b. The angel answered Daniel's second question (7:19-20) by showing him a vision (7:21-22) and giving him an explanation (7:23-27) that answered all three parts of his question—to know the truth about the fourth beast, the ten horns, and the little horn (7:20). The angel answered the first part about the fourth beast (7:23), the second part about the ten horns (7:24a), and the third part about the little horn (7:24b-25) and his destruction (7:26).
- c. **Fourth beast**: The fourth beast will be a kingdom that is different from all other kingdoms, and it will devour the whole earth. The final stage of the fourth beast is the Antichrist's world empire. It will be unique in power and cruelty as it devours the earth.

<sup>23</sup>“Thus he [angel] said: ‘The fourth beast shall be a fourth kingdom on earth, which shall be different [unique] from all other kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, trample it and break it in pieces.’” (Dan. 7:23)

- d. **The ten horns**: These represent ten kings who will form a ten-nation confederation that makes an alliance with the Antichrist (7:7, 20, 24; Rev. 12:3; 13:1; 17:3, 7, 12, 16). Daniel saw the ten horns as being “on” the beast's head (7:20). Earlier, Daniel saw these ten kings as ten toes (2:41-42).

<sup>24</sup>“The ten horns are ten kings who shall arise from this kingdom. And another shall rise after them [Antichrist]; he shall be different from the first ones [ten kings], and shall subdue [kill] three kings.” (Dan. 7:24)

- e. **Will arise**: Ten kings will arise from the initial stage of the fourth beast—the ancient Roman Empire. They will arise from the same region and/or people groups associated with the ancient Roman Empire, both its east and west divisions, including various European and Middle Eastern nations and peoples.
- f. **Shall subdue**: Three kings are described as being “plucked out” by the roots (7:7), “falling before” the little horn (7:20), and “being subdued” by him (7:24).
- g. **Another shall rise after them**: The Antichrist will arise to prominence “after” the ten kings emerge. They will give their allegiance to the Antichrist (Rev 17:12). He will unite them under his authority.

<sup>12</sup>The ten horns which you saw are ten kings...<sup>13</sup>These are of one mind, and they will give their power and authority to the beast [Antichrist]. (Rev. 17:12–13)

- h. The characteristics of the horn, or the Antichrist, (7:25) will be blasphemy, murder, and domination.

<sup>25</sup>“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 [3½ years].” (Dan. 7:25)

- i. **He shall change times and law**: He shall establish legislation that will change some of the most important social and spiritual institutions. He will also use the legal system as a tool of oppression and murder. Initially he will oppress the saints through the legal system, by removing their

privileges and restricting their civil liberties. The laws will change—they will become progressively more oppressive and evil until it will be legal to kill the saints.

- j. **A time and times and half a time:** There will be a God-given limit of 3½ years for the persecution of God’s people. The word *time* refers to one year, *times* refers to two years, and *half a time* speaks of half a year, totalling 3½ years. There are eight scriptures and four phrases that describe the final 3½ years before Jesus’ return. It is referred to twice as 1,260 days (Rev. 11:3; 12:6); twice as 42 months (Rev. 11:2; 13:5); three times as “time, times, and half a time” (Dan. 7:25; 12:7; Rev. 12:14); and as “the middle of the week” (Dan. 9:27). By comparing these verses, we see that they describe the same 3½ years.

## 11. Third question – the saints

<sup>21</sup>As I looked, this horn made war with the saints and prevailed over them, <sup>22</sup>until the Ancient of Days came, and judgement was given for the saints of the Most High, and the time came when the saints possessed the kingdom.

- a. In this first vision in 553 BC, the Lord showed Daniel the great suffering to come. He did not give Daniel the reason for this suffering until seventeen years later in the last vision (Dan. 10-12) in 536 BC. God will use the suffering to purify the saints and prepare them to partner with the Son of Man in ruling the earth forever.

<sup>35</sup>“Some of those of understanding shall fall [martyrdom], to refine them, purify them, and make them white, until the time of the end...” (Dan. 11:35)

<sup>10</sup>“Many shall be purified, made white, and refined, but the wicked shall do wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand.” (Dan. 12:10)

- b. The Ancient of Days has already decreed the destruction of the Antichrist (7:26).

<sup>26</sup>“But the court shall be seated, and they shall take away his [Antichrist’s] dominion, to consume and destroy it forever.” (Dan. 7:26)

- c. The Father’s heavenly court is seated and the court decides the fate of all the leaders on the earth. At the Lord’s appointed time, He will suddenly reverse things. The Antichrist’s kingdom will be consumed and destroyed at the time when Jesus returns.

- d. God’s plan is to establish His kingdom on earth (7:27). This is not only one of the main points in the vision, but is also one of the most remarkable biblical truths related to God’s leadership over us. Notice “the” kingdom (in the singular) and the greatness of the “kingdoms” (in the plural) shall be given to the saints. Dominion speaks of the leadership positions of influence over the earth.

<sup>27</sup>“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.” (Dan. 7:27)

- e. The saints will replace the leadership of the beast empire in leading the world government. God’s plan is to prepare the Bride as Jesus’ eternal companion who will rule the earth with Him. Jesus, the Bridegroom King, desires to rule the earth forever in partnership with His people (Jn. 17:24; Rev. 3:21; 5:10).

<sup>21</sup>To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne... (Rev. 3:21)

<sup>24</sup>*Father, I desire that they whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am, that they may behold [see and experience] My glory which You have given Me... (Jn. 17:24)*

## 12. Daniel's response

<sup>28</sup>*"Here is the end of the matter. As for me, Daniel, my thoughts **greatly alarmed** me, and my **colour changed**, but I **kept the matter in my heart.**"*

- a. End times revelation is not given for simple factual information. It is meant to impact our heart and provoke us to further understanding and fervent intercession. Daniel's thoughts after the vision and interpretation are still troubling him greatly.
- b. His countenance changes and he enters into a vigilant pursuit of end-time understanding. A sobriety and intensity is now birthed in the life of Daniel.
- c. He keeps the matter in his heart. This is very likely to be the primary reason for Daniel's disappearance from the political and governmental scene during Belshazzar's rule. Daniel enters into a personal, violent pursuit of understanding for over ten years in obscurity.
- d. If we desire to respond like Daniel then we will set our hearts in a spirit of prayer to understanding and diligent study of end-time purposes. We will let eschatology become more than a doctrine. It will produce an intercessory burden for understanding and deliverance.