

# THE PROPHETIC WORD TODAY

## Beastly Visions

Text: Daniel 7

INTRODUCTION: Dan. 1-6 gave to us the story of Daniel. That included Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the statue, which of course proved to be prophetic. However, Dan. 7 – 12 consists of a series of visions sent to Daniel himself along with explanations of their interpretations. These passages are entirely prophetic. They have as much or more to say about our time as they did about Daniel's.

First we will examine the vision. Then we will look at the explanation of its meaning. Finally we will consider its implications and application to us.

### I. THE VISION

Given to Daniel in the first year of Belshazzar's reign.

Dan. 7:1-8 <sup>1</sup> 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. <sup>2</sup> Daniel spoke, saying, "I saw in my vision by night, and behold, the four winds of heaven were stirring up the Great Sea. <sup>3</sup> And four great beasts came up from the sea, each different from the other. <sup>4</sup> 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. <sup>5</sup> "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!' <sup>6</sup> "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. <sup>7</sup> "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. <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.

1. 4 beasts from sea
  - A. Lion with eagle wings
  - B. Bear with 3 ribs in its mouth
  - C. Leopard with bird wings and 4 heads
  - D. Terrible beast with ten horns
    - a. Another little horn comes up
    - b. Plucks out 3 of the original 10 horns
    - c. The little horn has eyes and mouth speaking blasphemous words.

2. Thrones set up

Dan. 7:9-14 <sup>9</sup> " 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; <sup>10</sup> 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. <sup>11</sup> “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. <sup>12</sup> As for the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away, yet their lives were prolonged for a season and a time. <sup>13</sup> “ 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. <sup>14</sup> 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.

- A. Judgment
- B. Terrible beast slain and cast into the fire
- C. Kingdom set up

## II. THE MEANING

### A. 4 Beasts – the same picture as Nebuchadnezzar’s image

Dan. 7:15-18 <sup>15</sup> “I, Daniel, was grieved in my spirit within *my* body, and the visions of my head troubled me. <sup>16</sup> 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: <sup>17</sup> ‘Those great beasts, which are four, *are* four kings *which* arise out of the earth. <sup>18</sup> But the saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom, and possess the kingdom forever, even forever and ever.’

1. The 4 beasts represent 4 kings and their kingdoms. Immediately the four kingdoms remind us of the prophetic statue God showed to Nebuchadnezzar in a dream.
  - a. Babylon and Nebuchadnezzar – King of beasts, King of birds, stand like man, mind, refer to Nebuchadnezzar
  - b. Medo-Persia – 3 ribs, Egypt, Libya, and Babylon. One side – stronger – Persia. Devour, army of 2 ½ million men
  - c. Greece – Leopard, wings, speed. 4 heads – divisions (Thrace, Macedonia, Syria, Egypt)
  - d. Rome – iron teeth (iron toes of image)

As with the statue, Daniel noticed that the fourth beast was different than the other 3. He likely remembered that in the vision of the statue, the statue itself clearly portrayed the change, The iron legs gave way to feet with ten toes mixed with iron and clay. So he asked,

Dan. 7:19-22 <sup>19</sup> “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; <sup>20</sup> 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. <sup>21</sup> “I was

watching; and the same horn was making war against the saints, and prevailing against them, <sup>22</sup> 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.

The answer was given:

Dan. 7:23-25 "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. <sup>24</sup> 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. <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.

2. Rome – Revived Roman Empire, the future dynasty of Antichrist in the tribulation.
  - a. 10 horns – 10 kings
  - b. Another horn – different will destroy 3 kings. This is the antichrist.
  - c. V. 25 – power over them all for 3 ½ years, last part of the tribulation

### 3. Thrones

Dan. 7:26-27 <sup>26</sup> ' But the court shall be seated, And they shall take away his dominion, To consume and destroy *it* forever. <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.'

#### A. Judgment Court held. Antichrist thrown into the lake of fire

Rev. 19:20-21 <sup>20</sup> Then the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who worked signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. These two were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone. <sup>21</sup> And the rest were killed with the sword which proceeded from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse. And all the birds were filled with their flesh.

And then God's everlasting kingdom shall be established upon the earth.

Rev. 20:1-6 <sup>1</sup> Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. <sup>2</sup> He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is *the* Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; <sup>3</sup> and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while. <sup>4</sup> And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then *I* saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received *his* mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a<sup>[a]</sup>

thousand years. <sup>5</sup> But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished. This *is* the first resurrection. <sup>6</sup> Blessed and holy *is* he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.

B. This is the Millennial Kingdom

### III. MESSAGE

- A. Despite the awesome appearance of power of man, the power of God is always the overwhelming victor.
- B. God directs the outcome of history. He has appointed the end.
- C. Christians are on the winning side.
- D. These things will happen soon.
- E. We are to live in readiness
  - 1. Be saved
  - 2. Walk with Christ
  - 3. Be a witness