

Midweek Study

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STANDING STRONG IN A HOSTILE CULTURE

THE BOOK OF DANIEL



WHAT'S THIS WORLD COMING TO?

Daniel 7:1-28

ONLY GOD CAN PROPHECY:

- "I think that there's a world market for maybe 5 computers." (Thomas Watson, chairman of IBM in 1943)
- "There's no reason anyone would want a computer in their home." (Ken Olson, Founder, President of Digital Equipment in 1977)
- In 2011, 35% of American adults owned a smartphone.
- In 2019, 81% of American adults owned a smartphone.
- In 2019, 96% of American adults owned a cellphone.^a
- 50% of smartphone users say they cannot live without their phone!
- 41% of millennials (ages 18 to 34) said they would be willing to quit shampooing for a week if it meant keeping their phone for that same period of time.^b

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,'"

<u>DANIEL 2</u>		<u>DANIEL 7</u>
Head of gold	BABYLON (626-539 B.C.)	Lion (<u>v. 4</u>)
Chest of silver	MEDES/PERSIANS (539-330 B.C.)	Bear (<u>v. 5</u>)
Thighs of bronze	GREECE (330-63 B.C.)	Leopard (<u>v. 6</u>)
Legs of iron	ROME (63 B.C.–430 A.D.)	
	<i>(The kingdom of God comes initially.)</i>	
	ANTICHRIST	
	<i>(The kingdom of God comes in fullness.)</i>	Terrifying Beast (<u>vv. 7-28</u>)

^a Pew Research stats, <https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/fact-sheet/mobile/>, accessed 1/5/2021.

^b <https://www.businessinsider.com/41-percent-millennials-choose-shampooing-vs-phone-2018-6>, accessed 1/5/2021.

The Babylonian Empire lasted barely 70 years, the Persian Empire about 200 years, and the Greek Empire about 180 years. But the Roman Empire lasted some 500 years, and in many respects the remnants of the Roman Empire still exists today.

- 541 BC is when Daniel saw this vision.
- The number 4 represents the world in apocalyptic literature: 4 seasons, 4 corners of the compass
- Man looks at empires as models of human achievement. God looks on them as wild beasts which need to be controlled.
- **Psalm 49:12 – Nevertheless man, though in honor, does not remain; He is like the beasts that perish.**
- 81x in the Gospels (41 in Matthew alone), Jesus refers to Himself as the **Son of Man**. (Matt. 8:20, for example).

Daniel sees^c:

1. **A Lion-Like Beast (7:1-4):** “As I watched, its wings were pulled off, and it was left standing with its two hind feet on the ground, like a human being. And a human mind was given to it.”
2. **A bear-Like beast (7:5):** It holds three ribs between its teeth.
3. **A leopard-like beast (7:6):** It has four birds’ wings on its back and four heads and is given great authority.
4. **A 10-horned beast (7:7-8):** It is by far the most dreadful and terrifying creature yet. An 11th horn grows, yanking out 3 of the 10 horns.
5. **The Ancient One (7:9-12)**
 - a. Who it is (7:9): God himself is seated in all his heavenly glory, preparing to judge the world.
 - b. What happens (7:10-12)
 - (1) A river of fire flows from God’s presence (7:10a).
 - (2) Millions of angels minister to him (7:10b).
 - (3) Tens of millions of people await judgment (7:10c).
 - (4) The fourth beast is thrown into hell (7:11-12).
 - a. Who it is (7:13): Some believe the “man” who approaches the Ancient One is a reference to God’s Son, Jesus Christ.
 - b. What happens (7:14): The Son is given a mighty, glorious, and eternal kingdom.

The interpretation (7:15-28)

1. Of the four beasts in general (7: 15-18)
 - a. Their rise (7: 15-17): They represent the four ancient kingdoms of Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome.
 - b. Their replacement (7:18): They will give way to God’s glorious kingdom.
2. Of the fourth beast in particular (7:19-28)
 - a. The confusion (7:19-22): Daniel desires more information on the cruelty and conquests of this vicious beast.
 - b. The clarification (7:23-27): He is given three facts concerning the fourth beast. It will:
 - (1) Devour the earth (7:23-24)
 - (2) Defy the Most High (7:25)
 - (3) Be Destroyed by the Most High (7:26-27)
 - c. The consternation (7:28) The prophet is terrified by this vision.

How Should We Live?

- 1) **Anticipate His Coming** (Matthew 25:6 – Behold the Bridegroom Cometh)
- 2) **Discern the Signs of the Times** (with Excitement) (Matthew 16:3 – Discern the Signs of the times)
- 3) **Commit to Faithful Obedience** (Luke 19:13 – Occupy Till I Come.)

^c Harold Wilmington, *The Outline Bible* (Wheaton, Ill: Tyndale, 1999), 414-415.