

**FAITH UNDER PRESSURE**  
STUDIES IN THE BOOK OF DANIEL  
Daniel 7 & 8

**“ KINGDOMS WILL COME AND GO UNTIL CHRIST COMES BACK ”**

**INTRODUCTION:** Are you paying attention to how quickly anything that man builds can be destroyed by elements over which we have no control? Wind and rain, fire and floods, are destroying everything in sight. Likewise, kingdoms and leaders that once appeared invincible have been destroyed. How much time do you spend being concerned about future events and the possibility of wars between nuclear powers? Do you realize that only the Lord knows for sure what will happen in the future? Have you learned that He chooses to reveal to us what we need to know about future events so we never doubt His Sovereignty over the nations? Daniel’s writings will teach us about six kingdoms. Four of this world system, one of Satan, and one of our Lord Jesus Christ. Only one of them will last forever!

**BACKGROUND:** Daniel had been in Babylon for over fifty years when he received the visions recorded in Daniel 7 & 8. He had to be concerned about the future on his fellow Jews, since the earlier vision given to Nebuchadnezzar only spoke of Gentile world powers. God foretells the future with such accuracy that skeptics refuse to believe these events were recorded before they happened. These great prophecies cover from the time of Babylon’s power to the Second Coming of Christ. God uses SYMBOLS which are relevant throughout generations, yet we use them for literal interpretations.

**I. WHILE MANKIND LOOKS AT MILITARY POWER, THE LORD SEES MANKIND ACTING LIKE WILD ANIMALS. (Daniel 7: 1-8)**

A. Nebuchadnezzar saw a large statue that resembled a man comprised of various materials of different value (gold, silver, bronze, iron). They represented four Gentile powers that would successively rule over Israel and much of the world. God did not reveal how long these kingdoms would remain in power. Daniel would see these nations from God’s perspective as they appeared as wild animals.

B. The Lord used imagery rather than specific names as the images would be symbolically appropriate throughout the ages. We now can identify most of the nations and leaders that fit the descriptions revealed to Daniel. The seas symbolize the peoples of the world, the winds symbolize God’s movements behind the scenes, and the Great Sea is the Mediterranean.

1. Babylon (head of gold) ; **lion** with **eagles** wings; symbols used in Babylon, indicative of these mighty hunters. (Jeremiah 49:19-22) Babylon was the fountainhead of idolatry, featuring astronomy and astrology in their worship practices.

2. Medo-Persia .The **bear** is slow but powerful. Persia eventually went into battle with 2.5 million soldiers. The bear was raised up on one side because Persia eventually became stronger than Media. The three ribs in its mouth were Egypt, Lydia (Turkey), and Babylon, nations they conquered.

3. Greece conquered with the speed of a **leopard**, conquering many nations in the space of three years. The four heads represent the four generals of Alexander the Great, and after his death the kingdom was divided into four kingdoms.

4. Roman Empire was different than the others, with **no known animal** to compare with it. The ten toes represent ten kingdoms as horns represent powers. This kingdom would be comprised of an unlikely mixture of countries, diverse yet united. The “little horn” in Daniel 7 represents the antichrist, and in Daniel 8 it represents Antiochus IV Epiphanes, (“The Manifest, Glorious One”) but the Jews called him Antiochus Epimanes, because he was a madman.

**II. THERE IS ONLY ONE KING WHO WILL HAVE AN EVERLASTING KINGDOM, AND ALL OTHERS WILL BOW BEFORE HIM. (Daniel 7:9-28)**

A. God's people living under his sovereign rule must recognize that empires must rise and fall and that an interim period of "waiting" must elapse before the kingdom of God breaks into history (12:4, 9-13). This means God's promises for Israel's restoration after the exile, as foretold by Jeremiah (Jeremiah 31:31-34) and Ezekiel (Ezekiel 34:23-25; 37:24-25), have not failed but will be delayed until God's purposes are accomplished.

B. Daniel saw the "**Ancient of Days**" (God, the Father of Eternity) and the "**Son of Man**" (the Lord Jesus Christ, Messiah, Perfect Man and God Incarnate) on the Throne of God with the clouds of glory. (Revelation 4-5) (Revelation 20;11-15) (Psalm 97:1-3) The angels and the redeemed saints worshipped the Lord, the books were opened, judgment was given, and the arrogant antichrist and his followers were cast into the eternal flames. (Daniel 7:9-14)

C. "Son of Man" is a recognized title for the Messiah (Daniel 7:13) while others are called "a" son of man simply to identify them as human beings. (Dan. 8:17) (Ezekiel 2-5) God the Son took on humanity to sacrifice His life for us and conquer death by His Resurrection. He will reign forever as the God-Man. The Jews were outraged when He used the "Son of Man" title for Himself. (Matthew 26:62-66) The glory clouds often accompany God's manifest presence. (Ex. 13:31-32) (1Thess. 4:13-18)

D. Daniel was fascinated by the beast that defied description. "Horns" symbolize power, and this beast is described as a diverse union of ten leaders; one of them eventually rises to authority over the others. The language describes the antichrist "wearing out the saints" (redeemed Jews and Christians) for 3 1/2 years, and blaspheming the Lord until He returns to set up His Millennial Kingdom. (Revelation 13:1-4) Daniel was troubled by what he heard, perhaps because he realized his people would suffer for a long time before the Messiah came. He needed his dream interpreted! Sometimes it is hard to hear things will get worse before they get better! (Daniel 7:15-28)

### **III. THE MAN WHO WAS GIVEN THE ABILITY TO INTERPRET THE DREAMS OF OTHERS, NEEDED THE LORD TO INTERPRET HIS VISIONS. WHEN YOU DO NOT UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU READ, KEEP READING UNTIL THE LORD GIVES YOU UNDERSTANDING! (Daniel 8:1-27)**

A. Daniel envisioned himself in Susa (Persian capital) and received more clarity about his earlier vision. Persia was the strong ram with two horns (Medes/Persia) conquering all opposition. (Dan. 8:1-4)

B. The notable goat horn was Alexander the Great, disciplined by Aristotle, who taught him "all non-Greeks should be enslaved." In three years he conquered many nations. He was a great military leader but drank heavily, ruined his health, and died in his early 30's. He left "mountains" of dead bodies.

C. The little horn of Daniel 8, was Antiochus IV Epiphanes. He rose to power, subdued many nations, and viciously attacked Jerusalem with 20,000 soldiers. The self proclaimed "glorious one" was called a madman ("Epimanes") by the Jews. He desecrated the Temple and was "an antichrist" in his time.

D. The angel Gabriel helped Daniel understand his vision, the length of time that Jerusalem would be decimated (2,300 days or 1,150 days and nights, ending with a cleansing now celebrated as "Hanukkah") The Lord had predetermined the rise and fall of the enemies of Israel.

E. Antiochus and the antichrist share many similarities. Rising to power from obscurity, fierce, masters of intrigue and deception, powerfully energized by Satan, and killing God's people until God Himself stops them.

**DANIEL BECAME ILL AND FAINTED AT THE NEWS OF HIS PEOPLE SUFFERING, YET HE TRUSTED THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD. HE WAS COMFORTED IN KNOWING THAT ONE DAY THE KING AND HIS KINGDOM WOULD COME. WILL YOU BE READY?**

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