

Session 3 The Rise and Fall of the Antichrist (Dan. 7:15-28)

I. OUTLINE OF DANIEL 7:15-28

- A. An angel's interpretation of the vision (Dan. 7:15-28)
 - 1. Interpretation (Part 1): Victory is assured (7:15-18)
 - a. Daniel's response to the vision (7:15)
 - b. Daniel's first question (7:16)
 - c. Interpretation of the four beasts (7:17)
 - d. The saints as world rulers (7:18)
 - 2. Interpretation (Part 2): Prepared to rule through martyrdom (7:19-22)
 - a. Daniel's second question: (7:19-20)
 - b. Antichrist permitted to kill the saints (7:21)
 - c. God suddenly reverses all things (7:22)
 - 3. Interpretation (Part 3): The fourth beast, 10 horns, and the little horn (7:23-27)
 - a. The fourth beast (7:23), 10 horns (10 kings; 7:24a) and the little horn (Antichrist; 7:24b-25)
 - b. The destruction of the Antichrist (7:26)
 - c. God's kingdom forever ruled by the saints (7:27)
 - 4. Daniel's response (7:28)

II. OVERVIEW OF DANIEL 7:15-28

- A. Daniel had just seen a vision of the Ancient of Days sitting on His all-powerful throne (7:9-10), the triumph of the Son of Man receiving the leadership of the earth forever (7:13-14), and the total defeat of the Antichrist (7:11-12), yet he was still so deeply troubled by what he saw that he recorded his troubled response twice (7:15, 28). Daniel 7:15-28 explains why he was so troubled.
- B. Daniel asked an angel for understanding of the vision (7:16, 19). The angel's interpretation was given in three parts (7:17-27). The first part focused on the four beasts and on giving assurance that the saints will be victorious (7:17-18). Next, Daniel asked for "the truth" about the fourth beast, the ten horns, and the little horn (7:19-20). The angel answered by showing him a vision (7:21-22) along with an explanation (7:23-27). Finally, the angel gave further explanation of the fourth beast (7:23), the ten horns (7:24a), the little horn (7:24b-25), and the sure victory of the saints (7:26-27).

III. DANIEL'S RESPONSE TO THE VISION (DAN. 7:15)

- A. Daniel was grieved and troubled by the fourth beast's power, violence, and arrogance (7:15). The vision left Daniel in a state of extreme grief affecting both soul and body. He was perplexed in his mind and sought to gain more understanding. Daniel again described how troubled he was (7:28).
*¹⁵"I, Daniel, was grieved in my spirit within my body, and the visions of my head troubled me."
(Dan. 7:15)*
- B. Daniel was troubled by the intensity of the Antichrist's empire, which will be dreadful, terrible, and exceedingly strong (7:7). If we are not greatly troubled by what Daniel shared about the Antichrist and his empire, then we have not yet understood what he saw.

IV. FIRST QUESTION: VICTORY ASSURED (DAN. 7:16-18)

- A. Daniel's first question (7:16): He asked to know the truth or the full implications of the vision. "These things" speak of the four beasts (v. 1-6) and especially the dreadful beast (v. 7).
¹⁶"I came near to one of those who stood by [an angel], and asked him the truth of all this. So he told me and made known to me the interpretation of these things." (Dan. 7:16)
- B. The first part of the angel's interpretation focused on the four beasts (7:17) and the sure victory of the saints (7:18). 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). The most prominent kings are Nebuchadnezzar (Babylon), Cyrus (Medo-Persia), Alexander the Great (Greece), and the Antichrist.
¹⁷"Those great beasts, which are four, are four kings which arise out of the earth. ¹⁸But the saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom and possess the kingdom, forever..." (Dan. 7:17-18)
- C. 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. The False Prophet is described as "coming out of the earth" (Rev. 13:11), but the Antichrist "rises up out of the sea" (Rev. 13:1).
- D. 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.
¹⁰...and have made us kings and priests to our God; and we shall reign on the earth. (Rev. 5:10)

V. SECOND QUESTION: FOURTH BEAST, TEN HORNS, AND ANOTHER HORN (DAN. 7:19-20)

- A. Daniel's second question (7:19-20) had three parts. He wanted to know the truth, or 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 exceedingly dreadful (7:19). Next he asked about the **ten horns**, and finally he asked about the **little horn** (7:20).
¹⁹"I wished to know the truth [implications] 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; ²⁰and the ten horns that were on its head [ten nation confederation], and the other horn [Antichrist] which came up, before which three fell [three kings killed], namely, that horn which had eyes [supernatural intelligence] and a mouth which spoke pompous words, whose appearance was greater than his fellows." (Dan. 7:19-20)
1. We gain more understanding by comparing verses 19-20 to what Daniel saw earlier in his vision about the fourth beast and the ten horns, and the other horn (7:7-8).
*⁷"A fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, exceedingly strong. It had huge iron teeth; it was devouring, breaking in pieces...It was different from all the beasts...it had ten horns...
⁸there was another horn, a little one, coming up among them, before whom three of the first horns were plucked out by the roots. There, in this horn, were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking pompous words." (Dan. 7:7-8)*

2. Notice the aspects of the vision that are emphasized by being mentioned several times—the beast will be “different” (4x—vs. 7, 19, 23, 24) and “pompous” (4x— vs. 8, 11, 20, 25), and it will be “dreadful,” “strong,” “terrible,” and will “trample,” “devour,” and “break” the nations (vs. 7, 19, 23). There will be “ten horns” (3x— vs. 7, 20, 24) and three of the horns will be killed (3x)—“plucked out” (v. 8), “fell” (v. 20) or “subdued” (v. 24).
- B. *A fourth beast*: The ancient Roman Empire prophetically foreshadowed, or pictured, the Antichrist’s end-time empire made up of a ten-nation confederation (Rev. 17:12-13).
1. ***Different***: The Antichrist’s empire will be energized by demonic power (Rev. 13:2). It will function in a new order of evil, cruelty, and supernatural power. Daniel emphasized four times that the Antichrist kingdom is different from all other kingdoms (7:7, 19, 23, 24).
²*The dragon [Satan] gave him [Antichrist] his power, his throne, and great authority.*
¹³*He performs great signs...he even makes fire come down from heaven (Rev. 13:2, 13)*
 2. ***Exceedingly dreadful***: Earlier, Daniel described it as dreadful, terrible, and exceedingly strong (7:7). He was deeply troubled by the terror of this beast (7:15). Its huge, or massive, teeth emphasize its overwhelming, destructive power.
 3. ***Trampled the residue***: This speaks of continuing to trample a nation after it is defeated. The Antichrist will show no mercy towards those he conquers; he is ruthless and cruel, and will crush and trample everything that was not initially destroyed in the hostile military takeover.
 4. ***The other horn***: This horn is the Antichrist. He will be a political leader that starts out “little,” or with a small sphere of authority and influence. The fact that the little horn is mentioned four times in this vision (7:8, 11, 20, 21) tells us how important this detail is.
 5. ***Ten horns on its head***: A ten-nation confederation will align with the Antichrist. The nations are symbolized by ten horns (7:7, 20, 24; Rev. 12:3; 13:1; 17:3, 7, 12, 16).
 6. ***Which came up***: The Antichrist will first come up “among them” (7:8) as a peer, then he will “arise after them” (7:24) by seizing control of the ten-nation confederation partly by killing three of its prominent kings. The Antichrist will lead a violent overthrow of the government, demanding the full control of the ten-nation confederation.
 7. ***Before which three fell***: Three kings will be killed by the Antichrist as he usurps power from them (7: 8, 19, 24). Earlier Daniel described the three horns as plucked out by the roots.
 8. ***The horn which had eyes***: Earlier Daniel described it as having eyes like a man (7:7). This speaks of his great intelligence that will appeal to humanity—its pride, dignity, and needs etc.
 9. ***A mouth which spoke pompous words***: The Antichrist will speak pompous or arrogant words. His arrogant words will create fear (threats) and/or excitement (false promises) in the nations.
 10. ***Appearance was greater than his fellows***: Daniel did not mention this in verse 8. The way he appears or presents himself to nations will be more glorious and powerful than any other man.

- C. The angel answered all three parts of Daniel’s question in the order in which he asked them. The first part of the question was to know the implications of the fourth beast—why it was so different and what the consequence for Israel would be since it was so dreadful (7:21-22).
- ²¹“I was watching; and the same horn was making war against the saints, and prevailing against them, ²²until the Ancient of Days came, and a judgment was made in favor of the saints of the Most High, the time came for the saints to possess the kingdom.” (Dan. 7:21-22)***
1. In this short vision, Daniel saw that the Antichrist would be permitted to kill the saints (7:21), and then he was assured of the victory of the saints (7:22).
 2. I assume it was shocking information to Daniel that the Ancient of Days would allow this. Earlier in the vision, Daniel saw that He had already issued a decree that the beast be slain and leadership of the earth be given to the Son of Man (7:13-14), so he was perplexed and troubled that the beast or little horn would “prevail” against the saints (7:21).
- ⁹The Ancient of Days was seated...¹⁰The court was seated...¹¹the beast was slain...¹³...behold, One like the Son of Man, coming with clouds...came to the Ancient of Days...¹⁴Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom... (Dan. 7:9-14)***
- D. An angel addressed a twofold offense about the end times: why will God allow evil leaders to rise up and prevail as they persecute God’s people? The saints must trust God’s sovereign leadership.
1. ***Making war against the saints:*** Jesus said that the saints would be hated in all nations.
⁹“They will...kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name’s sake.” (Mt. 24:9)
 2. ***Prevailing against the saints:*** This speaks of martyrdom. The Antichrist will overcome the saints physically, but they will overcome him spiritually.
⁷It was granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them. And authority was given him over every tribe, tongue, and nation. (Rev. 13:7)
¹¹“And they overcame him [Satan] by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death.” (Rev. 12:10-11)
 3. ***Until a judgment was made in favor of the saints:*** The Ancient of Days has decreed the time in which there will be a sudden reversal of the persecution of the saints. The saints will boldly proclaim this coming victory, while those in the Antichrist’s empire will surely mock it.
 4. ***Saints to possess the kingdom:*** The saints will rule the nations with the Son of Man. Jesus will replace all the government leaders of the nations after Armageddon.
 5. ***The time came:*** At the perfect time the Father will suddenly reverse things (7:22). He will use the rage of the Antichrist’s persecution to purify the saints and prepare them to overcome everything that hinders love and to rule the earth with the Son of Man (7:27; 11:35; 12:10). The Father knows the amount of time needed for the combination of persecution and the manifestation of His glory on the end-time Church to bring it to full maturity and to bring Israel to salvation (Eph. 4:13; 5:27).

VI. INTERPRETATION OF THE FOURTH BEAST, TEN HORNS, AND THE HORN (DAN. 7:23-27)

A. 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).

B. **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.

²³***“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)***

C. **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).

²⁴***“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)***

1. **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.

2. **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).

D. **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.

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

E. Characteristics of the horn, or the Antichrist, (7:25): blasphemy, murder, and domination.

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 [3½ years].” (Dan. 7:25)***

1. **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.

2. ***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.
- F. 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.
- ³⁵***“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)***
- ¹⁰***“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)***
- G. The Ancient of Days has already decreed the destruction of the Antichrist (7:26).
- ²⁶***“But the court shall be seated, and they shall take away his [Antichrist’s] dominion, to consume and destroy it forever.” (Dan. 7:26)***
1. ***The court shall be seated***: The Father’s heavenly court was seated—court was in session. This court decides the fate of all the leaders on the earth.
 2. ***Take away his dominion***: 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.
- H. 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.
- 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.” (Dan. 7:27)***
- I. ***Shall be given to saints***: 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).
- ²¹***To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne... (Rev. 3:21)***
- ²⁴***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)***