

## ***Session 6 The Forerunner Message in Daniel 7***

### **I. INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF DANIEL**

- A. The first section is historical (Dan. 1-6), highlighting six episodes in Daniel's life.
- B. The second section is prophetic (Dan. 7-12), highlighting four visions about the end times.
- C. In 603 BC, the Lord revealed Nebuchadnezzar's dream of a statue to Daniel in a night vision (2:19) and gave Daniel insight into four world empires that the statue represented. In 553 BC, 50 years later, Daniel received a vision (Dan. 7) that elaborated on the same four world empires.
- D. In Daniel 7, we see that God chose to use four world empires as the context in which to send the Messiah and bring Israel to salvation and prepare them for world leadership, while purifying His Church and establishing His kingdom on earth. Daniel 7 reveals the sure victory of God's people and the intensity of the battle that they will face in the end times as they stand against the Antichrist.
- E. Outline for Daniel 7

**7:1-8 Daniel's vision: four beasts symbolizing four world empires**

**7:9-14 God's sovereign leadership over the Antichrist**

7:9-10 God enthroned in majesty

7:11-12 Destruction of the Antichrist

7:13-14 Jesus' heavenly coronation as King over all nations

**7:15-28 An angel's interpretation of the vision**

7:15-18 Victory is assured

7:19-22 Prepared to rule through martyrdom

7:23-27 The fourth beast, 10 horns, and the little horn

7:28 Daniel's response

### **II. NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S DREAM OF THE STATUE (DAN. 2)**

- A. Nebuchadnezzar saw four kingdoms represented by precious metals in a statue of a "glorious man" (2:31-45). He saw these four kingdoms from man's perspective—as glorious, like gold and silver.  
*<sup>31</sup>"You, O king, were watching...a great image... <sup>32</sup>This image's head was of fine gold, its chest and arms of silver, its belly and thighs of bronze, <sup>33</sup>its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay. <sup>34</sup>You watched while a stone was cut out without hands, which struck the image on its feet... <sup>35</sup>The iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold were crushed together...the stone ...became a great mountain and filled the whole earth." (Dan. 2:31-35)*

1. **Head of gold:** This represents the Babylonian Empire (606-539 BC).
2. **Chest and arms of silver:** This represents the Medo-Persian Empire (539-331 BC).
3. **Belly and thighs of bronze:** This represents the Greek Empire (331-146 BC).

4. **Legs, feet, and toes of iron and clay:** This represent the Antichrist's empire, as foreshadowed by the Roman Empire (146 BC-AD 1453).

B. The stone that struck the image speaks of Jesus and His eternal kingdom (2:35, 44-45).

<sup>44</sup>***“And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed...it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.***

<sup>45</sup>***Inasmuch as you saw that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold...” (Dan. 2:44-45)***

### III. DANIEL'S VISION OF THE FOUR BEASTS (DAN. 7:1-8)

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

<sup>1</sup>***In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon [553 BC]... <sup>2</sup>Daniel spoke, saying, “I saw in my vision by night, and behold, the four winds of heaven [angelic and demonic activity] were stirring up the Great Sea [Mediterranean]. <sup>3</sup>And four great beasts came up from the sea...” (Dan. 7:1-3)***

B. **Four great beasts:** Daniel saw four wild animals—each represented an ancient empire in the Mediterranean region that would persecute Israel and cause great turmoil in the region.

1. The first three beasts (7:4-6)

a. First beast: Babylonian Empire (606-539 BC) – Iraq (7:4)

b. Second beast: Persian Empire (539-331 BC) – Iran (7:5)

c. Third beast: Greek Empire (331-146 BC) – Greece (7:6)

2. Fourth beast: Antichrist's empire, foreshadowed by the Roman Empire (7:7-8)

a. Roman Empire's western and eastern divisions (146 BC-AD 1453)

b. Antichrist's empire with a ten-king confederation

C. **First beast:** A lion with eagle's wings refers to the Babylonian Empire, 605-539 BC (7:4).

<sup>4</sup>***“The first [Babylon] was like a lion, and had eagle's wings...” (Dan. 7:4)***

D. **Second beast:** A bear with ribs in its mouth refers to the Persian Empire, 539-331 BC (7:5).

<sup>5</sup>***“Another beast [Medo-Persia], a second, like a bear.” (Dan. 7:5)***

E. **Third beast:** A leopard with four wings refers to the Greek Empire, 331-146 BC (7:6).

<sup>6</sup>***“I looked, and there was another [Greece], 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.” (Dan. 7:6)***

F. **Fourth Beast:** This refers to the Antichrist, who was foreshadowed by the Roman Empire (7:7-8).

This beast has three stages—the *ancient empire* (146 BC-AD 1453), an end-time *confederation* made up of ten kings, and the Antichrist's *dictatorship* ruling the ten-nation confederation.

<sup>7</sup>“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.” (Dan. 7:7)

G. ***It was different***: The Antichrist’s empire will be unique in being energized by Satan (Rev. 13:2).

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

H. Notice five prophetic signs that will be recognizable to God’s people in the end times (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)

1. ***Sign #1—Little horn***: It 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.
2. ***Sign #2—Coming up among them***: The Antichrist will first come up “among them” (7:8) as a peer; then he will “arise after them” (7:24) to seize control of the ten-nation confederation.
3. ***Sign #3—Three horns plucked out***: Three of the first horns (kings) will be plucked out by the roots or killed in a violent overthrow led by the Antichrist (7:7, 20, 24). When these three world leaders are killed, the Church will understand it as a prophetic sign of the times.
4. ***Sign #4—Eyes like a man***: Having eyes “like a man” speaks of possessing great intelligence pertaining to things that will amaze and please men. This will give him great credibility.
5. ***Sign #5—Mouth speaking pompous words***: The Antichrist will speak pompous, arrogant words. These arrogant words will create great excitement (false promises) and fear (threats). His pompous or arrogant words are emphasized four times in this chapter (7:8, 11, 20, 25).

#### IV. THREE STAGES OF THE FOURTH BEAST

A. 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 the ten-nation confederation.

B. ***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 the city of Rome and the Western Roman Empire. The Antichrist will be associated with the geographic territory once in the eastern division of the Roman Empire (8:9).

C. ***Ten-nation confederation***: An end-time empire will arise that will initially be under ten kings geographically and ethnically; it will cover geographic areas that include parts of the eastern and western divisions of the ancient Roman Empire.

<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...<sup>17</sup>God has put it into their hearts to fulfill His purpose, to be of one mind, and to give their kingdom to the beast...” (Rev. 17:12, 17)

- D. **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>“...another [Antichrist] shall rise after them [the 10 kings]; he shall be different...” (Dan. 7:24)

## V. VISION OF THE THRONE: GOD’S LEADERSHIP OVER THE NATIONS (DAN. 7:9-10)

- A. Daniel saw the sovereign Lord seated in His heavenly court, and the books were opened (7:9-10).

<sup>9</sup>“I watched till thrones were put in place, and the Ancient of Days [the Father] 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 [river; NAS] 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.” (Dan. 7:9-10)

- B. **Ancient of Days:** The Father established His plans from the perspective of eternity.

## VI. THE DESTRUCTION OF THE ANTICHRIST (DAN. 7:11-12)

- A. God decreed that the Antichrist and his empire be destroyed at Jesus’ second coming (7:11-12).

<sup>11</sup>“...the pompous words which the horn was speaking; I watched till the beast [Antichrist] 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.” (Dan. 7:11-12)

- B. **Slain:** Daniel described the Antichrist as being slain, destroyed, and consumed (Dan. 7:11, 26).

- C. **The rest of the beasts:** This speaks of the people and territory of the first three beast kingdoms. The Antichrist’s kingdom will incorporate the evil of all four kingdoms that will come to fullness and find expression in his global empire. The demonic elements of the four empires will be fully expressed in the Antichrist’s empire. The Antichrist beast kingdom is the “*composite beast*” in which the former beast kingdoms will culminate, find expression, and continue to “live on.”

<sup>12</sup>As for the rest of the beasts...their lives were prolonged for a season and a time. (Dan. 7:12)

## VII. JESUS’ HEAVENLY CORONATION AS KING OVER ALL NATIONS (DAN. 7:13-14)

- A. Daniel saw the coronation of Jesus as King of kings with dominion over all the nations (7:13-14).

***<sup>13</sup>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...and His kingdom the one which shall not be destroyed. (Dan. 7:13-14)***

- B. ***Son of Man***: Jesus will come to the earth on clouds and will be seen by every person (Rev. 1:7).

***<sup>7</sup>Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him... (Rev. 1:7)***

- C. Jesus will rule all the nations from a throne of glory (Mt. 25:31) in Jerusalem (Jer. 3:17).

***<sup>31</sup>When the Son of Man comes in His glory...then He will sit on the throne of His glory.***

***<sup>32</sup>All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them... (Mt. 25:31-32)***

### VIII. THE RISE AND FALL OF THE ANTICHRIST (DAN. 7:15-28)

- A. Daniel saw the defeat of the Antichrist (7:11-12) and the triumph of the Son of Man (7:13-14), yet he was still troubled by what he saw (7:15, 28). Daniel 7:15-28 explains why he was so troubled.

***<sup>15</sup>“I, Daniel, was grieved in my spirit within my body, and the visions of my head troubled me.” (Dan. 7:15)***

- B. ***Grieved***: What pained him most was the fourth beast who was dreadful, terrible, and exceedingly strong (7:7). He saw the intensity of the violence, cruelty, and power of the Antichrist’s empire.

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

- A. Daniel asked an angel for understanding of the vision (7:16, 19). The angel gave his interpretation to Daniel in three parts (7:17-27). First, Daniel asked to know the truth or implications of the vision.

***<sup>16</sup>“I came near to one...[an angel] and asked him the truth [implications] of all this. So he told me and made known to me the interpretation of these things.” (Dan. 7:16)***

- B. The angel’s interpretation here focused on the four beasts (7:17) and the victory of the saints (7:18). The four beasts are four kings (7:17), which are also kingdoms (7:23).

***<sup>17</sup>“Those great beasts, which are four, are four kings which arise out of the earth...<sup>23</sup>“Thus he [angel] said: ‘The fourth beast shall be a fourth kingdom on earth...’ (Dan. 7:17, 23)***

- C. The victory of the saints is assured (7:18; Rev. 5:10; 20:4-6).

***<sup>18</sup>But the saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom and possess the kingdom, forever...” (Dan. 7:18)***

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

- A. Daniel’s second question (7:19-20) focused on knowing the implications of the *fourth beast* and why it was so dreadful (7:19). Next, he asked about the *ten horns* and the *other horn* (7:20).
- 19“I wished to know the truth [implications] about the fourth beast, which was different from all the others, exceedingly dreadful...<sup>20</sup>and the ten horns [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...” (Dan. 7:19-20)*
- 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).
- C. ***Before which three fell:*** Three kings will be killed by the Antichrist (7:7, 20, 24). These three kings are described as being “*plucked out*” by the roots (7:7), as those who “*fell before*” the little horn (7:20), and as “*subdued*” by him (7:24). The Antichrist will lead a violent overthrow of the government, demanding the full control of the ten-nation confederation.

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

- A. The angel answered Daniel’s second question by showing him a vision (7:21-22) and giving him more information (7:23-27)—about the fourth beast (7:23), the ten horns (7:24a), and the other horn—the Antichrist (7:24b-25)—and his sure destruction (7:26).
- B. The fourth beast will be a kingdom that is different from all others. It will devour the whole 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...’” (Dan. 7:23)*
- C. The ten horns represent ten kings who will form a ten-nation confederation (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).
- 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, and shall subdue [kill] three kings.” (Dan. 7:24)*
1. ***Shall arise from this kingdom:*** Ten kings in the end times will arise from the fourth beast—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. ***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).
- D. Characteristics of the horn, or the Antichrist, (7:25): blasphemy, murder, and domination. Daniel saw that the saints were “given” into the Antichrist’s hand by God for 3½ years (7:25).

***25“He shall speak pompous words against the Most High, shall persecute the saints of the Most High...The saints shall be given into his hand for a time and times and half a time [3½ years].” (Dan. 7:25)***

- E. 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)***

- F. 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.

***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)***

- G. The saints will replace the evil leadership of the beast empire in governing the nations. Jesus, the Bridegroom King, desires to rule the earth forever in partnership with His people (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)***