

CULTURE SHOCK

“I Got This”

Daniel 7

1. LIVING IN DAYS OF UNCERTAINTY

Picking up where Pastor Rick left off last week, let me take just a few minuets if I may to encourage you with the events that surround us these day

- Christians from Nigeria and Ghana pushed overboard into the Med by Muslims.
- “Open Doors Watch List Ministry” reports that 2014 was the worst year of persecution of Christians in modern times (since they have been able to monitor and record it) and 2015 seems to be on track to eclipse 2014.
- A highly decorated Navy Chaplain is told not to pray in the name of Jesus in direct violation of the Navy’s regulation of Chaplains remaining true to their sponsoring Church’s doctrine.
- Soldiers and airman are being threatened with punitive action for sharing their faith with fellow soldiers.

- Academy cadet is told his personal marker board, for whatever personal message he would like to communicate – MAY NOT contain a scripture passage – take it down.
- Critics are calling for the Court Marshal of a Major General of the Air Force for sharing his views of the importance of prayer when asked to speak to the National Day of Prayer Task Force! What was he supposed to speak about?
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- A national leader tells us we cannot condemn the atrocities of the ISIL/ISIS (*Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant*) terrorist group because bad things happened during the crusades as well. (Regardless of whether the crusades were in response to a Jihad or not).
- How about the fact that you can go to your laptop as I did and type in words like: Jihad, Boko Haram, Hezbollah, al-Qaeda, ISIL, ISIS, and it doesn't even ask you to correct the spelling. It has so become a part of the vernacular that our software recognizes it.
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Daniel, probably more than anyone can appreciate our times and difficulties:

Remember his experience: dragged from his home, enslaved, given the name of a pagan God, slandered, had an attempt on his life, prone to dreams no one could understand, and frequently endured radical changes in the authority over him (third King of seven kings).

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Daniel's Vision of the Four Beasts

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dreadful, and incredibly strong, with large iron teeth. It devoured and crushed, and it trampled with its feet whatever was left. It was different from all the beasts before it, and it had 10 horns. Daniel 7:1–7 (HCSB)

Four beasts arising from the “Sea of Humanity.” How do we know it’s not a literal sea (The Med)? Verse 17 tells us they rise up from the Earth. Four Kingdoms Parallel to the vision of the statue Nebuchadnezzar had seen in Chapter 2:31 but with more detail!

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Obviously this was a southern king. Represents Medo/Persia who followed Babylon (chest and arms of silver). Lopsided because Persia is much stronger (like the “Skittles” commercial where they settle things in the usual way) and will win out before long.

Rib dinner of 3 ribs – three major conquests— Lydia (546 BC), Babylon (539 BC), and Egypt (525 BC). And like the brute beast which the bear represents, Medo/Persia will be known more for its brute force than speed or wealth like other kingdoms.

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(Belly & thighs of Bronze) Greece. Just as Leopards are notorious for their speed (further represented by four wings – if two are fast four are more faster). Greece carried out it's conquests with lightning speed – Germany just thought they were first to blitzkrieg! Alexander the Great invaded Asia Minor in 334 BC and within ten short years (by the age of thirty-two) had conquered the entire Medo-Persian Empire to the borders of India. According to legend, he then wept because there were no more lands to conquer.

Four heads – representing rulers or governments – After Alexander the Great's death his four generals carved out four kingdoms for themselves.

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Unlike any Daniel had ever seen and will be different from any the world has ever seen. Described as terrible w/ iron teeth, horns, and claws and cannot be compared to any animal known on Earth. Parallel with Iron Legs and Iron and Clay toes – Roman Empire.

Terrible iron teeth devoured and crushed its victims (large powerful body) and later described to have bronze claws. Kind of like Wolverine's upgrade from bone claws to Adamantium in the Marvel movie series if you follow such things.

The similarity this beast has with the beasts of chapter two is the iron (legs & teeth) and the number 10 (toes & horns) **NOTE: #10 & Rome.** 10 kingdoms made up the Roman Empire – the toes of iron and clay show the union of the stronger nations uniting with the weaker nations – something many say is happening right now in the European Union. Just as this monster was “different” from all the others, so the Roman Empire differed from those that had preceded it. Rome possessed a power and longevity unlike anything the world had ever known.

Nations were crushed under the iron boot of the Roman legions, its power was virtually irresistible, and the extent of its influence surpassed the other three kingdoms. An online search will reveal many different renderings of the creature (no one knows what it will look like) but all will have 10 horns. The Beast has ten horns and later a little horn grows that has eyes and a mouth that blasphemes and proceeds to pluck out three of the other horns.

Some Say “Wow – sounds like Daniel been to Colorado and got a hold of the strong stuff. He’s seeing things” – yes he is.

Why the vision is so difficult to understand at first and where it gets really interesting is the principle Bible scholars refer to as double fulfillment. Many times in scripture God will reveal prophecy, a promise, a sign that will be fulfilled in the near future and a distant future as well (frequently relating to Messiah).

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Roman Empire – sequel –

The exceeding greatness and longevity of the Roman Empire was the first part of the fulfillment of this vision. Like an Iron Beast, Rome would conquer the winged leopard and everything else in its path.

However, the mystery of the Little Horn and who or what that represents comes later – much later. In fact it could happen at any time now. We will touch on it this this morning but you will learn a lot more from Pastor Rick next week.

The mighty Roman Empire was not conquered as an Empire as the previous three. It self-imploded and then was conquered in parts but Bible scholars point to prophecies that it will rise again.

So let’s take a moment to look at what God has shown us in His Word concerning what happens in the future – the end times. We will introduce the big picture to identify the fourth beast and fill in my gaps in the weeks to come.

General Description of Events leading to the end:

1. First we see the Old Testament believers looking forward to the Messiah coming. The Old Testaments prophets saw it but they didn't know when and they didn't know exactly what they were seeing. They saw the Messiah coming but with two very different descriptions? Once as a suffering servant.

***But He was wounded for our transgressions,
He was bruised for our iniquities;
The chastisement for our peace was upon Him,
And by His stripes we are healed.***

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Part of the beautiful passage in Isaiah 53 that describes Jesus the Lamb of God taking our punishment for sin – good homework assignment only 12 verses.

And the other vision of Messiah was as the mighty King of Kings and Lord of Lords. The conflicting views confused them – They could not comprehend that they were seeing Jesus' appearance at two separate times. They could not see the Church Age because God had not

revealed it to them. When Jesus told Peter that “Upon this Rock (reverting to Himself not Peter the pebble) I will build my church,” that was the first time Satan heard the name of his new enemy.

So the OT prophets developed a theory that they were seeing two different people; that there was yet another prophet to come before the Messiah.

That's part of why so many did not recognize Him when he came as a baby, born of a virgin in little Bethlehem. They had two to pick from – who would you pick- pick ME! Became the Zealots – Judas was one. They could not know that God had planned an entire age which began with His resurrection and continues to this day.

2. The Church Age – the age in which we live now is in my humble opinion the greatest time in history for humans to live. Initiated at the resurrection of Christ and the entrance of the Holy Spirit into the world to remain. Greater than the Garden of Eden, even though they saw God face to face because... How many sins did it take to end it forever? One! Sinned at least once this morning? Better than the Old Testament Saints under the Law

awaiting a promise of one who could take away the guilt of your sins. Gal 3:24 says the

Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor. Galatians 3:24–25 (NKJV)

Law was merely our tutor our guardian to prepare us for Christ to come.

I don't even need to mention how it is better than living in the tribulation. The only thing close is living with Jesus in the Millennial Reign – but I said the best time for humans to live – when we reign with Him we will no longer be human – We will be in our glorified bodies, like His after the resurrection.

This church age is the time we tell people about Jesus so they too can spend an eternity with Him.

3. The Rapture

The next major event on our prophetic calendar is the Rapture- “The catching away.” All the Messianic prophecies that we can discern have been fulfilled.

According to 1Thess 4:15-17

... We who are still alive at the Lord's coming will certainly have no advantage over those who have fallen asleep. ¹⁶ For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout with the archangel's voice, and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ Then we who are still alive will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air and so we will always be with the Lord

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4. Tribulation – Divided into two parts first 3 ½ yrs. and the second 3 ½ years. Sometime after the rapture the Antichrist will come onto the scene, be handed the leadership of the world on a platter, strike a deal with Israel to rebuild their temple (which is the event that starts the clock on the first 3 ½). But once Israel completes the work the Antichrist will defile the Holy Temple in what Daniel calls the “abomination of desolation” in 12:11. He will literally declare himself as God in the temple and defile it. This is what ushers in the second 3 ½ years – and the worse judgements to ever hit the Earth. The judgments will come so fast and furiously that the Earth and humanity would not survive except that God cuts those days short and comes back to rule in what is called the Millennium.

4. How Uncertain is that Future – “I Got This”

To come back to our original question, why did God show all of this to Daniel? Why are we looking at something that happened more than 2500 years ago? Because it screams to us “I got this!”

Daniel thought he was facing an uncertain future, we look around and think even more so – the future is uncertain. The truth is, the future has NEVER BEEN MORE CERTAIN!
Because the future is in the palm of His hand.
“He’s got this!” & “He’s got YOU!” – Let me show you!

5. Millennium - At the end of the tribulation (which has to take the prize for what must seem like the most uncertain future) Jesus returns as King of Kings and Lord of Lords with 10,000 of His saints accompanying Him (The very vision the OT Prophets saw) (that’s you and me believes - In verse 18 it says, “But the saints of the Most High shall receive the Kingdom and possess the Kingdom forever, even forever and ever.” Underline the word saint. That’s YOU).

Did you get that? We of the uncertain future come back with Jesus and rule and reign with Him for 1000 years.

Satan will be placed into the bottomless pit for most of those 1000 years. Those who survived the tribulation will live with Jesus and see Him face to face for the entire 1000 years (that’s a lot of birthdays). At the end of that Millennial reign Satan will be set free and will successfully tempt many to rebel against God in one final act of sin.

6. Eternity – Jesus will judge those who stayed true during the Millennium and those who did not. A new Heaven and Earth will be created to replace the old that were touched by sin and forever we will be with the Lord.

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God reminds Daniel in verse 9 - Evil will be vanquished. The Ancient of Days sits enthroned and judges the evil one and delivers to him his just deserts. I know you are scared He is telling Daniel – know uncertain – seems all is against you – Don’t worry – I got this, I am forever enthroned. I know your future. It might look bleak a moment or two here. You may be called to endure some hardships and

persecution here – But I hold all the future in the palm of my hand. Time can no more rule God than a piece of art that you create rule over you. According to 1Jn 3:8 Jesus was revealed for the purpose of destroying the works of the enemy.

The Future is certain. But that doesn't mean there won't be trials and difficulties. It doesn't mean that the world won't go mad and turn its back on God and His truth. It doesn't mean they won't embrace the lie and celebrate the sin. That will happen yet God is still on the throne and all of that will lead exactly as He has told us it would – To His Throne for His Glory. Don't fret beloved, don't be fearful, and don't let your heart fail and fall away. Press on with us to His glory. He's got this ya'll – share that with someone right now – He's Got this ya'll.

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God reminds Daniel in verse 9 - Evil will be vanquished. The Ancient of Days sits enthroned and judges the evil one and delivers to him his just deserts. I know you are scared He is telling Daniel – know uncertain – seems all is against you – Don’t worry – I got this, I am forever enthroned. I know your future. It might look bleak a moment or two here. You may be called to endure some hardships and

persecution here – But I hold all the future in the palm of my hand. Time can no more rule God than a piece of art that you create rule over you. According to 1Jn 3:8 Jesus was revealed for the purpose of destroying the works of the enemy.

The Future is certain. But that doesn't mean there won't be trials and difficulties. It doesn't mean that the world won't go mad and turn its back on God and His truth. It doesn't mean they won't embrace the lie and celebrate the sin. That will happen yet God is still on the throne and all of that will lead exactly as He has told us it would – To His Throne for His Glory. Don't fret beloved, don't be fearful, and don't let your heart fail and fall away. Press on with us to His glory. He's got this ya'll – share that with someone right now – He's Got this ya'll.