

A Panorama of the End Times

Daniel 7

ILLUSTRATION: The Union was being ripped apart at the seams in 1865 when Julia Ward visited a military encampment near Washington D.C. The camps of the Union and the Confederacy were filled with the songs of soldiers at night. Many of them made up on the spot and set to popular tunes.

One soldier said, “music was the one thing that passed freely from the North to the South. You would hear Southern soldiers singing songs popularized by the black union soldiers, and you would even hear the occasional Union soldier whistling Dixie.”

Well it was one of the common camp tunes that Julia Ward borrowed for her poem that has become known as the **Battle Hymn of the Republic**.

*Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord
He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored
He hath loosed the fateful lightning of His terrible swift sword
His truth is marching on,
Glory, glory, Hallelujah!*

Beyond the controversies and confusions of war - Ms. Ward envisioned the unchangeable Providence of God working his will and way among mankind.

*Daniel had a far more vivid vision of the same reality in **Daniel 7**.*

CONTEXT: The 7th Chapter of Daniel is one of the **least familiar** chapters in the whole book. Yet it was one of the favorite chapters to reference by the NT writers. As a matter of fact there are some 80 references in the NT to Daniel 7.

Why is it so unfamiliar to us?

We know about the **fiery furnace** and we know about the **Lion's den**, but chapter 7 and following is filled with strange and bizarre images. There is a reason for that. It is written in a different genre from the first 6 chapters. The first 6 chapters are historic narrative, chapters 7-12 are in the genre of Apocalyptic literature.

Keep in mind the Bible was penned by 40 different authors writing over a period of 1,600 years. The 66 books of the Bible: 39 books of the Old Testament from the 27 of the New Testament. In the Bible we find -

- **Historical narrative:** [Genesis](#) and the first half of [Exodus](#), [Numbers](#), [Joshua](#), [Judges](#), [Ruth](#), 1 and 2 [Samuel](#), 1 and 2 [Kings](#), 1 and 2 [Chronicles](#), [Ezra](#), [Nehemiah](#), [Esther](#), [Jonah](#)
- **Law:** the last half of [Exodus](#); also [Leviticus](#), [Deuteronomy](#)

- **Wisdom literature:** [Job](#), [Proverbs](#), [Ecclesiastes](#)
- **Poetry:** [Psalms](#), [Song of Solomon](#), [Lamentations](#)
- **Prophecy:** [Isaiah](#), [Jeremiah](#), [Ezekiel](#), [Daniel](#), [Hosea](#), [Joel](#), [Amos](#), [Obadiah](#), [Micah](#), [Nahum](#), [Habakkuk](#), [Zephaniah](#), [Haggai](#), [Zechariah](#), [Malachi](#)
- **Gospel:** [Matthew](#), [Mark](#), [Luke](#), [John](#), and possibly [Acts](#)
- **Epistle (letter):** [Romans](#), 1 and 2 [Corinthians](#), [Galatians](#), [Ephesians](#), [Philippians](#), [Colossians](#), 1 and 2 [Thessalonians](#), 1 and 2 [Timothy](#), [Titus](#), [Philemon](#), [Hebrews](#), [James](#), [Peter](#), 1, 2, and 3 [John](#), [Jude](#)
- **Apocalyptic:** [Daniel](#), [Revelation](#)

Each time you shift genre you have to accommodate your mind to the particular nuances of that particular genre.

ILLUSTRATION: How many times have you been reading through your bible in a year and doing just great through Genesis, Exodus, but then suddenly surrender around Leviticus? Why is that? The Genre changed - Leviticus is *legalese*.

Apocalyptic literature by nature is peculiar.

It is literal but not concrete - in other words it means what it says when interpreted according to the rules of the genre.

But for example, if you see a **beast with 10 horns**, that is not a concrete creature, you can't go find such a creature and make a selfie with it - it is literal in that such a vision really did occur, it's not made up, but it is highly symbolic.

There are certain "**givens**" that you either know or you don't know that are common for all Apocalyptic literature.

- For example - Horns – represent Kings or Kingdoms.
- Seas are representative of the Gentile nations.
- Beast speaks of either a nation or a person.
- Numbers are used repeatedly to make a common point.

For example in **Revelation 5:6** we read

6. And I saw between the throne (with the **four** living **creatures**) and the elders a Lamb standing, as if slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God, sent out into all the earth.

Who did John see? John saw Jesus. Jesus doesn't literally have 7 horns and eyes... but that is how the vision came to John. That is Apocalyptic literature.

Revelation gives us the end times focused on the person of **Christ**.
Daniel gives us the same story focused on the person of **Anti-Christ**.

Chapter 7 gives us a **PANORAMA** of history as it relates to **Antichrist** and chapters **8-12** focus in on various aspects of that history.

TEXT: Daniel 7:1–28 (ESV)

¹ In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon, Daniel saw a dream and visions of his head as he lay in his bed. Then he wrote down the dream and told the sum of the matter.

So notice that chapter 7 takes us chronologically back in time. In Chapter 6, Persia had overthrown Babylon and Daniel was living under the rule of Darius. But here in chapter 7 we read of the time when Daniel was under the rule of Babylon's final King, Belshazzar.

² Daniel declared, "I saw in my vision by night, and behold, the four winds of heaven were stirring up the great sea.

The oceans and the sea in prophetic literature has reference to the **Gentile nations**.

³ And four great beasts came up out of the sea, different from one another.

Ok, so remember that **beasts** represent nations, coming from the sea - that's **gentile nations**... and there are **four** of them sequentially arising. Where else have we see four subsequent gentile nations represented in the book of Daniel? Nebuchadnezzar's dream in chapter 2.

The 4 beasts in chapter 7 correspond to the 4 parts of the statue in chapter 2.

⁴ The first was like a lion and had eagles' wings. Then as I looked its wings were plucked off, and it was lifted up from the ground and made to stand on two feet like a man, and the mind of a man was given to it.

That is the **Babylonian** Empire. No new information really at this point.

⁵ And behold, another beast, a second one, like a bear. It was raised up on one side. It had three ribs in its mouth between its teeth; and it was told, 'Arise, devour much flesh.'

That's **Persia**. It began as an alliance with Media, thus the Medes and the Persians, but ultimately Persia was dominant and over threw Media.

⁶ After this I looked, and behold, another, like a leopard, with four wings of a bird on its back. And the beast had four heads, and dominion was given to it.

That it the **Greek** Empire under the rule of Alexander the Great. He was known for his speed in battle - a leopard is fast, a flying leopard even faster.

⁷ After this I saw in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast, terrifying and dreadful and exceedingly strong. It had great iron teeth; it devoured and broke in pieces and stamped what was left with its feet. It was different from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns.

That is the **Roman** Empire. The 10 horns correspond with the 10 toes of the statue in Nebuchadnezzar's Dream. We said that was an 10 nation federation that is yet to arise on the planet. NOW - what comes next in verse 8 is **new information**. Now this has not yet been revealed to God's people.

⁸ I considered the horns, and behold, there came up among them another horn, a little one, before which three of the first horns were plucked up by the roots. And behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great things.

Now that's new information. This little horn is a **RULER** who will dispose 3 of the Leaders of this Federation and will reduce the number to 7. This is the man that the New Testament refers to as **Anti-Christ**.

The title **Anti-Christ** referring to a specific individual is only used one time in scripture, that is in **1 John 2:18**. In other places he is called -

- Daniel - Desolator, Willful King, Little Horn
- Paul - man of sin, son of perdition, man of lawlessness
- Zechariah - Worthless Shepherd
- Revelation - The Beast

There is a world leader that is Satan's counterfeit of Jesus. He opposes Christ, he seeks to supplant Christ, and he hates the people of God.

⁹ "As I looked, thrones were placed, and the **Ancient of Days** took his seat;

Notice the startling contrast between the Blasphemous monsters of 7-8 and the King seated on his throne in verses 9-10.

Always let your throne position itself properly under His throne.

In every decision you make, let this image of the Ancient of Days sitting upon His Fairy throne haunt you. Don't make any decision today that you would regret if you stood before God's throne tonight.

9b. his clothing was white as snow, and the hair of his head like pure wool; his throne was fiery flames; its wheels were burning fire. ¹⁰ A stream of fire issued and came out

from before him; a thousand thousands served him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him; the court sat in judgment, and the books were opened.

Listen dear citizen, it matters not what we decide by majority vote nor by the ruling of the Supreme Court. There is a God in Heaven who has the power to sentence you into eternal damnation. Every decision you make and every vote you cast must be saturated in that reality.

¹¹ "I looked then because of the sound of the great words that the horn was speaking. And as I looked, the beast was killed, and its body destroyed and given over to be burned with fire. ¹² As for the rest of the beasts, their dominion was taken away, but their lives were prolonged for a season and a time.

So here we see the season of time we call the Millennial Reign of Christ. This is NOT New Heaven and New Earth, this is that 1000 years when nations still exist, local governments still exist, but Jesus has Physically returned to Jerusalem, he sets up His Throne on the Temple Mount and from there, "the government is on His shoulders".

Friend, one of the great things that I am struck with each time I go to Israel is NOT only the History of that great land - but it's future. I stand on the Temple Mount and recognize what is coming.

¹³ "I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him.

So this title, "Son of Man" was Jesus's favorite term to apply to Himself when he was referencing His second coming. He has defeated AntiChrist, and now He stands before the Ancient of Days.

¹⁴ And 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, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed.

OK - so that was the vision and now the verses that follow retell verses 1-13 with an explanation.

¹⁵ "As for me, Daniel, my spirit within me was anxious, and the visions of my head alarmed me. ¹⁶ I approached one of those who stood there and asked him the truth concerning all this. So he told me and made known to me the interpretation of the things. ¹⁷ 'These four great beasts are four kings who shall arise out of the earth. ¹⁸ But **the saints of the Most High** shall receive the kingdom and possess the kingdom forever, forever and ever.'

Who rules and reigns with Christ? The saints of God. I call Nassau County. When Jesus said, "the meek shall inherit the Earth" he was serious.

Now all of us who have griped and complained about the government for so many years get our chance to show them how to do it.

19 “Then I desired to know the truth about the fourth beast, which was different from all the rest, exceedingly terrifying, with its teeth of iron and claws of bronze, and which devoured and broke in pieces and stamped what was left with its feet, ²⁰ and about the ten horns that were on its head, and the other horn that came up and before which three of them fell, the horn that had eyes and a mouth that **spoke great things**, and that seemed greater than its companions.

Do you see why a previous generation thought this was Adolf Hitler? He had a remarkable ability to move crowds with his words.

21 As I looked, this horn made war with the saints and prevailed over them,

Now at this time the Church has been taken away. Ethnic Israel is restored - so the saints referred to here are those saved Jews who are converted through the tribulation.

Antichrist hates the followers of Jesus. They are non-conformist. They will not receive the mark of the Beast, they will not bow to worship His image. They are a NATION of Daniel’s and antichrist hates them for it.

The longer I live the more hesitant I become to jump on the latest cultural movement, especially if Hollywood approves. If you didn’t have a bible you could almost discern right from wrong, simply by doing the opposite of Hollywood.

22 until the Ancient of Days came, and judgment was given for the saints of the Most High, and the time came when the saints possessed the kingdom.

23 “Thus he said: ‘As for the fourth beast, there shall be a fourth kingdom on earth, which shall be different from all the kingdoms, and it shall devour the whole earth, and trample it down, and break it to pieces. ²⁴ As for the ten horns, out of this kingdom ten kings shall arise, and another shall arise after them; he shall be different from the former ones, and shall put down three kings. ²⁵ He shall speak words against the Most High, and shall **wear out the saints** of the Most High,

“to wear out” is the Aramaic word *yěballē*, which literally means “to wear away” or “to wear out,” as one would wear out a garment.

Believers will daily be harassed until their lives become miserable. Religious freedom will be abolished (cf. 9:27), and economic pressure will be applied to force his subjects to follow him and reject religion (cf. Rev 13:16–17).

25b. and shall think to change the times and the law; and they shall be given into his hand for a time, times, and half a time.

No one is certain about the changing of times, it could refer to resetting the calendar. Our current Calendar reflect the years we are removed from the first Advent of Christ. I would expect this Satanic Counterfeit to reset the calendar to reflect his reign.

26 But the court shall sit in judgment, and his dominion shall be taken away, to be consumed and destroyed to the end. 27 And the kingdom and the dominion and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High; his kingdom shall be an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him. 28 "Here is the end of the matter. As for me, Daniel, my thoughts greatly alarmed me, and my color changed, but I kept the matter in my heart."

INVITATION/CONCLUSION:

Someone may ask, "Well Pastor, it seems that from where we stand - the next thing to happen in this prophetic scheme is that AntiChrist is revealed, when will that happen?"

Friend I don't know, but I can tell you this - In Daniel's Day:

- There was no semblance of a 10 nation federation developing in Europe.
- There was no practical way that one could receive a mark, without which he could not buy or sell.
- There was no way that an image could be seen by the entire world simultaneously, and the whole world respond in worship.

Before this year - could you even conceptualize of the Global economy being Brought to an absolute halt?

Just a couple of weeks ago, I was in Savannah, GA. I had about \$1,200 cash in my pocket. I stopped by a outlet mall to by my youngest daughter a new pair of sunglasses. YET, it did not matter how much money I had - I could not buy anything because I had no mask on my face. I'M NOT SAYING THE MASK IS THE MARK.

I am saying, this is not science fiction.

My advice to you is to live as though the return of Jesus Christ could happen imminently.