

OUR GOD REIGNS – p. 9

“A Beastly Vision”

Daniel 7:1-18

Dividing Daniel

The Book of Daniel is one message in two parts –

Apocalyptic Prophecy

“Apocalypse” in common vernacular communicates a sense of pending doom.

-To say, “The apocalypse is coming” or “The apocalypse is here” might get your blood pressure up!
-But the word “apocalypse” simply means “revelation” and we get this from the second word in the book of the Revelation –

-Rev. 1:1 – “The revelation (apocalypse) of Jesus Christ...”

Through apocalyptic prophecy, God reveals how He will bring an end to human history and human oppression – especially the oppression of His people!

-Apocalyptic prophecy radiates with joy and hope as it celebrates the victory that God promises and gives through Jesus Christ.

The most popular feature of apocalyptic prophecy is the use of fantastical images – Images that aren’t just unusual but unearthly!

This brings us to the challenge of interpretation of apocalyptic Scripture –

The kind of genre makes certain realities vividly clear – The Ancient of Days will destroy the beastly empires of man – praise God!

-While at the same time it has an aura of mystery to it – What or who are three ribs?!

The Message

God will destroy the empires of man and will be replaced by the kingdom of the Son of Man

1 – The Beastly Empires of Man vs. 1-8

-You will notice that chapter 7 goes back in time to before chapter 5 –

-v. 1 – “In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon...”

-Daniel says that he gets this vision “by night” (v. 2) –

-You could say that is only because you sleep at night and that’s when you dream...

-But I think it is more –

-Nighttime is dark and scary.

-The blowing wind is more spooking at night!

-All of this first part of the vision, as it relates to the beastly empires of man, create a scary mood.

-This is true with the 4 winds of the heavens stirring up the sea which then spits up 4 beasts –

-To ancient people, including the Hebrews, the sea was unpredictable, dangerous, uncontrollable, uncertain, etc. “A potent symbol of chaos” (T. Longman)

- You could set out one beautiful morning and by nightfall have perished!
- Ps. 18:15; Job 7:12; Jer. 5:22; Nah. 1:4; Hab. 3:5; Isa. 27:1
- The winds are blowing around and creating what we might think of as a hurricane.
- Out of the hurricane come these four beasts –

-Beast #1 – A lion with eagle wings – v. 4

-Beast #2 – A bear eating flesh and ribs – v. 5

-Beast #3 – A leopard with 4 wings – v. 6

-We will talk about the 4th beast in a bit but let's make these observations –

- The beasts go against God's created order –
- The beasts are wild and destructive – they're tearing things up!
- The beasts are proud – they do what they want!
- The beasts rise and fall – they aren't permanent –

-Who do the beasts represent? –

- First = Babylon
- Second = Medo-Persian
- Third = Greece
- Fourth = Rome

2 – The Universal and Eternal Reign of God vs. 9-12

-It begins with the "Ancient of Days" – vs. 9-10

-While the kingdoms of man have a beginning, the Ancient of Days is just there – He exists!

-God says, "In the beginning Me!"

-He has no beginning and no end – From everlasting to everlasting He is God!

-He sits on the throne and all angelic beings worship him.

-Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord God Almighty – The earth is full of His glory!

-He opens the books of judgment and judges the kingdoms of man, including the final one – the "little horn".

-He gives all the earth and all its people to one called "son of man".

-The first phase is a 1,000 year kingdom

-The final is an eternal kingdom in the New Heavens and New Earth.

3 – The Kingdom of the Son of Man vs. 13-14

(Read and commit on the characteristics of the kingdom.)

-This Son of Man is God

-He forgives sins – Matt. 9:6

-He is Lord of the Sabbath – Matt. 12:8

-He purifies the kingdom – Matt. 13:41

-He judges the world – Matt. 16:27

-He is raised from the dead – Matt. 17:9

-He will sit on the throne – Matt. 19:28

-The Son of Man is the Redeemer –