

"The Night Vision"
Daniel 7:1–28
Wednesday, October 7, 2026
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God gives Daniel a dream featuring visions of four terrible beasts.

Main Thought of the Chapter: "Daniel sees earthly kingdoms rise and fall under God's judgment, while the Son of Man receives an everlasting kingdom."

Chapter Outline

- 1. Vv. 1–8: Kingdoms Rise**
- 2. Vv. 9–12: God Judges**
- 3. Vv. 13–28: Christ Reigns**

1. Verses 1–8: Kingdoms Rise

Vs. 1: "In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon..." This was about 553 B.C., before the events of Daniel 5. Daniel was about 70 years old when God gave him this revelation.

Daniel's dreams and visions were supernatural revelation concerning the future of mankind and the kingdoms of this world. **"...then he wrote the dream..."** Daniel recorded what God showed him.

Vs. 2: "The four winds of heaven were stirring up the great sea." Great Sea: Mediterranean. Winds: "*ruah*." Spiritual forces behind the affairs of nations. Sinful humanity. **Isaiah 57:20**

Gentile nations are portrayed as restless, chaotic, and sinful: instability. Yet God remains sovereign. The nations may seem to move according to their own purposes, but God directs history toward His appointed end.

Vs. 3: "Four great beasts were coming up... different from one another." An angel later explains that these four beasts represent four kings and their kingdoms (**Vv. 15–17**).

The four beast kingdoms correspond to those represented by the metallic-man statue in **Daniel 2**: Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome.

Daniel 2 presents these kingdoms as a magnificent statue. **Daniel 7** presents them as beasts. What man sees as impressive, God sees as destructive.

Vs. 4: "The first was like a lion and had the wings of an eagle." The winged lion represents **Babylon**. Lions were associated with Babylonian royalty, and winged-lion imagery was common in Babylon. **Jeremiah 4:7**.

"Its wings were plucked...". The beast was lifted up and made to stand like a man. Looking heavenward: repent. **"A human mind also was given to it."** "Ability to reason" or "a new heart."

This corresponds with what happened to Nebuchadnezzar in **Daniel 4**. God humbled the proud king, and Nebuchadnezzar ultimately acknowledged God's sovereignty. God humbled the proudest ruler on earth.

Vs. 5: "Another beast, a second one, resembling a bear."

The bear represents **Medo-Persia**, the empire that followed Babylon.

"It was raised up on one side..." The image reflects the unequal relationship between Media and Persia. Persia eventually became the dominant partner.

"Three ribs were in its mouth...". The ribs picture conquest. Medo-Persia conquered major territories including Babylon, Lydia, and Egypt.

"Arise, devour much meat!" The command emphasizes the empire's appetite for conquest and expansion.

Vs. 6: "Another one, like a leopard...". The leopard is a cunning animal known for speed and agility. This beast is given extraordinary speed: **"...on its back four wings of a bird."**

This beast is Greece. Alexander the Great rapidly conquered the Persian Empire in an extraordinarily short time. Four wings: Four points of the compass, world domination.

"...the beast also had four heads..." After Alexander's death in 323 B.C., his empire was eventually divided among four generals.

"...and dominion was given to it." Even the rise of this powerful empire was under divine sovereignty.

Vv. 7–8: "Dreadful and terrifying and extremely strong." The fourth beast is unlike anything Daniel can identify: a mongrel (a composite of lion, bear, and leopard). **Revelation 13:2.**

"It had large iron teeth." It represents Rome. **Iron:** overwhelming military power and crushing strength. **"It devoured and crushed and trampled down the remainder..."** Rome conquered and assimilated nation after nation.

"It had ten horns." The angel later explains: **"... out of this kingdom ten kings will arise." (Daniel 7:24).** The ten horns point to a future configuration associated with the fourth kingdom—a revived Roman Empire.

"Another horn, a little one, came up among them..." Three horns are overthrown. The little horn possesses **"eyes"** (intelligence, insight, and cleverness) and a **"mouth"** (arrogance, boasting, and blasphemy). **Antichrist.**

2. Vv. 9–12 God Judges

Vs. 9: "Until thrones were set up..." Matthew 25:31-33. Divine judgment. **"Ancient of Days"**: God's eternity, sovereignty, and holiness. White vesture and hair symbolize purity and wisdom. **Revelation 1:14.**

Vv. 9–10: "His throne was ablaze with flames; its wheels were a burning fire." Fire represents God's holiness, judgment, purification, and opposition to sin.

"A river of fire was flowing..." This may be God's opening declaration in the nations' trial. **Isaiah 30: 27-28.** An overwhelming multitude: **"Thousands upon thousands ... myriads upon myriads..."**

"The court sat, and the books were opened." These books record deeds for judgment. Nothing is hidden from Him.

Vv. 11–12: Daniel watches because of the boastful words of the little horn. **"...the beast was slain, and its body was destroyed and given to the burning fire."** The Antichrist's power ends in eternal destruction.

3. Vv. 13–28: Christ Reigns

Vv. 13–14: "... One like a Son of Man was coming." Mark 14:61-62. Daniel sees the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. The Son of Man comes before the Ancient of Days and receives the kingdom. **Revelation 10:15.**

Vs. 14: "And to Him was given dominion, glory, and a kingdom." And His kingdom extends to **"All the peoples, nations, and men of every language."** Unlike Man's kingdoms, Christ's kingdom cannot be destroyed.

Vv. 15–18: "My spirit was distressed within me..." Daniel does not understand everything. The angel explains: **"These great beasts... are four kings who will arise from the earth."**

Then comes encouraging news: **"But the saints... will receive the kingdom and possess the kingdom forever."** God's redeemed people will share in Christ's reign.

Vv. 19–22: "...the exact meaning of the fourth beast..."

Daniel remains troubled by the fourth beast. It is exceedingly dreadful, with iron teeth, bronze claws, ten horns, and a blasphemous little horn.

“That horn was waging war with the saints and overpowering them.” The Antichrist will persecute God's people for a limited period. **Revelation 11:3-7; Revelation 13:1-8.**

“Until the Ancient of Days came...”. The saints who appeared defeated are ultimately vindicated

Vv. 23–25: “He will ...devour the whole earth...”. The angel further explains, **“...out of this kingdom ten kings will arise.”** They will reign as a single, united empire. **Revelation 17:12-13.** These ten kings will surrender control of the Empire to the Antichrist.

“He will speak out against the Most High...”. He will persecute God's people. Seeking to alter times and law. Exercising authority for **“a time, times, and half a time”** (the final three and one-half years of the Tribulation).

Vs. 26: “But the court will sit for judgment...”. The Antichrist ends in complete defeat. **Revelation 20:10** declares that the devil, the beast, and the false prophet will be cast into the lake of fire.

Vs. 27: Christ's kingdom is given to His saints. Christ will rule the earth, and His saints will reign with Him. **“All the dominions will serve and obey Him.”**

Vs. 28: “At this point the revelation ended.” Daniel was alarmed. He has seen the rise of kingdoms, the terror of the Antichrist, the persecution of God's people, the judgment of evil, and the coming kingdom of Christ.

Summary:

Daniel 7 reveals God's view of history: kingdoms rise, culminating in the Antichrist. The Ancient of Days judges him, removes his dominion, and vindicates the saints. The Son of Man receives everlasting dominion and glory; Jesus Christ will reign forever.

Application:

1. Prophecy calls us to holy living. Keep eternity in view.
2. We find comfort and strength: the future is in God's hands.
3. All prophecy points to Jesus, who will reign over the earth.
4. Live in hope: We will reign with Him and serve Him forever.