

Kings and Kingdoms: The Ancient of Days and the Days to Come

Appreciating the Literary Style of Apocalyptic Literature

- From **chapter 7** onward, we now have a genre shift from historical narrative to apocalyptic literature.
 - Apocalyptic means an “unveiling.”
- This literary style is heightened, dense, and highly symbolic.
 - It uses many visual figures to illustrate broadly instead of technically explaining.

There are portions that, in our time, are not yet meant to be understandable. Even Daniel did understand portions of this:

Daniel 12:8 – 9

8 I heard, but I did not understand. Then I said, “O my lord, what shall be the outcome of these things?”

9 He said, “Go your way, Daniel, for the words are shut up and sealed until the time of the end.”

- These prophetic sections are multi-layered
 - On one layer, they reveal kings and kingdoms that were more immediate for Daniel’s place in time.
- But also, they are revealing things regarding the end of the ages
 - These descriptions are types and shadows that bleed into details regarding the rise and fall of the lawless one (anti-Christ) and his wicked kingdom.

Daniel 7 is Key to Understanding the following Chapters

- **Chapter 7** is a prophetic panorama of what happened from Daniel's time throughout human history until Jesus Christ came the first time and what will happen until he returns to rule and reign in a very compressed form.
 - **Chapter 7** is the panoramic view,
 - **Chapters 8** through **12** expand on or highlight portions of **chapter 7**.

Verse 2 – “the four winds of heaven were stirring up the great sea”

- The stirring sea stands for the Earth and humanity’s ebb and flow below the heavens

Isaiah 57:20 But the wicked are like the tossing sea; for it cannot be quiet, and its waters toss up mire and dirt.

- The winds of heaven blow over it to cause it to do God's will and purposes

Psalms 89:9 – 10

9 You rule the raging of the sea; when its waves rise, you still them.

10 You crushed Rahab(Egypt) like a carcass; you scattered your enemies with your mighty arm.

Proverbs 21:1 The king's heart is a stream of water in the hand of the LORD; he turns it wherever he will.



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The First Beast Is a Lion with Eagle Wings

- This is Nebuchadnezzar and Babylon, which existed between 605 - 539 BC
 - In the archaeological discoveries of the city of Babylon, especially at the gates of the royal palaces, they have found several examples of winged lions as their national symbol.
- This imagery speaks of great royal majesty, domination, and speed.
 - All of which characterize Nebuchadnezzar and his rise to power.

The Second Beast Is a Bear with Three Ribs in its Teeth

- This is Cyrus and the Medo-Persian empire, which existed between 539 - 322 BC
 - A bear is slower than a lion, but a bear has brute force.
 - The ribs in its teeth show it's devouring other kingdoms (beasts)
- Being raised up on one side as if two feet are on the ground, and two feet are up symbolizes how the Medo-Persian coalition was never an even union.
 - The Persians were much more powerful than the Medes.

The Third Beast is a Leopard with Four Wings and Four Heads

- This is Alexander the Great and the Greek Empire
 - A leopard is agile, and given four wings would make it incredibly fast
- Alexander the Great began to take over the world starting in 334 BC and there were two things that marked his kingdom:
 - The speed of his victories (the four wings)
 - Then the speed of the breakup of his kingdom into four rival parts (the four heads).
- In only 10 years time, Alexander conquered from Greece all the way to India
 - But just as quickly, his kingdom was divided into the hands of his four key generals:
 - Cassander, Ptolemy, Antigonus, and Seleucus
 - And for the next 47 years would be the (322 - 275 BC) comes what history knows as "the Wars of the Diadochi," or "the Wars of Alexander's Successors."

The Fourth Beast is Different and Indescribable, with Ten Horns

- This fourth kingdom begins as Rome but then begins to describe something beyond Rome.
 - By 63 BC, Rome controls all the regions that Daniel knows and has prophesied about and will even expand well beyond
- This beast had great iron teeth - like the iron legs of the statue that Nebuchadnezzar saw in **Chapter 2**.
 - A fitting description of the domination and occupation of "the Iron Rule of Rome."
- The ten horns are not so much to be matched to ten Roman kings or ten nations.
 - Horns denote power. Most beasts only have two, but this empire will have unprecedented power to rule over the nations.



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Jesus was Born During the Reign of Rome's First Caesar

Luke 2:1 In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered.

- Caesar Augustus (prior known as Octavian), the grandnephew and adopted son of Julius Caesar, reigned for 40 years: 16 January 27 BC – 19 August 14 AD

His ministry began some thirty years later during the reign of Rome's Second Caesar

Luke 3:1 In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar

- Augustus appointed his stepson and adopted son Tiberius to be Caesar after him, and he reigned for 22 years: 17 September 14 – 16 March 37 AD.

Who is this Little Horn?

He will be a Powerful Ruler

- A “little horn” that rises up - **verses 8, 11, 20, and 21**
 - An animal's horn was the animal's strength. It is a symbol of power and might.

Psalms 75:10 All the horns of the wicked I will cut off, but the horns of the righteous shall be lifted up.

- His power will not only come from remarkable strength but also remarkable intelligence.
 - This horn has human eyes - **verses 8 and 20** - signifying insight and intellect.

He will be a Proud Speaker

- The little horn that rises up has a mouth - **verses 8, 11, 20, and 25**
Revelation 13:5a And the beast was given a mouth uttering haughty and blasphemous words,

He will be a Painful Oppressor

Revelation 13:7 - 8

7 Also it was allowed to make war on the saints and to conquer them. And authority was given it over every tribe and people and language and nation,
8 and all who dwell on Earth will worship it, everyone whose name has not been written before the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who was slain.

- In **chapter 7**, he's called “the little horn.”
- In **chapter 8**, he's called “a king of bold face.”
- In **chapter 9**, he is called “the prince who is to come”
- And in **chapter 11**, he is called “the king [who] shall do as he wills.”
 - These are different names for the same person—the final ruler—before Jesus Christ returns to reign.



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He will be the Principal Loser

2nd Thessalonians 2:8 And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will kill with the breath of his mouth and bring to nothing by the appearance of his coming.

Verse 25 - “For a time, times, and a half a time”

- Literally, in Aramaic, it means "a time, times, and a dividing of time."
- This unique phrase occurs three times in the Bible:
 - It occurs here in Aramaic,
 - in **Daniel 12:7** in Hebrew,
 - and then in **Revelation 12:14** in Greek.
- Later on, in both **Daniel** and **Revelation**, this gets more specific about this “divided time.”
 - It is 42 months or 1260 days, which happens to be three and a half years.
- God, in his mercy, is going shorten the time of the tribulation and cruelty of the little horn:
 - To 1260 days = 42 months = three and a half years = a time and times and half a time

Mark 13:19 - 26

13 For in those days there will be such tribulation as has not been from the beginning of the creation that God created until now, and never will be.

20 And if the Lord had not cut short the days, no human being would be saved. But for the sake of the elect, whom he chose, he shortened the days.

21 And then if anyone says to you, ‘Look, here is the Christ!’ or ‘Look, there he is!’ do not believe it.

22 For false christs and false prophets will arise and perform signs and wonders, to lead astray, if possible, the elect.

23 But be on guard; I have told you all things beforehand.

24 “But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light,

25 and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.

26 And then they will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory.

- In **Revelation 11:2-3, 12:6, and 13:5**, we see this division (and shortening) of the seven-year period of the lawless man’s rule on this earth.

Revelation 13:5 And the beast was given a mouth uttering haughty and blasphemous words, and it was allowed to exercise authority for forty-two months.

What’s the Big Lesson of Daniel 7?

- We see the same themes here, that we saw in the first six chapters
 - That what was true in all past, will be true in all future.
 - The same God *that ruled, is ruling, and will rule* overall!

