



Lesson 2 - Explanation

Daniel Chapter 7 - Verses 15 - 28

Remember in Lesson 1 Daniel had a dream of four distinctly different beasts but the fourth beast is quite dreadful, even more dreadful than a lion, a bear or a leopard. As Daniel looked he saw that the beast had ten horns and then the little horn that rose in power and spoke boastfully. In the dream Daniel also saw the Ancient of Days in Heaven and sitting on His throne. He saw millions attending to Him and Daniel saw the Son of Man - Jesus approaching.

As we think about dreams we have had, we can understand how real a dream can feel and we seem to consciously interact with the people in a dream. Daniel also tells us in verse 1 that he was able to write down what he was seeing. These events are quite troubling to Daniel. Now Daniel will get an explanation of this vision.

7:15 - *I, Daniel, was troubled in spirit, and the visions that passed through my mind disturbed me.*

We see Daniel refer to himself giving us his personal account of how he felt at this precise moment. Anyone receiving any vision about a future event would have to be very troubled about it. It would be interesting to experience a divine vision just one time to see the difference between a vision and a dream. Daniel should be well into old age by now and he has been diligently praying and carrying out all the Jewish law for most of his life.

7:16 – *“I approached one of those standing there and asked him the meaning of all this. “So he told me and gave me the interpretation of these things:*

We can wonder *who* are “those standing there” and it could be angels or it could be those who have come from the earth to Heaven either through death or the Rapture or someone else that we do not yet know about. One thing we can deduce is that for them to be in the presence of The Ancient of Days – God the Creator – they must be pure and holy and therefore their interpretation is true. Most of the commentaries agree that it was an angel.

7:17 - *“The four great beasts are four kings that will rise from the earth.”*

This is the first connection of the term “beast” and king. Remember this when we are introduced to the beasts in Revelation 11 and 13. The angel tells Daniel that they will rise from the earth. The term *kings* implies an individual and not a kingdom per se, but any kingdom must have a king and a kingdom follows the lead of its king so they are usually one and the same. We can use the accounts of all of the Jewish kings and how their kingdom was personalized by the king who was ruling at the time. Then, when Daniel was young, the entire kingdom was punished for their king’s rebellion. Daniel, himself witnessed the fall of Nebuchadnezzar’s kingdom through his son when it was overthrown by Cyrus.

7:18 – *‘But the holy people of the Most High will receive the kingdom and will possess it forever—yes, for ever and ever.’*

As Christians we frequently refer to this as having read the last chapter of the Bible and

in the end God wins. God's victory will be the final victory and all opposition to God will be destroyed. This is referring to Israel and as we know from Revelation, Jesus returns to earth and in the second part of Revelation 19:19-20 and the beast and the kings of the earth come together to fight Jesus and heavenly armies and LOSE big time and the beast and the false prophet are thrown into the fire lake of burning fire.

7:19 - *"Then I wanted to know the meaning of the fourth beast, which was different from all the others and most terrifying, with its iron teeth and bronze claws—the beast that crushed and devoured its victims and trampled underfoot whatever was left."*

Once the interpreter has assured Daniel that God's holy people will win out in the end, Daniel asks him about the fourth beast. From Daniel's perspective he is most interested in this beast but without details concerning the first three beasts we can only study history and try to see which kingdoms they refer to. Daniel had seen what Nebuchadnezzar's armies had done to Israel and it was extreme destruction – even if Daniel left Israel before this happened I am sure he heard the accounts from the remnant that had been preserved and brought to Babylon. So this beast is something far more destructive than he had witnessed personally.

7:20 – *"I also wanted to know about the ten horns on its head and about the other horn that came up, before which three of them fell—the horn that looked more imposing than the others and that had eyes and a mouth that spoke boastfully."*

This "horn", a future ruler, is widely thought to be the same person as the man of sin referred to by Paul in his letters and the first beast in Revelation.

7:21 – 22 - *"As I watched, this horn was waging war against the holy people and defeating them, until the Ancient of Days came and pronounced judgment in favor of the holy people of the Most High, and the time came when they possessed the kingdom."*

Daniel continues with his request by giving further details of what he had seen in the vision. The "holy people" refers to Israel and notice that he is defeating them. As we remember the Arab-Israeli wars 1947-1949 - Israel won, Suez canal war - 1956 - Israel sort of won, 1967 - known as the 6 day war - Israel won, 1973 - Yom Kippur War - Egypt and Syria against Israel - the Arab states initially were winning but after a few days the Israelis force the Syrians back to the ceasefire line and they had driven the

Egyptians back and had circled around them. So, those wars were nothing compared to what this war will be like.

7:23 - *“He gave me this explanation: ‘The fourth beast is a fourth kingdom that will appear on earth. It will be different from all the other kingdoms and will devour the whole earth, trampling it down and crushing it.’”*

From history to this date we know that no kingdom has really conquered the whole earth. Note, that this does not say it will rule the whole earth, but it will devour the whole earth and crush it.

7:24 – *“The ten horns are ten kings who will come from this kingdom. After them another king will arise, different from the earlier ones; he will subdue three kings.”*

From this we can see a couple of possibilities – sequential rulers or parallel rulers. Notice that it says “After them” which would seem to indicate sequential rulers and after they have ruled another will arise. “He will subdue three kings” might be other kings that are not part of the original 10 kings but from different areas.

7:25 – *“He will speak against the Most High and oppress his holy people and try to change the set times and the laws. The holy people will be delivered into his hands for a time, times and half a time.”*

The main characteristic of this new ruler is that he will speak against the Most High – God. He will oppress Israel and will try to change the laws for Israel and he will rule over them for 3.5 years as we best understand the phrase time, times and half a time. Later in Daniel he is given more specific reference to this in actual number of days that confirms 3.5 years. This period of time is frequently referred to as the first half of the tribulation.

7:26 - *‘But the court will sit, and his power will be taken away and completely destroyed forever.’*

The court may refer to the court that is mentioned in verse 10 - “The court was seated, and the books were opened.”

7:27 – *‘Then the sovereignty, power and greatness of all the kingdoms under heaven will be*

handed over to the holy people of the Most High. His kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom, and all rulers will worship and obey him.'

Daniel is given the explanation that ends in Israel being taken care of by God but not before more pain and suffering under this terrible ruler. When Jesus returns and defeats Satan as we see in the Book of Revelation that is when He will set up the kingdom that is everlasting and all believers will worship and obey him forever and ever.

7:28 - "This is the end of the matter. I, Daniel, was deeply troubled by my thoughts, and my face turned pale, but I kept the matter to myself."

The vision ends here and I have always wondered - how did it end? Did it just stop or did the translator tell him he had to go? Was there more that went on but did not get recorded? Keep in mind in Daniel 12:9 the angel tells him - "He replied, "Go your way, Daniel, because the words are rolled up and sealed until the time of the end." So, could it be that there are other details that we may become aware of when the time comes?

Many times we assure others that everything will work out and it will be OK. The interpreter did that but it still troubles us because we do not know all the details of what is going to happen. In raising my daughters there were many times that we would comfort them and encourage them telling them that this time will pass and it will be much better and they lived to see it happen but they still had to live through the time that lead up to everything working out. This must be how Daniel felt but at a much higher level. Of course, this will not be the end of it for Daniel. God is not through with Daniel and has a couple more visions and explanations for him.

As we go through each week our goal is to have our ears and eyes tuned into the many events around the world that are happening. Everything ties into the plan God has for us but most of the time we do not earnestly seek these events out. The more we think about and pray about what we are reading and seeing the more likely it is that God will reveal to us. Remember Jesus tells us to Seek and we will find.

Lesson Goals - What did we learn?