

"Daniel's Vision"**Part 1****Daniel 7**

Introduction: Tonight, in our study of Daniel, we have come to the 7th chapter, and it will be in this chapter that we start into the prophetic section of the book. In the first 6 chapters we have been learning how to live Godly in the midst of a pagan society. Now we are going to see the prophecies given to Daniel and it will be in these prophecies that we shall see the sovereign control of God over the kingdoms of the world. The section that we are going to step into tonight is going to be parallel with what we studied in Daniel 2, which was the image that Nebuchadnezzar had seen. That image in Daniel 2 told of the Gentile world powers that would exist during the Times of the Gentiles. This chapter will also cover the Times of the Gentiles only it will be from a different perspective, and it will give us more detail. Like Daniel 2, Daniel 7 is the blueprint for all Biblical Prophecy. Every prophecy that we study in the Bible **MUST** correspond with Daniel 7 and if it does not then we can be sure the interpretation is not accurate. What are the Times of the Gentiles?

This is the time that started when King Zedekiah was taken off the throne in Jerusalem by the Babylonians and it will last until Jesus returns at the end of the Tribulation and sets up His Kingdom and He then sits on the throne of David in Jerusalem. Between Zedekiah and the reign of Jesus Christ Israel will be under the control of Gentile world powers. There will not be a king from the line of David who would sit on the throne in Jerusalem until Jesus Christ rules from Jerusalem in His Kingdom.

J. F. Walvoord rightly remarks that *"Chapter 7 is a high point in revelation in the book of Daniel; and, in some sense, the material before as well as the material which follows pivots upon the detailed revelation of this chapter."*

Someone has very well said,

**Only he who knows prophecy
can dwell in the calm of eternity now.**

➤ **The Setting**

Notice Daniel 7:1

As we come to this verse the first thing we notice is that this chapter is not in chronological order. The events of this chapter take place after Daniel 4 and before

Daniel 5. This is the first year of Belshazzar and if you recall, Belshazzar died at the end of chapter 5. The year is 553 BC and Daniel is 67 years old.

We need to also notice in this verse that Daniel wrote this book. I point that out because there are critics who say it was not possible for Daniel to pen the Words of this book. You see, they have trouble with the accuracy of what Daniel wrote when you consider that he wrote about the Medo Persian Empire, the Grecian Empire, the Roman Empire before they were in existence. For this reason, there are many who say that Daniel's name was added to a letter that was written sometime in the 1st century, after these Gentile kingdoms came into power. But we know it is not a problem for Daniel to have written this letter in the 6th century BC for he was inspired by the God who knows the end from the beginning.

➤ The Vision

Notice Daniel 7:2

Here we see four winds that stove upon the great sea. So let us slow down and look closely at what is said here. The four winds are not defined for us and therefore we cannot be dogmatic as to what they refer to. We can consider a few ideas. Notice the words of John Whitcomb.

The four winds of heaven probably speak of the angelic forces through which God controls and moves the nations. Of more than 120 references in the Bible to wind (more than 90 in the OT and about 30 in the NT), well over half are related to events and ideas which reflect the sovereignty and power of God. In other words, more than 50% of the uses of "wind" in Scripture refer to God's sovereignty causing something to happen!

In Revelation we see the angels associated with the 4 winds.

Revelation 7:1

And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree.

Notice Daniel 7:2 again.

These 4 winds are seen striving upon the great sea. Some say the sea here is the Mediterranean Sea. But that does not seem to fit the context. It is more likely that the great sea here is the sea of humanity. The beasts that we shall see will all rise from this sea and because they are Gentile world powers, we can understand that the sea represents

the Gentile nations in all of their confusion The winds are the winds of storms as the sea of humanity always seems to be in turmoil. Let us notice another reference to this sea.

Revelation 13:1

And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy.

The Anti-Christ will rise out of the same sea. In the Bible, the sea often pictures the Gentile nations, and the land pictures the nation of Israel. For that reason, many believe the Anti-Christ will be a Gentile. The fact that the sea represents the Gentiles and the land represents Israel could give us a picture of the Times of the Gentiles. Why? Because the sea constantly beats against the land which is what happens to Israel in the Times of the Gentiles as she is under the rule of the Gentiles.

Let us get back to Daniel 7:2. The winds strove on the great sea. This helps us to understand what is happening in our world today. God is in control of the winds, and He stirs the masses in His power. He does this to stir the hearts of people. There is no way that unsaved man can find peace and solitude in the world in which we live in. There is always something happening such as wars, strife, and divisions. This is all by design. God will not allow fallen man to find peace on this earth and in this life. God wants man to turn to Him and so He is constantly stirring the masses. He is also stirring the masses as He is moving His pieces into place for the fulfillment of prophecy. Let us consider one more thought concerning the sea and the land.

Revelation 13:11-12

¹¹ *And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon.*

¹² *And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.*

Here is the False Prophet and he is seen coming out of the EARTH. Could it be that the Anti-Christ is a Gentile and the False Prophet is a Jew? It is surely possible. One thing we can be sure of is that they rise to power from different places.

Notice Daniel 7:3

From the sea rises four great beasts. This tells us that it is God who brings these empires into power because the stirring of the sea is brought about by the four winds of HEAVEN. The four beasts that we are about to see are the Gentile world powers that will exist in the Times of the Gentiles. The picture here is much different than the picture in Daniel 2.

Daniel 2:31-35

³¹ *Thou, O king, sawest, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible.*

³² *This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass,*

³³ *His legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay.*

³⁴ *Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces.*

³⁵ *Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshingfloors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.*

In Daniel 2 the Gentile world powers were seen as a beautiful statue of a man. It had a gold head, silver arms and chest, brass belly and thighs, and iron legs with feet of iron and brass. But in the section, we are in the same empires are going to be seen as terrible beasts. What is the difference?

In Daniel 2 the vision is seen by Nebuchadnezzar who sees this from the oppressor's perspective. He is the one who has the power. He is the one who is in charge. In Daniel 7 the vision is seen by Daniel and therefore it is seen from the one BEING oppressed perspective. Daniel is seeing the vision from the perspective of the Jews who will live under these Gentile world powers.

Notice Daniel 7:4

The first beast was like a lion, and it had wings upon its back. This is Babylon and the lion is the king of beasts. This is fitting because Nebuchadnezzar was called the king of kings.

Daniel 2:37

³⁷ Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory.

The wings on the lion's back spoke of the swiftness by which the Babylonians conquered different people groups.

Habakkuk 1:6-8

⁶ For, lo, I raise up the Chaldeans, that bitter and hasty nation, which shall march through the breadth of the land, to possess the dwellingplaces that are not their's.

⁷ They are terrible and dreadful: their judgment and their dignity shall proceed of themselves.

⁸ Their horses also are swifter than the leopards, and are more fierce than the evening wolves: and their horsemen shall spread themselves, and their horsemen shall come from far; they shall fly as the eagle that hasteth to eat.

Notice Daniel 7:4 again.

The last part of the verse speaks of what happened to Nebuchadnezzar when God humbled him.

Notice Daniel 7:5

This is the second Gentile power, and it is the Medes and the Persians. This empire is seen as a bear that is raised up on one side which shows that one side is stronger than the other. This would be the Persian side of the empire. The bear here is the same as the chest and arms of silver in Daniel 2. This empire rose up and devoured just as God had foretold.

As we look at each of these empires, we must understand that it is God who brings them to power.

Daniel 2:20-22

²⁰ Daniel answered and said, Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever: for wisdom and might are his:

²¹ And he changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings: he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding:

²² He revealeth the deep and secret things: he knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him.

There is something interesting to consider here. Cyrus of Persia was the man who would send the Jews back to Jerusalem after the Babylonian captivity.

Ezra 1:1-2

Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying,

² Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, The LORD God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and he hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah.

The Jews therefore saw Persia as an ally. Then we go to Ezekiel 38.

Ezekiel 38:4-5, 9-12

⁴ And I will turn thee back, and put hooks into thy jaws, and I will bring thee forth, and all thine army, horses and horsemen, all of them clothed with all sorts of armour, even a great company with bucklers and shields, all of them handling swords:

⁵ Persia, Ethiopia, and Libya with them; all of them with shield and helmet:

⁹ Thou shalt ascend and come like a storm, thou shalt be like a cloud to cover the land, thou, and all thy bands, and many people with thee.

¹⁰ Thus saith the Lord GOD; It shall also come to pass, that at the same time shall things come into thy mind, and thou shalt think an evil thought:

¹¹ And thou shalt say, I will go up to the land of unwalled villages; I will go to them that are at rest, that dwell safely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates,

¹² To take a spoil, and to take a prey; to turn thine hand upon the desolate places that are now inhabited, and upon the people that are gathered out of the nations, which have gotten cattle and goods, that dwell in the midst of the land.

Persia was seen as an ally and then Ezekiel was given this prophecy where we are told that in the battle of Gog and Magog, Persia will come against the nation of Israel to take the spoil. I cannot help but wonder what Ezekiel thought about this?

Conclusion:

The point I want to make here is that things can change. Regardless of how things appear to us we must know that God's Word will be fulfilled to the very letter.

In 1935 Persia was changed to the Islamic Republic of Iran. In 1979 there was an Islamic revelation and now the pieces are in place for the battle of Gog and Magog. Things can change quickly or they can change gradually. But the bottom line is that God's Word is the absolute Truth.