

**“BEASTLY KINGDOMS”**  
**Daniel 7:1-8; 15-17; 19-21; 23-25; 28**  
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INTRODUCTION

How do we look at the great world powers of the earth—both past and present?

With *awe, admiration, fear?*

This chapter shows us how God looks at them—**they are “beastly!”**

Let us compare the view of chapter two with that of chapter 7:

- Recipients of the vision—A heathen king in chapter 2; a godly prophet in chapter 7
- The Interpreter of the dreams—Daniel in chapter 2; an angel in chapter 7
- The viewpoint of the empires—Man’s perspective of the glorious spectacle in chapter 2; God’s perspective of the brutality and depravity of these mighty kingdoms.

Chapter 7 brings the *first half of the book* to an end; the Aramaic section also ends here, being that these incidents and teachings were intended to reach the world at large—as well as God’s people.

This section also ends by introducing the Messiah and His eternal Kingdom.

The Time of this revelation to Daniel was 553 BC

- The first year of Belshazzar the sub-king to Nabonidas.
- Daniel would have been about 67 years old.
- Babylon would fall 14 years later.
- Daniel would like to know what the future holds for the people of God.

God answers this question through a dream-vision which results in great distress for Daniel (v. 28), even though upon his polite demand for an explanation an angel gives him a brief outline of the future.

Here we see The Dream of Daniel, The Distress which resulted for him (15, 28), The Demand of Daniel for an explanation (16, 19-21), and The Definition of the details of the dream (17, 23-25).

**God understands the world and its actors and is in complete control!**

- I. THE DREAM (1-8) [Part 1 here; part 2 next week.]
  - Dream—visions of his head on his bed
  - He wrote the dream down for accuracy of details.
  - He recorded the following summary of it—giving all the essential information.
- A. The Background Scene (2, 3); notice throughout his careful observance of details.
  1. The Ocean—Represents the peoples of the World in turmoil and tumult. (cf. Is. 17:12-13; Jer. 46:7-8; Rev. 13:1; 17:1, 15)
  2. The Winds
    - The Forces stirring up the nations
    - The **4 directions**: Confusion and strife from all sides and worldwide—yet, all is under the control of God.

- The state of unrest is **caused by their sin**, and results in such empires and the conflicts between them.

3. The Beasts: the **Four World Empires** (cf. Is. 27:1; 51:9; Ps. 74:13-14; Ezek. 29:3; 32:2—Sea monsters, Leviathan, Rahab)

Such a dream would have been frightening and unsettling for anyone.

#### B. The Beasts (4-8)

##### 1. The Lion: Babylon (4) [**Rev. 13:2—head of a Lion.**]

- a. Lion=king of the beasts; Eagle=king of the birds; Nebuchadnezzar was the “head of gold” in the dream of chapter 2. The lion was very “swift” to pounce on its prey.
- b. Numerous statues of winged lions have been found in Babylonian ruins.
- c. Contemporary prophets also call Neby a lion: Jer. 4:7; 49:19; 50:17, 44) or an Eagle (Jer. 49:22; Lam. 4:9; Hab. 1:8); Compare
- d. Note the change from a beast to a man—Cf. Dan. 4—humanizing of Nebuchadnezzar and Babylon due to the spiritual influences upon him.

##### 2. The Bear: Media-Persia (5) [**Rev. 13:2—feet of a Bear**]

- a. Powerful, ferocious (II Sam. 17:8)
- b. Less swift, more awkward
- c. Compare the lion and bear together in Hos. 13:8; Am. 5:19; Pr. 28:15; I Sam. 17:34ff.
- d. Raised on one side—uneven influence of Medes compared with Persians
- e. Three ribs in its mouth—Babylon, Lydia, Egypt

##### 3. The Leopard: Greece (6) [**Rev. 13:2—body of a Leopard**]

- a. Less majestic, but swifter (cf. Hab. 1:8; Jer. 5:6; Hos. 13:7)
- b. Double set of wings—Speed and worldwide conquest
- c. Four heads
  - Lysimachus: Thrace and Bithynia
  - Cassander: Macedonia and Greece
  - Seleucus: Syria and Babylonia to India
  - Ptolemy: Egypt, Palestine, Arabia Petrea

##### 4. The Monster: Rome, “Different from all the other beasts before it” (7-8)

Notice the indication of “succession” in the words “before it.”

- a. Dreadful and terrifying
- b. Extremely Strong
- c. Cruel—large iron teeth
  - Devoured and crushed
  - Trampled the remainder with its feet
- d. Ten Horns—10 contemporary kings (v. 24; Rev. 17:12), not 10 divisions of Rome; compare the 10 toes of Daniel 2.
- e. The Little Horn

- Note that he came up “among them”, existing at the same historical period.
- He uproots three horns (v. 24); no known historical fulfillment of this.
- Eyes like those of a man—a person; indicates insight, humanism, and big-brother kind of oversight.
- Mouth uttering “great things”—boasts, blasphemies.
- As we will see, Antiochus Epiphanes will help us interpret this one.
- These characteristics are typical of a **powerful dictator**.
- This is **Not the Pope!**  
He is not a “king” historically // to other kings.  
He did not uproot three other kingdoms.  
He did not follow the break-up of the empire; he existed before that.
- He corresponds with the **beast of Rev. 13:5-8; 17:11-14.**

After such a dream, we can relate to Daniel’s deep distress.

## II. THE DISTRESS (15, 28)

- A. Spirit—“in its sheath”—cf. a sword
- B. Mind—15, 28—“thoughts” in his head
- C. Body—pale face--(lit. “brightness was changing upon me”)
- D. Emotions—alarmed (15, 28; by the vision and the thoughts connected with it)

But Daniel did not remain paralyzed; he was determined to discover the meaning of all this.

## III. THE DEMAND (16, 19-21)

- A. To know the general interpretation (16)
  - Daniel approached one of the angelic messengers
  - He wanted to know “the truth concerning all of this.”
  - So he told Daniel and made the interpretation known
- B. To know more about the Fourth Beast (19-21)  
Here is added “claws of bronze”  
Also added that the horn was “larger in appearance than its associates (20).”  
More careful observation also noted that this horn was “waging war with the saints and overpowering them” (21). These saints are Israel (9:26-27; Rev. 12:1-6) and believing Gentiles (Rev. 13:7-10, 16-17).

The angel gave him an explanation.

## IV. THE DEFINITION (17, 23-25)

- A. Four Kingdoms (17)
- B. Fury of the Little Horn (25)
  1. Devours the “whole earth and treads it down and crushes it” (v. 23)
  2. Speaks against (side of—seeks to replace) the Most High
  3. “Wears out” the saints—severe persecution
  4. Attacks “times and laws”

5. Dominion over God's holy ones for 3 ½ years  
See 9:27—half week; 12:7 3 ½ times; Rev. 11:2; 13:5—42 months; Rev. 11:3; 12:6—1260 days; 12:14—3 ½ times [cf. 12:11—1290 days].

#### CONCLUSION

In Matthew 4:8-10 Christ was offered the same thing that this Beast (little horn) gets.

Because He rejected the offer, He obtained the **Real Kingdom**—we see that next week.

The world kingdoms all perish—as we have already seen in Babylon, Persia, Greece, and the first manifestation of Rome's power. See **I John 2:17**

**Christians don't perish—we inherit an eternal kingdom!**