

DANIEL 7

I. OVERVIEW

- A. Four Beasts (vs 1-8, 11-12)
- B. The Heavenly Courtroom (vs 9-14)
- C. The Little Horn (vs 15-28)
 - 1) this section gives the divine interpretation of the previous verses

II. THE FOUR BEASTS (vs 1-8, 11-12)

- A. vs 1 Belshazzar was the king who was defeated by the Medo-Persian empire
- B. vs 2 “the great sea” is most often understood as the Mediterranean Sea. It also represents the gentiles
 - 1) consistently throughout the Scriptures, the antichrist and his religion are portrayed as emerging out of the gentile world
 - 2) this goes back to the [Genesis 3:15](#) prophecy of the conflict between the righteous seed and the satanic seed
 - 3) in [Isaiah 60:5](#), “sea” also represents gentiles
- C. vs 3 the beasts represent gentile kingdoms
- D. vs 4-6 the first three beasts
- E. vs 7 this beast is distinct from all the others
- F. vs 8 the new horn uproots three of the other horns
 - 1) the little horn is the antichrist
- G. vs 9-10 shift to the courtroom of God
- H. vs 11-12
 - 1) while the fourth beast is cast into the fire immediately, the others are given an extension of their lives

III. TWO PRIMARY INTERPRETATIONS OF DANIEL 7:1-8

- A. This book has been sealed until the end times ([Daniel 12:4](#))
 - 1) the statement is talking about people going over the prophecies of Daniel
 - 2) beware of being lured into the “prophet syndrome”
 - 3) on one hand we want to consult the broad spectrum of interpretation down throughout history; on the other hand, it’s clear that the majority of interpretations are probably wrong since the book is sealed until the end times and the church won’t have clarity on it until then
- B. The first interpretation:
 - 1) the beasts represent four historical, gentile empires
 - 2) chapter 7 is a recapitulation of chapter 2 (Nebuchadnezzar’s dream)

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- C. The second interpretation:
- 1) the beasts represent four contemporary kingdoms that arise as power players in the last days
 - 2) chapter 7 and chapter 2 aren't related

IV. COMPARING THE INTERPRETATIONS

- A. [Daniel 7:17](#) “will arise” in Aramaic, the original language of this text, the tense doesn't necessarily mean future tense; it could also be translated as “have arisen” or “are arising”
- B. the second interpretation says [Daniel 7:12](#) means the first three kingdoms will be allowed to continue for a little while into the Millennium
- 1) [Daniel 2 and 7](#) describe the destruction of the fourth beast (the antichrist) and his kingdom as being sudden and total. This is contrasted with Messiah's kingdom, which is sudden and spreads throughout the whole earth
 - 2) If [Daniel 7](#) is a recapitulation of [Daniel 2](#), the lion, bear, and leopard represent Nebuchadnezzar's Babylonian empire; Darius the Mede's Medo-Persian empire; and Alexander the Great's Greek Macedonian empire
 - a. they are represented in [Daniel 2:32](#) as the head of gold, chest of silver, and belly and thighs of bronze, respectively
 - b. The legs of iron in [Daniel 2:33](#) correlate to the iron-toothed fourth beast in [Daniel 7](#)
 - i. out of the legs of iron come the feet of mixed iron and clay ([2:33](#))
 - ii. a divided kingdom ([2:41-43](#)) that'll be comprised of ten kings ([7:7](#))
 - 3) In contrast to the antichrist's empire, which will be suddenly and totally destroyed, the other kingdoms, when they are conquered, will have their authority taken away; but they will live on for a period of time.
 - a. for example, when Babylon fell to the Medes and Persians, there was a change in leadership and replacement of power; but so much of the culture, the gods, the language, of Babylon remained.
 - 4) [Daniel 2:40](#) gives us a criterion with which we can see if historical empires align with the biblical requirement.
 - a. the historical empire that the legs of iron represent will be revived and comprised of ten kingdoms that will come to be controlled by the antichrist
 - 5) when Jesus returns, He will destroy the kingdom of the antichrist ([Daniel 2:34](#))
 - a. when the feet are broken, all are destroyed at the same time ([Daniel 2:35,45](#))
 - b. by virtue of the return of Jesus and the destruction of the antichrist's kingdom, all of the other empires will be destroyed at the same time

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- C. a contemporary kingdom interpretation is very subjective
- 1) Rome did not crush all the other empires both in its rise and demise (Daniel 2:34-35,40)
 - 2) however, the Islamic empire consumed Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and the whole Middle East
 - 3) a revived end time, antichrist Islamic empire fits the criterium more closely: a coalition of ten - eleven, when the antichrist arises and uproots three - Middle Eastern and North African Muslim majority nations