

The Book of Daniel

Chapter Seven



One of the interesting facts about Daniel is that it is not written chronologically. The first six chapters trace Daniel's life in captivity under the Babylonian and Medo-Persian Empire. They are largely historical narratives with a little bit of prophecy mixed in. Chapters Seven through Eleven contain prophecies given to Daniel pertaining to things yet to come. Chapter Seven, specifically, provides greater insight into the four kingdoms we learned about in Chapter Two. As we will see, God has 20/20 vision of the future, down to the smallest detail.

7:1-2 – A Vision in the Night

"In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon Daniel had a dream and visions of his head upon his bed: then he wrote the dream, [and] told the sum of the matters. Daniel spake and said, I saw in my vision by night, and, behold, the four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea."

Divine Timing

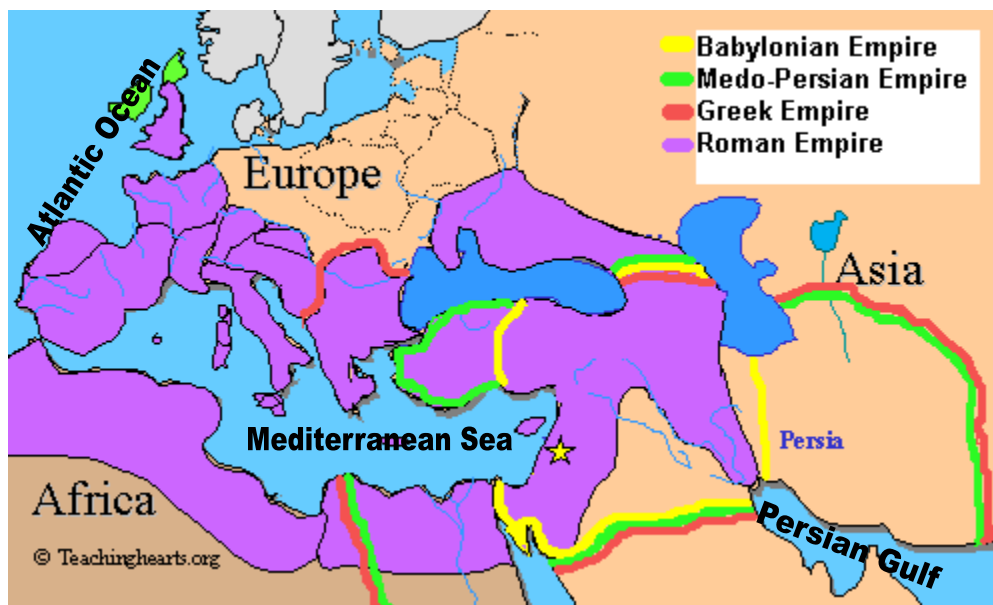
Based on what we've learned thus far in Daniel, what is the significance of Belshazzar's reign in Babylon? Also, knowing that Chapter Seven will provide more detail about the kingdoms discussed in Chapter Two, why do you think Daniel received this vision at this time?

Belshazzar was the last of the Babylonian kings to rule. It was during his reign that Babylon was overthrown by the Medo-Persian Empire. The significance of this vision's timing is that a portion of the prophecy was about to be fulfilled. Daniel was given a glimpse of this early on during Nebuchadnezzar's reign, approximately 50 years prior. The time was nearing for the head of gold to be overthrown.

The vision we are about to study was given to Daniel while he was sleeping, which appears to be a common mechanism the Lord used to communicate to man during Biblical times. Daniel received other visions during his lifetime (Daniel 2:19, 8:1). God came to Abram in a vision to give him comfort and protection (Genesis 15:1). Joseph was visited in a dream when Mary was pregnant with Jesus (Matthew 1:20). The Apostle Paul mentioned receiving visions (2 Corinthians 12:1). I've also heard recent testimony of the Lord communicating to men in dreams, not providing new revelation, but giving personal direction.

Daniel's vision begins with the four winds of heaven (North, South, East, and West) blowing upon the "great sea." Knowing that this vision will develop our knowledge of the four world empires identified in Chapter Two, use the map below to determine the identity of the "great sea".

Each of the Empires bordered or were centered around the Mediterranean Sea. It is interesting to note that Israel was one of the few nations under the dominion of each of the successive Empires.

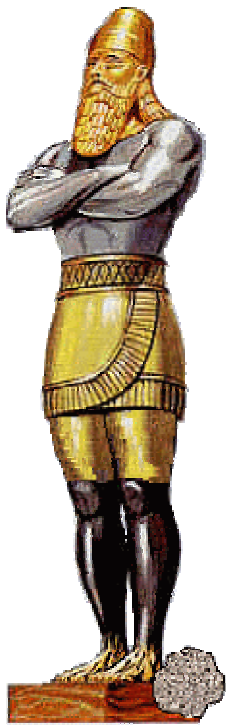


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7:3-8 – The Four Beasts

“And four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another. The first [was] like a lion, and had eagle’s wings: I beheld till the wings thereof were plucked, and it was lifted up from the earth, and made stand upon the feet as a man, and a man’s heart was given to it. And behold another beast, a second, like to a bear, and it raised up itself on one side, and [it had] three ribs in the mouth of it between the teeth of it: and they said thus unto it, Arise, devour much flesh. After this I beheld, and lo another, like a leopard, which had upon the back of it four wings of a fowl; the beast had also four heads; and dominion was given to it. After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it: and it [was] diverse from all the beasts that [were] before it; and it had ten horns. I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn [were] eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things.”

Verse three tells us that four beasts came out of the sea, each one different from the other. What could these four beasts be? This grid will help us identify each of the beasts and will serve as a useful reference.



| Statue: Daniel 2 | Empire | Beasts: Daniel 7 |
|-------------------------------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| The Head of Gold | Babylonian Empire | The lion with the eagle’s wings. It had the heart of a man and walked erect |
| The Arms and Chest of Silver | Medo-Persian Empire | The bear raised up on one side with three ribs in its mouth |
| The Girdle and Thighs of Bronze | Grecian Empire | A leopard with four wings on its back and four heads |
| The legs of Iron and feet made of Iron and Clay | Roman Empire | A terrible beast with iron teeth and 10 horns. An 11 th horn rose up and uprooted 3 of the existing horns |

The first beast: Babylonian Empire

The head of gold, the most precious metal of the statue, was used to identify Babylonia in Chapter Two. Remember that Babylonia was the smallest of the world empires but considered to be the greatest empire. The Lord called Nebuchadnezzar a “king of kings” (Daniel 2:37). The lion is often called the king of beasts and the eagle, at least in America, the king of birds. The combination of the lion and eagle is a formidable beast. It is interesting to note that one of the ancient symbols of the Babylonian Empire was a winged lion with a human head. Daniel would no doubt have recognized this symbolism. Archaeologists have excavated glazed tile walls with pictures of lions built during Nebuchadnezzar’s reign.¹



¹ Images of the beasts taken from www.maranathamedia.com

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In Daniel's vision, the wings of the eagle were plucked, it stood erect on its feet and a man's heart was given to the beast, rather than a lion's heart. What do each of these symbols mean?

Wings Plucked...

The plucking of the eagle's wings indicates a loss of power. Babylon reached its territorial and influential heights during the reign of Nebuchadnezzar. After this, there were no additional conquests of significance, in fact, during the reign of Nabonidus and Belshazzar, their territory was being slowly diminished until all that remained was the stronghold of their city.

Stood Erect on Feet & Man's Heart Given

Both of the final symbols relate to a dramatic change in the Babylonian Empire that began when the Lord humbled Nebuchadnezzar (Daniel 4). The symbol indicates that the Empire changed from having lion like qualities to having frail human tendencies. Even ancient literature, like Homer's Iliad, written somewhere between 1200 and 1500 BC uses the phrase "lion-hearted" to indicate courage.

In Daniel 4:30, Nebuchadnezzar boasts of his great power and accomplishments while walking on the roof of his palace. In that moment, his heart is changed from that of a man to that of a beast as a judgment from God. After seven years of insanity, his mind returns to him he is a humbled man. This no doubt had an immediate effect on Babylon. His most significant successor, Nabonidus, was also not known for his mental stability and in fact took off on a long vacation, leaving Belshazzar as the second in command. What the scriptures show of Belshazzar indicates that he was more of a party animal than a lion. Babylon's fall began when Nebuchadnezzar was humbled and the character of the whole empire changed. The descent continued through

The second beast: Medo-Persian Empire

The second beast to come from the great sea is the resemblance of a bear raised up on one side. Remember that the second empire is the result of an alliance between the Medes and the Persians. As time went on, the Persians became the dominant force in the empire, thus the bear was raised up (stronger) on one side.



Describe some of the characteristics of a bear, compared to a lion.

In comparison to a lion, a bear is the second most formidable beast known to man. Scriptures mention both lions and bears as fierce predators (1 Samuel 17:34, Amos 5:19, and Hosea 13:8). The primary difference is that bears are only vicious when hungry or deprived of their cubs. Even then, they are not nearly as fast and nimble as a lion.

We notice that the bear carried three ribs in its mouth. In looking at the territorial map on Page One of this lesson, you see that the Medo-Persian empire was significantly larger than its predecessor, the Babylonian Empire. Three of the Medo-Persian's primary conquests were Babylon, Lydia, and Egypt. The ribs may represent these conquests.

The command was given to the bear to arise and "devour much flesh". What does this symbolize?

It is tied to the ferocity of a bear when hungry and the additional kingdoms conquered by the Medo-Persians after the fall of Babylon. The Medo-Persians enlarged their empire beyond the extents of the Babylonian Empire. They even set their sights on Greece prior to being conquered by Alexander the Great. It is often surmised that the Persians were behind the assassination of Alexander the Great's father, Philip of Macedon. This motivated Alexander to attack the Persians on their own soil, ushering in the Greek Empire.

The third beast: Grecian Empire

As stated in Daniel 7:3, each of the beasts differed from one another. The third beast is a leopard with four heads and four wings. What strikes you about this beast in comparison to the first two beasts?

This is a remarkably fast animal. A leopard is very fast. If it could fly, it would surely have great speed. It is also a predatory animal, feasting upon its kill.

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The rise of the Grecian Empire is characterized by the great speed in which Alexander the Great made his conquests. He began by defeating the Medo-Persians in 334 at 21 years of age and expanded his territory to include the entirety of the Medo-Persian Empire, Greece, and additional parts of Saudi Arabia. He died at the ripe old age of 33 after reportedly grieving that there were no more worlds to conquer.



The four heads and wings of the leopard indicates the division of the Grecian Empire among Alexander's four most powerful generals: Cassander ruled in Macedon, Lysimachus in Thrace, Seleucus in Mesopotamia and Iran, and Ptolemy in the Levant and Egypt. We will learn much more about Alexander's conquests and the events that transpired within the Greek Empire in future chapters of Daniel.

The fourth beast: Roman Empire

The fourth and final beast Daniel observes coming out of the sea will present our greatest challenge to date. Identifying the beast as the Roman Empire is not difficult. However, interpreting the details revealed about the beast is the source of much dispute between the various schools of prophetic interpretation. Before we dive into this prophecy, we'll look at an essential interpretive principle for understanding Daniel and also discuss three perspectives on this prophecy we will consider throughout the remainder of this lesson. Please remember that end-time prophecy is probably the most challenging subject in all of Scripture and the author is also in the learning mode. I reserve the right to be wrong and to change my mind! We should handle this subject delicately, respectfully, and most importantly, with a mind open to the Word of God as illuminated to us by His Spirit!



An Important Interpretive Principle

There is one principle of prophetic interpretation we should understand before we embark into this passage: developmental fulfillment. Developmental fulfillment, according to Dr. Henry Virkler², "refers to the accomplishment of generalized, comprehensive prophecy in several progressive stages." Read Genesis 3:15, John 12:31-32, Romans 16:20, Revelations 20:3, 10. What progression do we see here? **We see that from the fall, Satan's demise was established. However, we did not know how God would accomplish this. Through Christ's death and resurrection, we see him overcome death and decree Satan's defeat. This is accomplished as the Church is obedient to Christ and will be finally consummated when Satan is bound and then thrown into the lake of fire at the end.**

We will see this principle applied as we navigate the passage on Daniel and then look to Revelation to gain additional insight. It is almost as if Daniel sees things from a distance while John (in Revelation) gets a closer look or a "zoom in" on various aspects of the beast. Please keep in mind that even within these three divisions, there is much room for difference in opinion. It is my intention to cover the prevalent viewpoint of each perspective.

Three Perspectives

It is not possible to cover every perspective on Daniel's vision of the fourth beast. On the portions of the prophecy that are often interpreted differently (and there are many), we will approach the interpretation from three perspectives: the preterist, historicist, and futurist.

Preterist Perspective: Preterists generally believe that most, if not all events of Biblical prophecy, including the events of Revelation, occurred by the fall of Jerusalem in 70 AD or later at the fall of the Roman Empire in 476 AD. Thus, in their opinion, the events of Daniel 7 occurred over 1,500 years ago. Preterists interpret much of Daniel and Revelation in a symbolic manner.

² Hermeneutics: Principles and Processes of Biblical Interpretation - Henry Virkler, Baker Books © 1981 (p. 200)

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Historical Perspective: Historicists teach a chronological progression of end-time events throughout Christian history that will be culminated in the visible second coming of Jesus Christ. Thus historicists find themselves interpreting events of history in light of portions of Daniel and Revelation, while anticipating the fulfillment of end-time prophecies that have not yet occurred. Historicists interpret end-time prophecy in a much more literal manner than Preterists, yet still understand some portions to be symbolic.

Futurist Perspective: Futurists look forward to find the fulfillment of much of the prophecies about the fourth beast. This believe system has become very popular over the last 100 years. Futurists interpret much of Daniel and Revelation literally.

Having learned an important interpretive principle and reviewed the three perspectives we will consider, let us begin to study the fourth beast. We will use verses seven and eight of Daniel 7 as our scriptural platform. However, we will pull in additional description Daniel gave of the beast in verses 19 and 21 as well as the interpretation given by the angel in verses 23 through 25. We will also frequently use passages from Daniel 2, and Revelation 13 and 17.

The Appearance of the Fourth Beast

Let's begin by reexamining verse 7.

Daniel 7:7 – *“After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it: and it [was] diverse from all the beasts that [were] before it; and it had ten horns.”*

Daniel's initial description of the beast sets it apart from the three prior beasts. In fact, he emphatically states that the fourth beast is different than those before it. What immediately strikes you about this description?

The three prior beasts were based upon a specific animal: a lion, bear, or leopard. Daniel is unable to associate this animal with any specific animal.

Why is it important that the beast had iron teeth?

In Daniel 2, we learned that the fourth kingdom was the kingdom of iron, because of its great strength. This vision is lining right up with Nebuchadnezzar's vision from Daniel 2.

Let's now look at two other passages in this chapter that provide additional information and Daniel's interpretation of the fourth kingdom from Daniel 2.

Daniel 7:19 – *“Then I would know the truth of the fourth beast, which was diverse from all the others, exceeding dreadful, whose teeth [were of] iron, and his nails [of] brass; [which] devoured, brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with his feet;”*

Daniel 7:23 – *“Thus he said, The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms...”*

Daniel 2:40-41 – *“And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all [things]: and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise. And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potters' clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay.”*

What additional detail do we learn from these two passages? What could it mean?

We learn that in addition to iron teeth, the beast had brass claws. This is of interest because in Daniel 2, we learned that the third kingdom, Greece, was the kingdom of brass. This implies a sort of a mixing of elements in this fourth kingdom. It will definitely be different from the prior kingdoms.

Within Daniel, we see the principle of Developmental Fulfillment, discussed earlier. The vision from Chapter 2 provides one level of detail. Chapter 7 gives us a bit more information. Now let's look to a passage from Revelation 13 that will provide us with even greater detail. Remember that this is a “zoom in” on this beast and additional detail will be provided that we do not have in Daniel 7.

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Revelation 13:1-2 – *“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. And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as [the feet] of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority.”*

At first glance, you may question whether the beast John witnesses in Revelation 13 is the same beast from Daniel 2. At this point, take it as a matter of faith. As we continue to study both passages, we will see important ties between the two beasts that will likely convince you that they are one and the same. What additional detail is provided in Revelation that Daniel does not either see or write down?

The beast of Revelation has seven heads. Each head has the name of blasphemy. Also, the beast has the body of a leopard, the feet of a bear, and the mouth of a lion.

The beast of Revelation is a compilation of three other animals. Discuss the following questions:

- 1.) What is the significance of these three animals?
They are the first three beasts Daniel saw in his vision, each representing a separate empire.
- 2.) Why is the beast composed in this manner? (Ex: Why a bear’s paws instead of a bear’s mouth?)
Perhaps the greatest strength of a lion is its roar and its bite. A leopard’s speed is in its body. A bear’s greatest strength is the swipe of its paws. This fourth beast takes upon it the three strongest attributes of the previous beasts.
- 3.) Do you see any allusion to this composition in Daniel 7:19?
We do so a bit of foreshadowing taking place in Daniel 7:19 because it indicates that both iron and bronze are a part of the fourth beast (indicating two kingdoms). This indicates that the fourth kingdom might contain elements of the previous three.

We now better understand why Daniel found the fourth beast to be “dreadful, terrible, and strong exceedingly”. Our next step is to take this understanding and set forth some expectations for the fourth kingdom. What might they be?

We should likely expect that the fourth kingdom stirred much fear in its enemies, and possessed great strength and speed.

The Actions of the Fourth Beast

Continuing on Daniel 7:7, he notes that the beast, “... *devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it...*” The “residue” is the remnant of the previous empires: Babylonia, Medo-Persia, and Greece. He again notes it twice in this chapter and also in Daniel 2:

Daniel 7:19 – *“Then I would know the truth of the fourth beast, which was diverse from all the others, exceeding dreadful, whose teeth [were of] iron, and his nails [of] brass; [which] devoured, brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with his feet;”*

Daniel 7:23 – *“Thus he said, The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces.”*

Daniel 2:40 – *“And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all [things]: and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise.”*

Additionally, we read in Revelation 13:2, “... and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority.” The dragon in this passage is almost universally considered to be Satan himself. Based on the above, we should expect a very cruel and powerful kingdom with far reaching dominion.

The conquests of the Roman Empire, beginning with the occupation of Sicily in 241 B.C. and reaching its height in 117 A.D. Walvoord notes, “... the Roman empire was ruthless in its destruction of civilizations and peoples, killing captives by thousands and selling them into slavery by the hundreds of thousands.” If you look back to the overlay map on page one, you will notice that the Roman Empire completely engulfed the Mediterranean Sea and spread its tentacles across much of the civilized world.

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The Ten Horns

The next detail about the fourth beast Daniel shares are the ten horns upon the head of the beast.

Daniel 7:20 – *“And of the ten horns that [were] in his head...”*

Daniel 7:24 – *“And the ten horns out of this kingdom [are] ten kings [that] shall arise: and another shall rise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings.”*

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.”*

Revelation 17:7-18 – *“And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns. The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is. And here [is] the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth. And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, [and] the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space. And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition. And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast. These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him [are] called, and chosen, and faithful. And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues. And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled. And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.”*

Daniel 7:24 gives us the first insight into the ten horns upon the head of the beast. They represent ten kings. This ties together with the beast from Revelation 13:1, which had ten crowns upon the ten horns, consistent with their identity as ten kings. Based on the additional information given in Revelation 17, we can make the following assertions about the ten kings:

- 1.) The ten kings had not yet received **power** at the time of the writing of Revelation.
- 2.) The ten kings will rule at the **same time**, not in a succession.
- 3.) The ten kings will give their power and strength to the **beast**.
- 4.) The ten kings will make **war** with the Lamb, but will lose.
- 5.) The ten kings will eventually make war with the **whore** that rides upon the beast.

Now that we have identified some of the clear teachings of these prophetic passages, we move into an attempt to apply these principles to reality. We will see how each prophetic viewpoint: Preterist, Historicist, and Futurist, applies these teachings.

Preterist Perspective: Remember that Preterists believe the events of spoken of here in Daniel occurred by the fall of Jerusalem in 70 AD. Preterists identify the 10 kings as governors of Roman provinces that composed the Roman Empire. One of the chief complaints against this position is that history records more than ten provinces within the Roman Empire. At one point in time there were over twenty. The Preterists interpret the number ten symbolically and would cite Daniel 1:14 and 1:20 as two instances in which they believe the number ten is used as a round number to mean “several” or “many”. This is an obvious source of debate between the Preterist, Historicist, and Futurist schools of interpretation. With this in mind, let’s look at the five statements made above in light of the Preterist position:

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- 1.) The ten kings had not yet received power at the time of the writing of Revelation: The Preterists believe that the description of the 10 kings indicates that they were not sovereign rulers, but had a limited authority. Revelation 17:12 states, “*And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast.*” The Roman provinces were under the control of the Roman Emperor and thus did not have a true kingdom. Under the Roman Senate, governors were only allowed to hold their position for one year.
- 2.) The ten kings will rule at the same time, not in a succession: The leaders over the Roman provinces ruled at the same time, each over their respective province.
- 3.) The ten kings will give their power and strength to the beast: The Roman Empire and more specifically, its army, was comprised of soldiers from all parts of the Empire, throughout the provinces. Thus, they lent their power to the beast.
- 4.) The ten kings will make war with the Lamb, but will lose: The Roman Empire persecuted Christians on more than one occasion, and tried to wipe out their existence. However, they never succeeded, and Christianity flourished.
- 5.) The ten kings will eventually make war with the whore that rides upon the beast: Many Preterists interpret the whore to be Rome itself. History indicates that Rome was not destroyed by an army invading from outside the empire, but rather by uprisings from the provinces themselves. Thus, some Preterists believe that the overthrow of the great whore was accomplished in 476 AD at the fall of the Roman Empire.

Historicist Perspective: Remember that Historicists stretch the fulfillment of this prophecy over a much longer period of time. Rather than identifying the ten kings as the heads of the Roman provinces that existed during the time of the Roman government, Historicists identify them as the ten concurrent kingdoms which formed after the breakup of the Roman Empire. The following is one of the possible lists of the ten resultant kingdoms:

| Kingdom | Modern Equivalent |
|--------------|--------------------------------------|
| Alamanni | Germany |
| Ostrogoths | Austria, Switzerland, and Yugoslavia |
| Visigoths | Spain |
| Vandals | North Africa |
| Suevi | Portugal |
| Burgundians | South France |
| Heruli | Italy |
| Anglo-Saxons | England |
| Lombards | Hungary |
| Franks | France |

There are other different lists of kingdoms resulting from the breakup of Rome. Obviously, they are not all correct. We must remember that when specifics are given in Biblical prophecy, it is essentially a snapshot of a particular period of history. For example, in studying the third beast, the Grecian Empire, we noticed that the beast had four heads. We identified these as the four generals that took control of the Grecian Empire upon Alexander the Great's death. There is a bit more to the story, however. The Grecian Empire first broke into six pieces under six generals. However, two of them were quickly defeated and their lands annexed into the remaining four territories. These four territories lasted for quite awhile. However, the Seleucids conquered the regions of Thrace and Bythinia, leaving only a fragment of Greece independent. The final form of the Grecian Empire, prior to the time of the Roman Empire, included only three territories. From this, we see that the Biblical prophecy was accurate, but did not present the entirety of Grecian

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history. It was only a snapshot of a certain period of time. We should carry these interpretive allowances forward into our study of the fourth beast.

Let's now look at how Historicists interpret the five principles we found from our study of the ten kings.

- 1.) The ten kings had not yet received power at the time of the writing of Revelation: The time during which the Historicists mark the existence of the ten kings (somewhere around 476 AD) occurred after the writing of Revelation.
- 2.) The ten kings will rule at the same time, not in a succession: The kingdoms that formed after the dissolution of the Roman Empire existed concurrently
- 3.) The ten kings will give their power and strength to the beast: These kingdoms of Europe eventually came under the power of the Roman Catholic Church around 533 AD, some willingly and some by force.
- 4.) The ten kings will make war with the Lamb, but will lose: Under the power of the Roman Catholic Church (the continuation of the Roman Empire), these kingdoms persecuted the true churches of Christ, the body of Christ during the Dark Ages.
- 5.) The ten kings will eventually make war with the whore that rides upon the beast: In 1798, the French (of the Frank kingdom), overthrew the Papacy during the reign of Pope Pius VI and made him a prisoner. It should be noted that this occurred at the dawn of the French Empire under Napoleon Bonaparte. The French Empire included much of Spain (the Visigoths), Italy (the Heruli kingdom), Germany (the Alamani kingdom), as well as Austria, Switzerland, and portions of Yugoslavia (Ostrogoths). A new pope was elected after the death of Pope Pius VI, but the power of the Pope was greatly diminished. Within the next sixty years, the Papacy lost its control of the Papal states to Italy (the Heruli kingdom).

Futurist Perspective: The Futurists are looking forward to the time of the ten kings. They believe that the revived Roman Empire will consist of ten kingdoms that will be under one centralized authority, the seat of the Antichrist. Many futurists look to the formation of the European Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) as the precursor to these events. At this time, there are over twenty nations participating in the EMU, so it is anticipated that there will be some national consolidation or succession prior to the rise of the Antichrist.

- 1.) The ten kings had not yet received power at the time of the writing of Revelation: As the futurists are still waiting for the appearance of the ten kings, they obviously did not exist during the time of the writing of Revelation.
- 2.) The ten kings will rule at the same time, not in a succession: This is the anticipation of the futurists.
- 3.) The ten kings will give their power and strength to the beast: The futurists anticipate that the ten kingdoms will be under the power of the Antichrist, and will thus support and enable his reign over the world.
- 4.) The ten kings will make war with the Lamb, but will lose: The futurists look forward to a war between the Antichrist with his empire, and Christ, Himself, with the Army of God at the Battle of Armageddon, described in Revelation 19:11-21. Christ will of course win this battle and the Antichrist will be destroyed.
- 5.) The ten kings will eventually make war with the whore that rides upon the beast: Futurists consider the great whore to be a false religion that the Antichrist will use to come to world power. It will be a means to an end and will ultimately be discarded as the ten kingdoms rise up against the false religion and completely destroy it.

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The Little Horn (Antichrist)

Daniel 7:8 – *“I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn [were] eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things.”*

Daniel 7:20-22 – *“And of the ten horns that [were] in his head, and [of] the other which came up, and before whom three fell; even [of] that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spake very great things, whose look [was] more stout than his fellows. I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; Until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom.”*

Daniel 7:24-26 – *“And the ten horns out of this kingdom [are] ten kings [that] shall arise: and another shall rise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings. And he shall speak [great] words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time. But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy [it] unto the end.”*

The topic of Antichrist is vast and we will be looking at a number of places in Scripture that give us insight into the character and actions of Antichrist. Re-read the passages above as well as the passages listed below. Fill in the blanks and write in the passage(s) that substantiates each statement, along with any notes you might like to make.

1 John 2:18-19, 4:3; 2 John 1:7; 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12, Revelation 13:1-16

- 1.) Three horns were uprooted before the little horn
Daniel 7:8,20,24
- 2.) The horn has the eyes of a man
Daniel 7:8,20
- 3.) The horn has a mouth speaking great (blasphemous) things
Daniel 7:8,20,25, 1 John 2:22, 4:3, 2 John 1:7, Revelation 13:5,6
- 4.) The horn’s look was more stout (larger in appearance) than his fellows, different from the first
Daniel 7:20,24
- 5.) The horn made war with the saints for a time, times and the dividing of time
Daniel 7:21,25, Revelation 13:5,7,15-18
- 6.) The horn will seek to change times and laws
Daniel 7:25, Revelation 13:5,16-18
- 7.) May have fallen away from the truth / apostatized
1 John 2:18-19, 2 Thessalonians 1:3
- 8.) He will be attested by power, signs, and lying wonders
2 Thessalonians 2:9, Revelation 13:3,13,14
- 9.) His work is in accordance with the activities of Satan
2 Thessalonians 2:9, Revelation 13:2,4
- 10.) He will be wounded, as if dead, and then be amazingly healed
Revelation 13:3,12

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- 11.) Will seek to be worshipped as God
2 Thessalonians 2:4, Revelation 13:3,4,8,12
- 12.) Many of those who do not know Christ will be fooled into worshipping him.
2 Thessalonians 2:10-12, Revelation 13:3,4,8,14,15
- 13.) He will sit in the temple of God
2 Thessalonians 2:4
- 14.) A false prophet will attest to his identity and cause others to worship him
Revelation 13:11-18
- 15.) The restrainer holds back his coming
2 Thessalonians 2:6, 7
- 16.) The mark of Antichrist (666) will be required to buy and sell at some point during his reign
Revelation 13:16-18

Feel free to jot down any additional points you would like to track as we proceed now into the different interpretations of end-time events.

Preterist Perspective: Remember again that Preterists believe the events of spoken of here in Daniel occurred by the fall of Jerusalem in 70 AD. Preterists believe that the Roman Emperor Nero was the Antichrist and therefore look to his life and reign as the fulfillment of these prophecies.

- 1.) Three horns were uprooted before the little horn
"Three" is symbolic for "a part of the ten. The Caesars took power and liberty from the people
- 2.) The horn has the eyes of a man
Nero Caesar is considered to be Antichrist
- 3.) The horn has a mouth speaking great (blasphemous) things
The Caesar's were fierce and cruel against their enemies.
- 4.) The horn's look was more stout (larger in appearance) than his fellows, different from the first
Caesar became the stronghold of power in the Roman Empire.
- 5.) The horn made war with the saints for a time, times and the dividing of time
November, 64 AD through June, 68 AD
- 6.) The horn will seek to change times and laws
Nero made decrees against Christianity
- 7.) May have fallen away from the truth / apostatized
Refers to professing Christians who apostatized as a result of the persecutions experienced.
- 8.) He will be attested by power, signs, and lying wonders
Unknown
- 9.) His work is in accordance with the activities of Satan
Satan was behind the persecution of the Christians

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- 10.) He will be wounded, as if dead, and then be amazingly healed
Unknown
- 11.) Will seek to be worshipped as God
Nero was worshipped by the Emperor Cult, which was strong in Asia Minor
- 12.) Many of those who do not know Christ will be fooled into worshipping him.
The Emperor Cult was very powerful in Asia Minor
- 13.) He will sit in the temple of God
He held authority over religion in the Roman Empire
- 14.) A false prophet will attest to his identity and cause others to worship him
Considered to be the Emperor Cult
- 15.) The restrainer holds back his coming
The Holy Spirit kept back the coming of Antichrist until the young church was ready
- 16.) The mark of Antichrist (666) will be required to buy and sell at some point during his reign
The letters of the name, Nero Caesar, add up to 666 when added together in Hebrew

Historicist Perspective: This perspective places us in the midst of the fulfillment of these passages. Historicists uniformly identify the office of the Pope (Papacy) as Antichrist.

- 1.) Three horns were uprooted before the little horn
Of the 10 kingdoms that arose after the break-up of the Roman Empire (in AD 476), three of them (Vandals, Ostrogoths, and Heruli) were Arians (denying the divinity of Christ). Justinian, the ruler of one of the kingdoms made a decree that the Pope was the highest ecclesiastical authority over all other religions in the ten kingdoms. The three kingdoms, which opposed the Catholic church, were finally conquered and placed under the religious reign of the Papacy in AD 538.
- 2.) The horn has the eyes of a man
The Antichrist is considered to be the Papacy, an office occupied by a man.
- 3.) The horn has a mouth speaking great (blasphemous) things
The Catholic Church/Papacy has made blasphemous claims as doctrine
(1) Claiming to have the power to forgive sin (Luke 5:21, 1 Tim. 2:5)
(2) Claiming to be God (John 10:33) Pope Leo XIII said, "We [the popes] hold upon the earth the place of God Almighty"
- 4.) The horn's look was more stout (larger in appearance) than his fellows, different from the first
The Papacy/Church is religious in nature while the 10 kings were secular.
- 5.) The horn made war with the saints for a time, times and the dividing of time
3 ½ years = 42 months = 1,260 days (30 days/month). Using the counting mechanism from Daniel 9:24, 1 prophetic day = 1 year. Therefore 1,260 prophetic days = 1,260 years. The Pope began his rule over the religion of the 10 kingdoms in 538 AD. In 1798 AD, Napoleon's general, Berthier, took the Pope captive. The Pope has not yet regained the power it had before.
- 6.) The horn will seek to change times and laws
The Catholic Church/Papacy claims the sole authority to interpret Scripture and can add to it infallible statements of the Pope, which carry as much weight as Scripture in their minds.
- 7.) May have fallen away from the truth / apostatized
This is a self-evident interpretation as the Catholic Church has its origins from true Christianity.

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- 8.) He will be attested by power, signs, and lying wonders
Catholic history is filled with supposed miracles that authenticate its message. The statues that cry tears of blood, those who are “healed”, etc.. are all examples of their supposed power. Many fall for it. In order to be declared a saint in the Catholic church, one must have performed a verifiable miracle. Recently, a French nun declared to be healed from Parkinson’s disease by the deceased Pope John Paul after praying to him.
- 9.) His work is in accordance with the activities of Satan
The Catholic church preaches the message of salvation by works. Those who fall for this lie are bound for hell, precisely what Satan desires. They take the attention off of Christ and turn it onto Mary, priests, crucifixes, and beads.
- 10.) He will be wounded, as if dead, and then be amazingly healed
Historicists consider this to be the overthrow of the Papacy in 1798 and its return to power, as we seem to be witnessing in recent years. With over one billion members, the Vatican is again the head of the most powerful religious organization in the world and appears to be growing in power and influence, as attested by the funeral of Pope John Paul II.
- 11.) Will seek to be worshipped as God
The title of the Pope is “the Vicar of Christ”, that is the “substitute or agent of Christ”.
- 12.) Many of those who do not know Christ will be fooled into worshipping him.
The Catholic Church has over 1 billion members out of around 6.5 billion on the earth, over 15%.
- 13.) He will sit in the temple of God
1 Corinthians 3:16-17 uses the illustration of the temple to represent the Christ’s Church. The Pope presides over the Catholic Church, which proclaims itself to be The Universal Church.
- 14.) A false prophet will attest to his identity and cause others to worship him
Many historicists consider this to be the United States in the future. Perhaps the ecumenical movement will grow and tie itself to the Papacy. This is conjecture.
- 15.) The restrainer holds back his coming
The Roman Empire was considered to be the restrainer. Once it fell, the Papacy arose in power.
- 16.) The mark of Antichrist (666) will be required to buy and sell at some point during his reign
In Latin, a prominent title of the Pope is “Vicariovs Filii Dei” (meaning “Vice-regent of Christ”) Using Roman Numerals (V = 5; I = 1; C = 100; L = 50; D = 500), this adds up to 666.

Futurist Perspective: From this perspective, all of these events have yet to be fulfilled. Futurists look toward the rise of a singular man to fulfill the office of Antichrist until Christ’s return.

- 1.) Three horns were uprooted before the little horn
Three of the ten kingdoms/nations of the Roman Empire will be during the rise of Antichrist.
- 2.) The horn has the eyes of a man
Antichrist will be a man.
- 3.) The horn has a mouth speaking great (blasphemous) things
Antichrist will blaspheme the name of God and cause others to do so.
- 4.) The horn’s look was more stout (larger in appearance) than his fellows, different from the first
Antichrist will rise above the ten nations and hold complete power in his hands.

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- 5.) The horn made war with the saints for a time, times and the dividing of time
Antichrist will persecute believers for 3 ½ years, prior to the return of Christ
- 6.) The horn will seek to change times and laws
Antichrist will assume supreme world power and will alter them to his liking.
- 7.) May have fallen away from the truth / apostatized
There is some division on whether Antichrist must fulfill this passage.
- 8.) He will be attested by power, signs, and lying wonders
Futurists expect miraculous works to be performed by Antichrist.
- 9.) His work is in accordance with the activities of Satan
Antichrist will seek to fulfill the desires of Satan.
- 10.) He will be wounded, as if dead, and then be amazingly healed
Antichrist will suffer a wound that will leave him as dead, but will be miraculously healed.
- 11.) Will seek to be worshipped as God
He will become the object of worship for all who do not know Christ.
- 12.) Many of those who do not know Christ will be fooled into worshipping him.
Again, the world will bow before him.
- 13.) He will sit in the temple of God
The Jewish temple will be rebuilt and Antichrist will set himself up as a god there.
- 14.) A false prophet will attest to his identity and cause others to worship him
Another individual will encourage the worship of the beast.
- 15.) The restrainer holds back his coming
The restrainer is considered to be the Holy Spirit, which will depart from the world when the church is raptured.
- 16.) The mark of Antichrist (666) will be required to buy and sell at some point during his reign
There is much speculation about the mark of the beast, but no definitive agreement.

What are some of the strengths and weaknesses of the viewpoints from your perspective?

Preterist:

Historicist:

Futurist:

If you were to study this issue further on your own, where would you start? What would some of your questions be?

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7:9-10 – The Court was Set...

"I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened."

What thrones were cast down? See Matthew 19:28, 1 Corinthians 6:2-3, and Revelation 2:26-27

These are all the dominions that are not of God, both man and angel (demonic).

Who is the Ancient of Days? See Psalms 102:24-25

The Ancient of Days is God the Father. This title reminds us of His eternal nature.

What is the significance of His white garments? See 1 John 1:5 and Mark 9:3

The whiteness of His robes signifies His perfect righteousness.

What is the significance of the throne being like a fiery flame? See Psalms 97:1-3

The fire is symbolic of judgment.

When viewed together, we get a very clear picture of perfect righteous judgment coming from God the Father. He is the Ancient of Days, and therefore is qualified to judge as the omniscient, omnipresent one. He is perfectly righteous, meaning that His judgment is pure and true and without the bias of sin. He also has the authority and power to judge, as indicated by the fire of His throne. With these qualities, His judgment is just and eternal.

7:11-12 – Judgment from the Fiery Throne

"I beheld then because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake: I beheld even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame. As concerning the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away: yet their lives were prolonged for a season and time."

Hebrews 10:37 states, "For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry." The Scriptures also state in 2nd Peter that the Lord isn't going to renege on His promise to return and carry out His judgment, but is patient, desiring that none should perish but that all be saved. This passage in Daniel gives us a preview of the meting out of the Lord's wrath against Antichrist.

The Fate of the First Three Beasts

This passage is a bit confusing at first, because it appears to almost be a side note used to clarify the fate of the first three beasts. It isn't really chronological in nature, but is more of a way of completing the thought of the judgment upon the beasts. The fourth beast came to a ruinous end. What happened to the first three? Let's start by seeking to understand what the "dominion" is that they lost.

Dominion – This Aramaic word, and its root word (7981) are only used in the book of Daniel. Each contextual use is clearly tied to ruling, as in a kingdom. It is used to describe God's reign (dominion) which is from generation to generation. It is used 8 times in this chapter alone. It means to have power and authority over a kingdom.

What dominion did the first three beasts lose?

The meaning is that the original dominion of these three previous kingdoms: Babylonia, Medo-Persia, and Greece were taken away. They were each world empires that had a far reaching power. See Daniel 4:22, which speaks of the great dominion of Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylonia. Each of the three empires demonstrated authority over the world in their time. Even though, they didn't rule over all world kingdoms, their power had far reaching influence. The judgment upon these kingdoms was that their dominion over the earth was taken away, yet they were allowed to continue in existence for a season and time.

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For a season and a time - the best interpretation I've found for this is, "an appointed time, not made known in its duration, but known in the mind of God". Compare Matt 24:22 which speaks of the Lord shortening the days of the tribulation so that His elect may endure.

The three original kingdoms currently exist as separate countries: Babylonia as Iraq; Medo-Persia as Iran; and Greece. Each remain sovereign, separate countries, but none of them are now world powers. The dominion of the first was taken away at the advent of the second kingdom, but the first country still existed under the reign of the second kingdom. This continued in like fashion until today. We are still in the time of the fourth empire. The lives of the first three have continued as we are in the midst of the "season and time" until the final annihilation of the fourth and final kingdom, which will occur at the gathering of all nations before the Lord, spoken of in Matthew 25.

7:13-14 – Presentation of the Son of Man

"I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed."

This passage seems to be a chronological departure from the previous visions. It is highly prophetic in that it is the only place in the Old Testament to use the term "Son of man" to refer to Jesus. Obviously, this was a favorite title of Jesus during His ministry. This must therefore be a significant Old Testament passage. We see Jesus coming up to God the Father (Ancient of Days) and receiving the kingdom. This isn't the saint's receipt of the kingdom (a separate event discussed in verse 22). This is Jesus' receipt of three things:

1. Dominion;
2. Glory; and a
3. Kingdom.

When did (or will) this event occur?

In my studies, I have come up with a few possibilities to consider. Discuss the pros and cons of each.

1.) At the Mount of Transfiguration – See Matthew 16:13-17:9 and Luke 9:18-36

Jesus just told His disciples that they would see the Son of Man coming in His Kingdom. Then we see this event occur.

2.) The Ascension after the Resurrection but before His appearance to the Disciples – see John 20:17-18

This may be logical because it is after this event that He gives the Great Commission and says, "All power (authority / dominion) has been given to Me in heaven and on earth" (Matthew 28:18)

3.) The Ascension after the giving of the Great Commission – see Acts 1:10-11

All we know is that the Son of Man ascended to the Father in a cloud at this event. The next time we "see" Jesus is when Stephen sees Him in the book of Acts. He is standing at the right hand of the Father.

4.) Some time in the future

This doesn't seem to make sense because several passages indicates that He reigns now (see Ephesians 1:20-22, 1 Peter 3:22, and Revelation 3:21).

The Characteristics of the Kingdom

This passage gives us insight into the characteristics of the Kingdom that Jesus inherits:

1. All people, nations, and languages will serve Him; and
2. His kingdom will be perpetual throughout all time and will never be destroyed.

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Do you see a similarity between the kingdom and the Church? – see Matthew 16:18, 28:18-20, and 24:14
Matthew 16:18 speaks of how the gates of hell will not prevail against the Church (it is perpetual and eternal).
Matthew 28:18-20 is the Church's commission (authority) to go into all the world and preach the gospel.
Matthew 24:14 also states that the gospel of the kingdom will be preached unto all nations before the end.
Those with different interpretations of end time events also debate the identity of the kingdom spoken of frequently in Scriptures. Is it the Church or a future earthly kingdom over which Christ will reign? The passages discussed above seem to indicate at least a strong similarity between the kingdom and the Church.

7:18, 21-22, 26-27 – The Saints inherit the Kingdom

vs. 18 – “But the saints of the most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever.”

vs. 21-22 – “I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; Until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom.”

vs. 26-27 – “But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end. And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.”

These passages provide us with two things: an additional event (the saints receiving the kingdom) and a time link to the events described earlier in the chapter. Apparently, the reign of Antichrist continues until:

1. Jesus receives the kingdom; and
2. He comes in glory and the saints receive the kingdom.

Read Matthew 25:31-46. Does it further describe what we read in Daniel 7:18, 21-22? If so how?

Matthew 25:31-46 describes the coming of Christ in His kingdom to reward His saints. Verse 34 specifically rewards those who loved Him by allowing them to inherit the kingdom. The passage in Matthew appears to be additional detail of the events described in Daniel.

The judgment spoken of in verse 26 was first spoken of in verse 10 of Daniel 7. The dominion taken away is that of Antichrist. A reference is made in verse 27 to all dominions being subject to the kingdom of Christ. This harmonizes with 1 Corinthians 15:25, which says, “For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet.” We know from Hebrews 2:8, that this has not yet happened, but we have this sure word of prophecy that it will and God will reign.

7:28 – The End of the Vision

“Hitherto is the end of the matter. As for me Daniel, my cogitations much troubled me, and my countenance changed in me: but I kept the matter in my heart.”

Why do you think Daniel was so troubled at the visions the Lord allowed him to see?

The vision itself was frightening, but especially the wickedness of Antichrist that would torment the saints of the Lord and the fiery vengeance of the Lord against this wickedness. While Daniel was secure in his salvation, these events were very sobering. They should have a similar effect upon us when we truly grasp the reality and power of God's judgment upon sin.

Summary

The preceding chapters of Daniel set the stage for this amazing piece of Biblical prophecy. The overall theme of Daniel is: God is in Control. Our faith has been strengthened by seeing God's hand in Daniel's life and the Lord has built upon that by sharing His plan for the kingdoms of this world. As the Apostle John said after seeing the revelations given to him by the Lord, “...Even so, come, Lord Jesus.” (Revelation 22:20)