

## Lesson 7 – Daniel 7

### NOTES:

#### **Daniel 1: The Introduction**

Chapter 1 introduces the historical context of Daniel's deportation to Babylon following Nebuchadnezzar's siege of Jerusalem in 605 BC. Daniel was among the royal Jewish captives first extradited to Babylon.

Upon Daniel's arrival, he and three companions were confronted with a difficult choice between defiling themselves with the king's appointed ration of choice food and wine or risking their lives by abstaining from the food for the sake of remaining undefiled in the sight of God. God rewards Daniel's righteous decision to abstain by granting him favor and compassion in the sight of the commander of the officials. God also endows Daniel and his three companions with exceptional knowledge, wisdom, and intelligence that results in the honor of entering into the king's personal service.

#### **Daniel 2: Daniel's Interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's First Dream**

Chapter 2 explains God's supernatural equipping of Daniel to reveal Nebuchadnezzar's first dream and its interpretation, demonstrating God's covenant attentiveness to His exiles. The dream reveals four successive Gentile dominions preceding the establishment of God's messianic kingdom that will never be destroyed. After Daniel reveals Nebuchadnezzar's dream and its interpretation, Daniel is promoted as ruler over Babylon and chief prefect over all its wise men.

#### **Daniel 3: Nebuchadnezzar's Command and the Courageous Response of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego**

Nebuchadnezzar erects a great image of gold, commanding peoples, nations and men of every language to fall down and worship the golden image when hearing musical instruments. The king's decree includes the penalty of being immediately cast into a furnace of blazing fire for anyone refusing to worship the image.

After the Chaldeans report the refusal of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego to worship the image, Nebuchadnezzar gives urgent orders for them to be cast into a furnace of blazing fire. The three men are tied up and cast into the furnace. When Nebuchadnezzar and his high officials look into the furnace, they are astounded to see four men walking unharmed in the midst of the fire. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego exit the fire unsinged. Nebuchadnezzar then issues a decree forbidding an offensive word to be spoken against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, whom the king causes to prosper.

#### **Daniel 4: Daniel's Interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's Second Dream Predicting the King's Insanity**

Chapter 4 provides Nebuchadnezzar's narrative of his second dream and Daniel's interpretation of the dream as a prediction of the king's temporary insanity. The dream is of a great spreading tree that a messenger from heaven commands to be cut down. Daniel interprets the tree as Nebuchadnezzar himself, predicting that Nebuchadnezzar would dwell among the beasts of the field for a seven-year period before finally ascribing glory to God. Afterwards, his mental health and kingdom are restored.

#### **Daniel 5: Daniel's Interpretation of the Miraculous Writing on the Wall**

Chapter 5 records Daniel's interpretation of a mysterious inscription on the palace wall of Belshazzar, the king of Babylon, coregent with Nabonidus (556–538 BC), and son of Nebuchadnezzar. During a great feast on the eve of the Persian conquest of Babylon (538 BC), Belshazzar was drinking out of the gold and silver vessels that Nebuchadnezzar had taken out of the temple in Jerusalem when a hand emerged and began writing on the palace wall. Seeing the hand, Belshazzar becomes alarmed and calls for the wise men.

After the wise men fail to interpret the inscription, Daniel is brought to Belshazzar, at the queen's request. Daniel interprets the message to read, "'MENE' – God has numbered your kingdom and put an end to it. 'TEKEL' – you have been weighed on the scales and found deficient. 'PERES' – your kingdom has been divided and given over to the Medes and Persians" (Dan 5:26-28). Belshazzar is slain that same night and Darius the Mede receives the kingdom, fulfilling the words spoken by Daniel.

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### Daniel 6: Daniel in the Lion's Den

Chapter 6 tells the familiar narrative of Daniel in the lion's den. As a result of the plotting of his political subordinates, Daniel is cast into the lion's den by King Darius the Mede for defying the injunction against petitioning a god or man except the king. Just as God had miraculously protected Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego in the furnace of fire, God closes the lions' mouths so that they do not harm Daniel. While Daniel is delivered and enjoys success, his accusers are thrown into the den and crushed by the lions.

### Daniel 7: Daniel's Vision of Four Beasts

Chapter 7 marks the transition from historical narrative (Dan 1–6) to predictive prophecy (Dan 7–12). The predictions in Daniel 7–12 concern events that extend from the days of Daniel to the coming of Messiah, including predictions of his first and second advents. The predictive prophecy is revealed through four visions of Daniel that occurred during the period of history covered in the first six chapters.

Chapter 7 describes and interprets the first vision of Daniel which occurs in the first year of Belshazzar (553 BC). Daniel is about 67-years old when he receives the first vision of four beasts symbolizing Babylon (Lion), Medo-Persia (Bear), Greece (Leopard), and Rome (Strong Beast). The vision extends into the last days during the reigns of ten kings (ten horns) and the Antichrist (little horn), culminating with the reign of Messiah to Whom the Ancient of Days gives an everlasting dominion which will not be destroyed.

### BIBLE TEXT: DANIEL 7 (NASB)

**Dan. 7:1** In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon Daniel saw a dream and visions in his mind *as he lay* on his bed; then he wrote the dream down *and* related the *following* summary of it. <sup>2</sup> Daniel said, "I was looking in my vision by night, and behold, the four winds of heaven were stirring up the great sea. <sup>3</sup> "And four great beasts were coming up from the sea, different from one another. <sup>4</sup> "The first *was* like a lion and had *the* wings of an eagle. I kept looking until its wings were plucked, and it was lifted up from the ground and made to stand on two feet like a man; a human mind also was given to it. <sup>5</sup> "And behold, another beast, a second one, resembling a bear. And it was raised up on one side, and three ribs *were* in its mouth between its teeth; and thus they said to it, 'Arise, devour much meat!' <sup>6</sup> "After this I kept looking, and behold, another one, like a leopard, which had on its back four wings of a bird; the beast also had four heads, and dominion was given to it. <sup>7</sup> "After this I kept looking in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast, dreadful and terrifying and extremely strong; and it had large iron teeth. It devoured and crushed and trampled down the remainder with its feet; and it was different from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns. <sup>8</sup> "While I was contemplating the horns, behold, another horn, a little one, came up among them, and three of the first horns were pulled out by the roots before it; and behold, this horn possessed eyes like the eyes of a man and a mouth uttering great *boasts*.

**Dan. 7:9** "I kept looking

Until thrones were set up,  
And the Ancient of Days took *His* seat;  
His vesture *was* like white snow  
And the hair of His head like pure wool.  
His throne *was* ablaze with flames,  
Its wheels *were* a burning fire.

<sup>10</sup> "A river of fire was flowing  
And coming out from before Him;  
Thousands upon thousands were attending Him,  
And myriads upon myriads were standing before Him;  
The court sat,  
And the books were opened.

<sup>11</sup> "Then I kept looking because of the sound of the boastful words which the horn was speaking; I kept looking until the beast was slain, and its body was destroyed and given to the burning fire. <sup>12</sup> "As for the rest of the beasts, their dominion was taken away, but an extension of life was granted to them for an appointed period of time.

**Dan. 7:13** "I kept looking in the night visions,  
And behold, with the clouds of heaven

\*(A)=Application (C)=Context (D)=Difficult (DOC)=Doctrine (O)=Opinion (PER)=Personal (PR)=Principle (P)=Prophecy

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One like a Son of Man was coming,  
And He came up to the Ancient of Days  
And was presented before Him.

14 “And to Him was given dominion,  
Glory and a kingdom,  
That all the peoples, nations and *men of every* language  
Might serve Him.  
His dominion is an everlasting dominion  
Which will not pass away;  
And His kingdom is one  
Which will not be destroyed.

Dan. 7:15 “As for me, Daniel, my spirit was distressed within me, and the visions in my mind kept alarming me. <sup>16</sup> “I approached one of those who were standing by and began asking him the exact meaning of all this. So he told me and made known to me the interpretation of these things: <sup>17</sup> ‘These great beasts, which are four *in number*, are four kings *who* will arise from the earth. <sup>18</sup> ‘But the saints of the Highest One will receive the kingdom and possess the kingdom forever, for all ages to come.’

Dan. 7:19 “Then I desired to know the exact meaning of the fourth beast, which was different from all the others, exceedingly dreadful, with its teeth of iron and its claws of bronze, *and which* devoured, crushed and trampled down the remainder with its feet, <sup>20</sup> *and the meaning* of the ten horns that *were* on its head and the other *horn* which came up, and before which three *of them* fell, namely, that horn which had eyes and a mouth uttering great *boasts* and which was larger in appearance than its associates. <sup>21</sup> “I kept looking, and that horn was waging war with the saints and overpowering them <sup>22</sup> until the Ancient of Days came and judgment was passed in favor of the saints of the Highest One, and the time arrived when the saints took possession of the kingdom.

Dan. 7:23 “Thus he said: ‘The fourth beast will be a fourth kingdom on the earth, which will be different from all the *other* kingdoms and will devour the whole earth and tread it down and crush it. <sup>24</sup> ‘As for the ten horns, out of this kingdom ten kings will arise; and another will arise after them, and he will be different from the previous ones and will subdue three kings. <sup>25</sup> ‘He will speak out against the Most High and wear down the saints of the Highest One, and he will intend to make alterations in times and in law; and they will be given into his hand for a time, times, and half a time. <sup>26</sup> ‘But the court will sit *for judgment*, and his dominion will be taken away, annihilated and destroyed forever. <sup>27</sup> ‘Then the sovereignty, the dominion and the greatness of *all* the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be given to the people of the saints of the Highest One; His kingdom *will be* an everlasting kingdom, and all the dominions will serve and obey Him.’

Dan. 7:28 “At this point the revelation ended. As for me, Daniel, my thoughts were greatly alarming me and my face grew pale, but I kept the matter to myself.”

### STUDY QUESTIONS:

1. What does Daniel see in the first year of Belshazzar’s reign over Babylon? (7:1) (D) Why do you think that God gave Daniel a predictive dream and visions during this time of the exile of Judah?
2. What does Daniel see as he is looking in his vision by night? What comes up from the sea? (7:2-3)
3. Describe the four beasts:  
1<sup>st</sup> beast (7:4)  
2<sup>nd</sup> beast (7:5)  
3<sup>rd</sup> beast (7:6)  
4<sup>th</sup> beast (7:7)
4. While Daniel is contemplating the horns, what comes up among them? What are pulled out by the roots before it? Describe this horn. (7:8)

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5. (C) What additional information do the following verses provide concerning the little horn that comes up on the 4th beast, who is commonly called the Antichrist?  
Revelation 13:5-8  
Revelation 17:11-14
6. As Daniel keeps looking, what is set up? Who takes His seat? Describe the following:  
The Ancient of Days (7:9)  
His Throne (7:9-10a)  
His Attendants (7:10b)  
The Books (7:10c)
7. (C) Describe the following from the Book of Revelation:  
The One Sitting on the Throne (Rev 4:2-3; 21:5-7)  
The Throne (Rev 4:2-6)  
24 Elders around the Throne (Rev 4:4, 9-11; 5:14)  
4 Living Creatures (Rev 4:6-9, 5:14)  
Book with Seven Seals (Rev 5:1-5)  
The Lamb (Rev 5:6-10)  
His Attendants (Rev 5:11-12)  
The Books (Rev 20:11-15)
8. Why does Daniel keep looking? How long does Daniel keep looking? (7:11)
9. (C) Describe the destruction of the beast at the second advent of Jesus. (Rev 19:19-21)
10. What happens to the rest of the beasts? (7:12)
11. As Daniel keeps looking in the night visions, who comes with the clouds of heaven? Before Whom is the Son of Man presented? What is given to the Son of Man? For how long? (7:13-14)
12. (C) Who takes the book out of the right hand of Him Who sat on the throne? (Rev 5:1-8)  
How long will the Lamb receive blessing, honor, glory, and dominion? (Rev 5:13)
13. How does Daniel respond emotionally to the visions? Who does Daniel ask to give an interpretation of these things? (7:15-16)
14. Who are the four great beasts? (7:17) Who will receive the kingdom? How long will they possess the kingdom? (7:18)
15. About what three things does Daniel desire to know the exact meaning? Describe them. (7:19-20)  
For how long does that horn wage war and overpower the saints of the Highest One? (7:21-22)  
Explain the following:  
4<sup>th</sup> Beast (7:23)  
10 Horns (7:24)  
11<sup>th</sup> Horn who Arises after the 10 Horns (7:24-26)
16. After the dominion of the Antichrist is taken away, annihilated, and destroyed forever, to Whom is the sovereignty, dominion, and greatness of all the kingdoms under the whole heaven given? How long will His kingdom endure? Who will serve and obey Him? (7:27) After the revelation ended, how does Daniel respond? (7:28) (O) Why do you think that Daniel responds this way?
17. What do you learn about God in Daniel 7?
18. How could you apply what you have learned about God this week?

Write a prayer response to Daniel 7.