

Who Is Holding The Joystick

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DANIEL 7 & 8

Using This Study

① EXAMINE His Word

What does God SAY? Open your time with prayer. The words God uses to communicate matters, so go back and pay close attention to the details that are emphasized or repeated in the passage.

② EXPLORE His Word

What does God MEAN? Asking questions of the text helps surface how the details relate to the message God wants to communicate.

③ EMBRACE His Word

Why does it MATTER to me? Embrace God by responding to what you discover in His word in faith and obedience.



In chapter 7 and 8 of Daniel, Daniel tells of visions that he has had of the future. The book of Daniel so accurately predicts the next three major world powers that sceptics have often tried to date the book as a historical book instead of prophesy. Daniel is a book of prophesy and chapters 7 and 8 reveal the sovereignty of God. Only God could predict the future as told by Daniel. And it is God alone who is in control; raising up kingdoms and removing kingdoms.



① EXAMINE His Word (Observation)

What does God SAY? Prayerfully note significant details and terms emphasized in the passage.

Read Daniel 7 & 8 (NASB)

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. ² Daniel said, "I was looking in my vision by night, and behold, the four winds of heaven were stirring up the great sea. ³ And four great beasts were coming up from the sea, different from one another. ⁴ 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. ⁵ 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!' ⁶ 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. ⁷ 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. ⁸ 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.

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.

¹⁰ "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.

¹¹ 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. ¹² 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.

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

¹⁵ "As for me, Daniel, my spirit was distressed within me, and the visions in my mind kept alarming me.

¹⁶ 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: ¹⁷ 'These great beasts, which are four in number, are four kings who will arise from the earth. ¹⁸ But the saints of the Highest One will receive the kingdom and possess the kingdom forever, for all ages to come.'

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, ²⁰ 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.

²¹ I kept looking, and that horn was waging war with the saints and overpowering them ²² 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.

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. ²⁴ 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.

²⁵ 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. ²⁶ But the court will sit for judgment, and his dominion will be taken away, annihilated and destroyed forever. ²⁷ 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.'

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."

8 In the third year of the reign of Belshazzar the king a vision appeared to me, Daniel, subsequent to the one which appeared to me previously. ² I looked in the vision, and while I was looking I was in the citadel of Susa, which is in the province of Elam; and I looked in the vision and I myself was beside the Ulai Canal. ³ Then I lifted my eyes and looked, and behold, a ram which had two horns was standing in front of the canal. Now the two horns were long, but one was longer than the other, with the longer one coming up last. ⁴ I saw the ram butting westward, northward, and southward, and no other beasts could stand before him nor was there anyone to rescue from his power, but he did as he pleased and magnified himself.

⁵ While I was observing, behold, a male goat was coming from the west over the surface of the whole earth without touching the ground; and the goat had a conspicuous horn between his eyes. ⁶ He came up to the ram that had the two horns, which I had seen standing in front of the canal, and rushed at him in his mighty wrath. ⁷ I saw him come beside the ram, and he was enraged at him; and he struck the ram and shattered his two horns, and the ram had no strength to withstand him. So he hurled him to the ground and trampled on him, and there was none to rescue the ram from his power. ⁸ Then the male goat magnified himself exceedingly. But as soon as he was mighty, the large horn was broken; and in its place there came up four conspicuous horns toward the four winds of heaven.

⁹ Out of one of them came forth a rather small horn which grew exceedingly great toward the south, toward the east, and toward the Beautiful Land. ¹⁰ It grew up to the host of heaven and caused some of the host and some of the stars to fall to the earth,

and it trampled them down. ¹¹ It even magnified itself to be equal with the Commander of the host; and it removed the regular sacrifice from Him, and the place of His sanctuary was thrown down. ¹² And on account of transgression the host will be given over to the horn along with the regular sacrifice; and it will fling truth to the ground and perform its will and prosper. ¹³ Then I heard a holy one speaking, and another holy one said to that particular one who was speaking, "How long will the vision about the regular sacrifice apply, while the transgression causes horror, so as to allow both the holy place and the host to be trampled?" ¹⁴ He said to me, "For 2,300 evenings and mornings; then the holy place will be properly restored."

¹⁵ When I, Daniel, had seen the vision, I sought to understand it; and behold, standing before me was one who looked like a man. ¹⁶ And I heard the voice of a man between the banks of Ulai, and he called out and said, "Gabriel, give this man an understanding of the vision." ¹⁷ So he came near to where I was standing, and when he came I was frightened and fell on my face; but he said to me, "Son of man, understand that the vision pertains to the time of the end."

¹⁸ Now while he was talking with me, I sank into a deep sleep with my face to the ground; but he touched me and made me stand upright. ¹⁹ He said, "Behold, I am going to let you know what will occur at the final period of the indignation, for it pertains to the appointed time of the end.

²⁰ The ram which you saw with the two horns represents the kings of Media and Persia.

²¹ The shaggy goat represents the kingdom of Greece, and the large horn that is between his eyes is the first king. ²² The broken horn and the four horns that arose in its place represent four kingdoms which will arise from his nation, although not with his power.

²³ "In the latter period of their rule,
When the transgressors have run their course,
A king will arise,
Insolent and skilled in intrigue.

²⁴ "His power will be mighty, but not by his own power,
And he will destroy to an extraordinary degree
And prosper and perform his will;
He will destroy mighty men and the holy people.

²⁵ "And through his shrewdness
He will cause deceit to succeed by his influence;
And he will magnify himself in his heart,
And he will destroy many while they are at ease.
He will even oppose the Prince of princes,
But he will be broken without human agency.

²⁶ “The vision of the evenings and mornings
Which has been told is true;
But keep the vision secret,
For it pertains to many days in the future.”

²⁷ Then I, Daniel, was exhausted and sick for days.
Then I got up again and carried on the king’s
business; but I was astounded at the vision, and
there was none to explain it.

1. Who is involved in the text? Author, audience, main characters.
2. Where and when is this taking place? Geography and timeline.
3. What actions are carried out or commanded? Look for the verbs.
4. Is there anything repeated?
5. What is emphasized?
6. Is there anything in this passage that is related to other areas of scripture?
7. Are there things to be noted that are alike or unlike such as similes and metaphors?

② EXPLORE His Word (Interpretation)

What does God MEAN?

1. What do the beasts in chapter 7 symbolize?
2. In 7:15 Daniel says that the vision alarms Him. Why do you think it alarms him?
3. Who do the Ram and Goat symbolize in chapter 8?
4. Is there any promise for believers to escape the punishment of the beasts?

③ EMBRACE His Word (Application)

Why does this MATTER to me?

5. Some of Daniel's prophecies are not yet fulfilled. Should we expect things to get better or worse for believers as we approach the end times?
6. There is no promise of an easier life for the believer. In the end, what do we have to look forward to as stated in 7:26-27?

7. a. Knowing that there could be difficult times ahead for believers, how should we prepare ourselves?

b. What should be my attitude toward the future?

Summarize your thoughts on the passage:

Write about what God wants you to KNOW, to FEEL, and to DO...

SERMON NOTES