

I. Introduction

A. Chapter 7 begins the second half of Daniel

1. Shift from narrative to visions, dreams, and prophecy
2. Caution
 - a. Skipping over preferring familiar narrative
 - b. Over-absorbed in working out every detail and missing the big picture

B. One of the Summits of Scripture

1. Summit - highest peak; see everything else clearly, even though it may be far away
2. Summit view: God is the reigning King of Heaven and Earth.
 - a. Opposition? Always and they are formidable and powerful
 - b. But God is sovereign even when those opponents seem most successful.
 - c. All who stand with God will triumph as well.

**When we join Jesus in praying, "Your Kingdom come," we lose ourselves in His mission and find our true identity.

II. The Vision

A. World kingdoms (verses 1-8)

1. Lion/Eagle
 - a. Dominion and strength
 - b. Both animals used by Jeremiah to describe Nebuchadnezzar
2. Bear
 - a. Almost as formidable as the first
 - b. Ready and poised to pounce and destroy its prey
3. Leopard w/wings and four heads
 - a. Fast and looking in all directions to conquer
 - b. "Dominion was given"
4. Frankenstein beast
 - a. Terrifying, exceedingly strong, iron teeth, and heavy feet
 - b. Five times more equipped than the normal beast

B. God's eternal Kingdom

1. Ancient of Days - only throne that matters (verses 9-10)
2. Judgment of all earthly powers (verses 11-12)
3. Son of man triumphs forever (verses 13-14)

III. The Interpretation (verses 15-28)

A. Beasts are kings and kingdoms that arise out of the Earth (fallen, sin-filled) but they will be temporary because forever belongs to the Redeemed.

B. Chapter 2 and 7

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| 1. Babylon | Gold | Lion/Eagle |
| 2. Medo/Persia | Silver | Bear |
| 3. Greece | Bronze | Leopard |
| 4. Rome | Iron | Frankenstein Beast |

*Why different depictions of the same kingdoms? The difference is in God's view versus man's view of human history and achievement.

- Man sees himself as primarily good. He sees the world and its offerings as the treasure - beautiful, precious, highly valued, and worthy of praise.
- God sees the wickedness and woundedness of man - sin. He sees the world and its pursuits as they really are, the pursuits of beasts - ferocious, conquest, plunder, domination, and destruction.

*Yet in the midst of God's accurate perception, He pursues the "beast" not to "kill the beast" but to redeem the beast.

IV. The Rut (that we get stuck in)

A. Message of the vision was that those with God will ultimately be victorious no matter how difficult the path. It was a vision to stir hope in those who call God their king.

1. All evil will be judged.
2. The duration of suffering will pale in comparison with the duration of perfect contentment.

B. But Daniel can't get past the present (or the near future).

1. Anxious and needed to know more about the terrifying future
2. Messenger responds (verse 25)
 - a. Blasphemy
 - b. Long exhausting persecution
 - c. New religious beliefs
 - d. New morality

*Sound familiar? Not complete but moving swiftly that direction...

3. Remember though, his dominion will be taken away and he will be destroyed and God's people will be rewarded for eternity

C. Daniel was still alarmed and anxious

1. Daniel
 - a. Raised to position of incredible influence
 - b. Protected from harm more than once
 - c. Utterly faithful and obedient to God

*So what's the problem?

2. Remember? When we join Jesus in praying, "Your Kingdom come," we lose ourselves in His mission and find our true identity.
 - a. We allow our current or immediate circumstances to define who we are. We allow a false story to grow and that develops into a false identity that the world has given us.
 - b. This is precisely why we lack hope, because hope is found in recognizing our core identity and dismantling our false stories that define us.
 - 1) You are created in the image of God.
 - 2) You are deeply loved by God.
 - 3) You have been or are being pursued for redemption and relationship with God.

Daniel brings us down to the very basics of reality. There is ultimately no race, color, or nationality. All are created by God in His image and deeply loved. That's simply a fact. The hope is in the fact that you can humble yourself and give yourself up to the love of God, recognizing that you are that beast that needs rescue - salvation from your sin and be saved for all eternity.

Daniel sees a vision of a Son of Man Who has all power and dominion forever and ever and His Kingdom will have no end. The Gospel of Mark says this of the Son of Man, "For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many." The hope in Daniel's vision is that you and I can be forgiven, restored, and recognize who we truly are when we surrender our lives to Jesus.