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| Topic | Daniel’s Vision of Four Beasts & Gods Kingdom |
| Reference | Daniel 7:1-28 |
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| Speaker | Pastor Massimo Gei |

It is called prophetic apocalyptic literature. We must understand that chapter 7 is not chronologically after chapter 6. Chapter 7 is probably somewhere between chapter 4 and 5. It is a younger Daniel. At this time Daniel was in his 60s. Daniel was in his 90s when he was in the lion’s den.

The chapter 7 has a twin chapter and its twin chapter is chapter 2. It is a vision of Nebuchadnezzar about the great statue. In apocalyptic literature there are couple of things for us. It is supposed to give us hope in trouble times. It is supposed to give us a cosmic view on things. It is supposed to show us how does dualism play, how different forces play. At the same time it is supposed to also give us hope in God’s sovereign hand through all things.

In chapter 2 we see Nebuchadnezzar’s dream was a dream of a man. It is kind of like man’s view on how the kingdom’s will be developed and man when they look at the great kingdoms that ought to come they look at it like a great gigantic marvelous statue. Today we are talking about the same kingdom but we are going to see from a cosmic perspective, from God’s view and God’s view on those four kingdoms looks very different. It looks like beasts devouring up humanity. God sees the kingdoms for that they truly are; he does not see them as giant statues. He sees them as beasts and animals.

In Daniel’s dream there were four beasts.

**LION WITH EAGLES WINGS:**

**4** The first was like a lion and had eagles' wings. Then as I looked its wings were plucked off, and it was lifted up from the ground and made to stand on two feet like a man, and the mind of a man was given to it.

Scholars say that this must be the Babylonian Empire, because of later on in literature we see that the Old Testament refers very often as lion as Nebuchadnezzar and we also read earlier on in Daniel that he actually eventually lost his mind and then God restored his mind and was given back to him again. So we see this picture here.

**BEAR:**

**5** And behold, another beast, a second one, like a bear. It was raised up on one side. It had three ribs in its mouth between its teeth; and it was told, ‘Arise, devour much flesh.

It shows that this bear has two parts to it and one side is bigger than the other one and that is why we can say this is the Medo-Persian Empire which lasted from 539 to 331 BC. It has two kingdoms and one was more powerful than the other.

**LEOPARD:**

**6** After this I looked, and behold, another, like a leopard, with four wings of a bird on its back. And the beast had four heads, and dominion was given to it.

Leopard is one of the fastest animals in the kingdom and a leopard with wings is even faster. So therefore we say that this represents the Greek Empire, because Alexander the great swiftly took over the known world back then. He did so fast within 10 years, he was age 32 when he was king over the entire empire and when he was in India a rumor says that he was sitting in his room and weeping because there was nothing left to conquer. We also see that the beast had four heads and we also know that the Greek Empire eventually was divided up by his four generals when Alexander the great passed away.

**LAST BEAST**:

**7** After this I saw in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast, terrifying and dreadful and exceedingly strong. It had great iron teeth; it devoured and broke in pieces and stamped what was left with its feet. It was different from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns.

It just shows a very-very powerful beast that was unlike anything else, before it is a kingdom unlike any other kingdom before and that give us the imagery of the Roman soldiers stampeding across the known world, crushing everything in its past, ultimately taking up the greatest and biggest kingdom that we ever had and it lasted from 168 BC to 476 AD. This is the Roman Empire.

From this imagery we can see that this beast had 10 horns and the 10 horns are supposed to represent 10 kingdoms that come out of that. 10 represents a fullness, it could be completeness, it could be a whole number of kingdoms that will come out of that and out of these number of kingdoms we see again another imagery that ultimately from those kingdoms will come this little horn.

Who is this little horn? It is boastful, it has a loud mouth. People might say it is Donald Trump, because he does have little hands. It is the spirit of the antichrist which is put forward.

**8** I considered the horns, and behold, there came up among them another horn, a little one, before which three of the first horns were plucked up by the roots. And behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great things.

So ultimately we can see that there was this beastly kingdoms that came out of the sea and the sea always represents chaos and humanity and this beast came up and ultimately came to this last beast which had a horn and this horn was very boastful and truly going against God, screaming blasphemies and this is what we see is the spirit of the antichrist of what Thessalonians were called, the man of lawlessness. It is interesting to take this Daniel chapter and hold it against revelation 13 because we will see the same king of imagery being put in Revelation 13.

**1** And I saw a beast rising out of the sea, with ten horns and seven heads, with ten diadems on its horns and blasphemous names on its heads. **2** And the beast that I saw was like a leopard; its feet were like a bear's, and its mouth was like a lion's mouth.

We can see here all the different kingdom beasts were put into one final big beast, one final animal and ultimately what we can derive from this is to look at it from a cosmic perspective and see, yes there are going to be earthly kingdoms. They are going to rise up from the chaos of man and from this earthly manly kingdoms eventually will rise this spirit of the antichrist, this little horn who will go ultimately completely against what God has wanted. He will blaspheme against God; he will go against God’s design.

God created in genesis every animal one of a kind but every animal that we see here is a hybrid animal. So it is completely going against God’s design and epitome of it is the little horn, the spirit of a boastfully go against God.

We will see more illusions or similarities between Daniel 7 and Revelations 13

**5** And the beast was given a mouth uttering haughty and blasphemous words, and it was allowed to exercise authority for forty-two months. **6**It opened its mouth to utter blasphemies against God, blaspheming his name and his dwelling, that is, those who dwell in heaven.

Rev 13 : 5-6

He shall speak words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and shall think to change the times and the law; and they shall be given into his hand for a time, times, and half a time.

Daniel 7: 25-26

Time, times and half stands for one year plus two years plus a half year. So altogether that is three and half years which is 42 months. So it is actually the same imagery which is being put forward there. What that ultimately represents is the number 7 in Jewish custom is always the number of completeness, of fullness, of eternity and three and half is the half of this. So it just means it is a temporary time. So ultimately the time given to that beast is a temporary period. The kingdom will not last for forever, it will eventually be crushed.

Revelation 13 gives a bit more of a picture. Some people will say that when you look at prophetic apocalyptic literature in the Old Testament it is kind of like walking around in a dark room where you feel around and you recognize the chair and you recognize the bed and you recognize the table but when you look in the New Testament it is kind of like switching on the lights and suddenly you see a bit more and that is what we can see in Revelation 13.

**2** And to it the dragon gave his power and his throne and great authority. **3** One of its heads seemed to have a mortal wound, but its mortal wound was healed, and the whole earth marveled as they followed the beast. **4** And they worshiped the dragon, for he had given his authority to the beast, and they worshiped the beast, saying, “Who is like the beast, and who can fight against it?”

The last beast with the 10 horns, the dragon, which is the symbol of the antichrist, the symbol of Satan as well gave his power and his throne and great authority to the beast. This is an imagery that Satan is trying to do. He is trying to represent and pretend to be like God. Like God the father giving dominion and power and authority to God, the son. So here we can see the ultimate picture is that the spirit of the antichrist will come and pretend to be like God, the father and pretend to pass authority on to the beast and here it says

**3** One of its heads seemed to have a mortal wound,

Again an imitation. Satan will come and he will try to look as if he was slain, as if he died and as if he would be resurrected again but it is a fake because it just seems to have a mortal wound

but its mortal wound was healed, and the whole earth marveled as they followed the beast.

And then everybody is fooled, the world is fooled by the imagery and what Satan

**4** And they worshiped the dragon, for he had given his authority to the beast, and they worshiped the beast, saying, “Who is like the beast, and who can fight against it?”

Here we see the ultimate epitome of what is going to happen is from the earthly kingdoms, from the chaos will come kingdoms, from the kingdoms will come the antichrist who will ultimately pretend to be like God, pretend to have the authority like God, pretend to be like the son of God. The father-son relationship is going to be trying to be imitated and everybody is going to be fooled and from there we will see the next scene and the next scene is the Ancient of Days. The Ancient of Days will come down in his glory. This is a man roped in white with white hair and fiery thrones and immediately we see this picture of this being God. The reason we know it is God because the color white there is always represented with holiness and we see the picture of fire there and fire has always been the representation of God from the burning bush with Moses right through the fire going through the covenant of Abraham, through the fire coming down in Acts. Fire always has the power to do two things, fire can consume you, fire can judge you and fire can refine you. So this is always the two works that God does. It is either that He brings you into condemnation or he will bring you into refinement and of course we know that happens to us through the power of Christ on the cross. So we see this picture here of the Ancient of Days coming down and he is overcoming that beast and when that happens the next picture arrives and we see the Son Of Man coming down from the clouds. So he comes down from the clouds and what happens is the Ancient of Days, God the father gives and hands over all authority to him. All that he inaugurated or he will consummate the final kingdom, all dominion will be given to him that kingdom will reign forever and ever; it is an everlasting kingdom that will be setup. This is when Christ returns.

Jesus Christ always referred to himself as the Son of Man. It is one of his favorite terms to call himself.

Again the high priest asked him, “Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?” **62** And Jesus said, “I am, and you will see the **Son of Man** seated at the right hand of Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven.” Mark 14:61-62

So we can see this imagery from Daniel 7 that Jesus takes on himself being the Son of Man coming from the clouds of heaven. So this Son of Man is Jesus. He will ultimately inherit the kingdom. He will have a kingdom that will last forever and ever. So this is the imagery. This is the vision that we see.

**What do we do with all that?**

The author and the story tells us something about God. It shows to us that God is always in control of all things. Even in control of these beastly kingdoms, yes God is the one who allows them to rise up.

1. **4** The first was like a lion and had eagles' wings. Then as I looked its wings were plucked off, and it was lifted up from the ground and made to stand on two feet like a man, and the mind of a man was given to it.

We see God’s hand in the picture, God’s sovereign hand in control even over the Babylonian or this first beast.

1. 5 And behold, another beast, a second one, like a bear. **It was raised up on one side**. It had three ribs in its mouth between its teeth; **and it was told, ‘Arise, devour much flesh**.

God raised and told. God is saying, standup and devour much. God’s hand is in that situation.

1. After this I looked, and behold, another, like a leopard, with four wings of a bird on its back. And the beast had four heads, and **dominion was given to it**.

It is only God who has the power and the authority to give dominion. Again we see God’s sovereign hand in control even over beastly kingdoms.

1. He shall speak words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and shall think to change the times and the law; and **they shall be given into his hand** for a time, times, and half a time

Again it is God who does the giving. We see God’s hand is in in play even in the kingdoms which are so beastly and seem to be blaspheming against him and going against everything he has designed but yet God is at hand. God is in control, God’s sovereign hand is at play. We see that God is both in control of goodness and evil throughout the whole scripture.

* “is it not from the mouth of the Most High that both good and bad come?” (Lam 3:38),
* “shall we receive good from God, and shall we not receive evil?” (Job 2:10),
* “I make well-being and create calamity” (Is 45:7),
* "The Lord kills and brings to life; he brings down to Sheol and raises up. The Lord makes poor and makes rich; he brings low and he exalts. ( 1 Samuel 2:6–7)
* “he who works **all things** in accordance with the counsel of his will” (Eph 1:11).

So God is sovereign, God is in control even the most evil things that you may think of right now, God is in control. God’s hand is always in play. He is the author of history, nothing happens without His knowledge; nothing happens without His power, nothing happens without His presence. Spurgeon is the one who said, *The dust molds are suspended in the air by divine appointment.*

God is sovereign over all things. So what do we do with that? When Daniel saw it, his reaction was

“As for me, Daniel, my spirit within me was anxious, and the visions of my head alarmed me. As for me, Daniel, my thoughts greatly alarmed me, and my color changed, but I kept the matter in my heart.

It is alarming when you think that God is control of evil too. It makes us anxious. When we understand that God is sovereign and God is in control and to keep that matter in the heart because how do we tell our friends we are not Christian and God that we say is a good God and loved us is in control of even the evil things. Now I will not tell anybody that. I will leave that out of my gospel presentation. It is alarming, it is perplexing, it is struggling to talk about that, but see Daniel he came from a picture where the cross has not happened yet. We understand how evil things can work for God’s glory. The most evil thing that ever happened on earth was the cross, it is the crucifixion of Christ that God came from heavenly places, walked on earth and healed people, he healed the lame, he gave the blind sight, he restored people, he communed with them, he freed them. Humanity in response put him on cross, we nailed him on the cross, we blasphemed against him, we mocked him, we speck on him, we put a spear on his side. The most evil thing that ever happened or will ever happen in the history of human kind is crucifying our living God and killing him on a cross, but it is also the most glorifying thing that ever happened. The cross is also the act that brought the most glory to God, because it paid for all our sins and therefore all of us can now come into the presence of God, all of us are redeemed through that cross. The most evil thing that ever happened produced the most glory that ever happened. We see the hand of God in that. So if the most evil thing that ever happened can produce the most glory that ever happened then what is true for the greater is also true for the lesser. It means every evil, every suffering, every pain, every hardship; every consequence of things also in a peculiar way brings glory to God. It must bring glory to God. If our suffering and our pain and our hardship are the consequences of evil, as evil is prevailing and God is not in control, said evil has prevailed for evil’s purpose and evil’s means and evil’s time. Evil is prevailing is God is not in control. What hope is found when evil does evil and it prevails for its own purposes? It means that God cannot take care of us. There is no hope found in that but if God is sovereign and if God is in control of even the evil the hope is found because then every bad thing, every pain that we feel, every suffering that we have, every anxiety, every sickness, every financial difficulty, anything that we face here has purpose and it is absolutely meaningful and it is working towards a glory for God and that is when the words of Paul in Corinthians come alive when he says, these momentary afflictions are producing, are creating, they are making for us an eternal wait of glory.

So how are we supposed to react in that situation? Well the first people who really understood that God is sovereign, that God is in control even over calamities, the first people who understand that he will come back down from heavens and ultimately he will reign are the people in Acts, the church of Acts where people started going out and proclaiming his word and growing his kingdom and we can see how they reacted and we should imitate their reaction. When they had hardship this is what happened

And when they had called in the apostles, they beat them and charged them not to speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. **41** Then they left the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the name. **42** And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they did not cease teaching and preaching that the Christ is Jesus. Acts 5:40-42

They were rejoicing because they know that their suffering in a peculiar way is producing glory for God. This needs to be our reaction when we understand that God is in control over all things, his hands plays in whatever suffering we have, every suffering that we appropriate for the cross and for the purpose of Jesus that he is in hand and ultimately we understand that, it will propel us to go out and tell everybody the good news. This is how we must react. This is how the church reacted in the early days when they understood that the kingdom of God is going to come. And they had urgency about it because they knew the time is short. The trouble is that we lack that hope because that hope is not tangible. It seems so far away when Christ is coming, we cannot seem to touch it and grab it and feel it right now. As a church people now want immediate results, we want to go out and spread the gospel and we immediately wanted to see people come to faith. We want to have direct results through our endeavors. This hope is not tangible. So how do we make hope tangible? We cannot have this narrow view. We cannot see that how our efforts as an individual contributes and how people come to faith or how people grow from our efforts, we have to see how we faithfully go and work for God’s purposes and how then through the body of faithful individuals, through the body of Christ through the church, how that brings hope to others. How through then the combined working of a church people come to faith. We have to see how the body grows.

Through an acting church we will be able to give witness to people who are around us and will be able to give glory to God’s name. When the people of Christ come together things happen.

I did not came to faith because of a single person acting. I came to faith because many different people starting doing things that attracted me. Someone prayed for me, someone encouraged me, someone brought me to prayer meeting, someone counseled me and that is how I came to Christ. These were all different people and how in spite of the situations, in spite of all the things around the world still kept faithful to God and ministered and it is their ministry.

When different people together and serve God and understand that he is sovereign and do their work, the overflow of a church of a body come in together as people like me and you getting saved. It is overflow, we always wait for direct results, these are indirect results and is it not that every person sitting next to you right now is a testimony of the eternity to come. We have tangible hope because we are the people who will spend eternity together, we are the beginning of the kingdom of God right now, right here, and it is people. Our purpose must be to gather more people into the kingdom that is tangible hope.

When the body comes together the overflow of the work of the body is people coming to faith and I know it is not easy because we will be persecuted, adversity will come against us, people will ridicule us, people will say we are crazy, people will not understand. Persecution will come, trouble will come, and forces are at work against us.

Jesus Christ said on his most famous sermon. Matthew 5:

[**2**](http://biblehub.com/matthew/5-2.htm)And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying:

[**3**](http://biblehub.com/matthew/5-3.htm)“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

[**4**](http://biblehub.com/matthew/5-4.htm)“Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

[**5**](http://biblehub.com/matthew/5-5.htm)“Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

[**6**](http://biblehub.com/matthew/5-6.htm)“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.

[**7**](http://biblehub.com/matthew/5-7.htm)“Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.

[**8**](http://biblehub.com/matthew/5-8.htm)“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

[**9**](http://biblehub.com/matthew/5-9.htm)“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.

[**10**](http://biblehub.com/matthew/5-10.htm)“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

[**11**](http://biblehub.com/matthew/5-11.htm) “Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account.

[**12**](http://biblehub.com/matthew/5-12.htm) Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

[**13**](http://biblehub.com/matthew/5-13.htm) “You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people’s feet.

[**14**](http://biblehub.com/matthew/5-14.htm) “You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden.

[**15**](http://biblehub.com/matthew/5-15.htm) Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house.

[**16**](http://biblehub.com/matthew/5-16.htm) In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.