

DANIEL

Lesson 12: Daniel 7:15-28 Spotter's Guide

- New Jersey was tired of being the brunt of jokes, so in 2017 they sponsored a campaign to spruce up the state's image with a new slogan. Most were positive but a few had a sarcastic twist.
- New Jersey: We can always use another relative on the payroll!
- New Jersey: Why should death end your voting rights?
- Come to New Jersey – it's not as bad as it smells.

- Churches are trying so hard to “attract people” that they are willing to become home, home, on the range, where the deer and the antelope play, where never is heard a discouraging word, and the skies are not cloudy all day.
- Are we afraid or reluctant to teach a “negative” message for fear of driving people away?
- This has echoes of something Paul once told Timothy.

- 2 Timothy 4:3-4: For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires; and will turn away their ears from the truth, and will turn aside to myths.
- **“I don't care if it's right or wrong, teach me what makes me feel better about my life.”**

- Do you want to hear from God, even if what He has to say is bad news?
- When God tells us bad news, it is an act of grace.
- zb – If it’s about consequences for bad behavior, then we can repent (The Nineveh 40 Day Verdict).
- zb – If it’s about undesirable consequences for good behavior, then we can “brace for impact.” (The Agabus Report – Paul’s belt)

- There are moments when what God says will create fear, or anxiety, even panic.
- This is not necessarily a bad thing.
- I often watch a weather report precisely because I want to hear some bad news. This is not about **wanting** something bad to happen but wanting to **understand** something bad that is going to happen. My anxiety propels preparation!

- I realize it’s been awhile since we studied the first half of Daniel chapter 7. Review...
- In the first half of chapter 7, Daniel had a vision of the future. He saw a succession of four great kingdoms (depicted as beasts). These earthly kingdoms were replaced by an eternal kingdom with “the Son of Man” on the throne.
- **This seems like a story with a deliciously happy ending. (And it is!)**

- But there was something about this vision that Daniel found more than a little disturbing.
- Daniel’s Panic Attack is first described in Daniel 7:15: “As for me, Daniel, my spirit was distressed within me, and the visions in my mind kept **alarming** me.”
- Have you ever had a dream that created a panic?
- This is what Daniel is experiencing in His vision. What is “alarm?”

- In Daniel 4, Nebuchadnezzar was **alarmed** by his dream. When Daniel heard Neb's account and realized what it meant, He was **alarmed**.
- 15 years into the future (in Daniel 5), Daniel will use the same term to describe the countenance of Belshazzar when the king reads the handwriting on the wall. **Alarmed!**
- So in Daniel 7:15, this is not a case of mild indigestion but something super scary!

- Daniel is not alone in feeling over-whelmed by a prophetic vision.
- Jeremiah 4:19 – *“My soul, my soul! I am in anguish! Oh, my heart! My heart is pounding in me; I cannot be silent, Because you have heard, O my soul, The sound of the trumpet, The alarm of war.”*
- Jeremiah has been given a prophetic preview of what will soon happen to Jerusalem and he is utterly undone.

- In Daniel's case, he is not alarmed because He is confused. He is alarmed precisely because he understands.
- Listen to what he says **after** he has had his questions answered:
- Daniel 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.”*

- The more clearly Daniel understands this vision, the greater His alarm. Why?
- So are you ready to unpack what Daniel saw?
- If you understand this vision, you will find it unsettling, even alarming!
- But this vision is also intended to be a message of grace that warns us of a coming storm.

- Daniel is alarmed by the vision in the first half of the chapter, and seeks more information.
- Bystander's First Report (Daniel 7:16-18)
- Daniel 7:16 – *“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.”*
- He is still, via vision, at the future inauguration, and asks (presumably) an angelic by-stander.

- This by-stander gives a summary report:
- Daniel 7:17–18 – *“These great beasts, which are four in number, are four kings who will arise from the earth. But the saints of the Highest One will receive the kingdom and possess the kingdom forever, for all ages to come.”*
- New Info: The four beasts = four kings (kingdoms)
- New Info: The saints receive the kingdom, too.

- I can just hear Daniel saying this: “Okay, I got that, but what is the deal with this fourth beast/kingdom? He is freaking me out!”
- So he spells out his question in precise detail. What is going on with this fourth beast? This is scary!

- Daniel 7:19–22 – *“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, 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. I kept looking, and that horn was waging war with the saints and overpowering them 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.”*
- Much of this account repeats the description in vss. 7-8.

- This beast is strange and terrifyingly different from the previous three.
- Teeth of iron, claws of bronze, devours crushes, and tramples – this beast is built for domination and leaves a path of destruction in its wake.
- There are ten horns on the beast. But then something changes: Another horn grows which replaces three of the ten.

- This horn surpasses the others and becomes dominant. We'll call him the “super-horn.”
- This super-horn has human features, notably eyes and a mouth, by which it speaks arrogantly.
- Then Daniel adds a new detail in his question that we haven't heard about previously: **This super-horn declares all-out war against God's people and is winning!**

- The rampage of this super-horn will not conclude until the Ancient of Days (God) intervenes and delivers a verdict in favor of the saints and gives to them the kingdom.
- The conclusion is good. But Daniel is aghast at what precedes the conclusion and is alarmed by this beast.
- He wants more detail, especially as it concerns this “super-horn.”

- Some Beastly Detail (Daniel 7:23-27)
- a. The Rise of the Beast (Daniel 7:23-25)
- Daniel 7:23–25 – *“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. 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.’*

- *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.”*
- 10 Key Points:
 1. The beast is a kingdom.
 2. This kingdom will shift the paradigm of what it means to be a kingdom.

3. This kingdom will be global in its reach
4. This kingdom will be driven by consumption and domination.
5. This kingdom will initially consist of a ten kingdom confederation.
6. At some point, a new king will rise to power, defeat three and take the lead of the whole.

7. This king will actually declare war against God and war against any who align with God.
8. He will alter the calendar in ways that support his anti-God campaign.
9. He will redefine what is right and wrong, ie, he will advocate pride for things God condemns. He will make it illegal to do what God calls holy.

10. Here is an irony – although he presumes to “rewrite the book” on time, he will be constrained by it. Limited to less than one term (US).

- The word “time” is also translated “year” – so “a year, years, and half a year” could mean 3½ years.
- He will be “given” this moment, but only this moment. God allows this.

- Daniel is not the only one to have caught a glimpse of this future moment.
- Revelation 13:1–4 – *And the dragon stood on the sand of the seashore. Then I saw a beast coming up out of the sea, having ten horns and seven heads, and on his horns were ten diadems, and on his heads were blasphemous names. And the beast which I saw was like a leopard, and his feet were like those of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion.*

- *And the dragon gave him his power and his throne and great authority. I saw one of his heads as if it had been slain, and his fatal wound was healed. And the whole earth was amazed and followed after the beast; they worshiped the dragon because he gave his authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, “Who is like the beast, and who is able to wage war with him?”*

- This is future – it is coming. This is the bad news...

- Here is the good news!
- The Fall of the Beast (Daniel 7:26-27)
- Daniel 7:26–27 – *“But the court will sit for judgment, and his dominion will be taken away, annihilated and destroyed forever. 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.”*

- The “super-horn” kingdom will fall.
- Everything connected to this kingdom will be totally erased. No trace!
- To the people of true holiness will be given the right to rule all the kingdoms under heaven.
- The saints will serve and follow God for all eternity.
- This is a stunning conclusion but the last chapter is a doozy!

- Daniel’s Ponderings (Daniel 7:28)
- Daniel 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.*
- Daniel is now greatly alarmed, not because he is **confused** but because he **knows**.
- This vision precedes the “hand-writing on the wall” by 15 years.

- Although Daniel kept the matter to himself, eventually he published his vision – otherwise we wouldn’t have it.
- This may reflect something that happened (to be continued) later in his life.
- Bottom line: Daniel saw a coming storm for God’s people. Unprecedented prevailing wrath for saints.
- This storm has not arrived, but it is coming.

- Application
- What should we do to prepare? **Great question!**
- The remaining sermons will help, so will Wed night.
- **Step One: Admit this is coming** – step out of **la-la land** (euphoric, dreamlike state of someone who is not aware of what is coming).
- Remember 2 Tim. 4:3-5?

- 2 Timothy 4:3-5 – *For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires; and will turn away their ears from the truth, and will turn aside to myths. But you, **be sober in all things**, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.*

- **Sober = See what is coming!**

- The world wants to condition you, to keep you obviously snuggled up in la-la land. Wake up!
- The greatest faith test of all time is coming.
- **Step Two: Connect the dots.** War against God / saints; Redefine what is right and wrong.
- Be sober in all things = sort out reality. See what is happening as the onramp to super-horn.

- **Step Three: Decide who you are!**

- Revelation 7:14 – “These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.”
- All who successfully exit this season of unprecedented trial, have been washed by the blood of the lamb. You?