

Daniel 7 • Daniel's vision of the four beasts

Teacher: Pastor Paul LeBoutillier
Calvary Chapel Ontario

Daniel chapter 7. What we're going to do is, read through the chapter first. We're going to read through the whole chapter, and then we're going to come back and take a look at it and see what it says.

So, follow along with me as I read Daniel chapter 7, beginning at verse 1, *“In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon, Daniel saw a dream and visions of his head as he lay in his bed. Then he wrote down the dream and told the sum of the matter. ² Daniel declared, “I saw in my vision by night, and behold, the four winds of heaven were stirring up the great sea. ³ And four great beasts came up out of the sea, different from one another. 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.*

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.’ 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. 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.

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. ⁹ “As I looked, thrones were placed, and the Ancient of Days took his seat; his clothing was white as snow, and the hair of his head like pure wool; his throne was fiery flames; its wheels were burning fire. ¹⁰ A stream of fire issued and came out from before him; a thousand thousands served him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him; the court sat in judgment, and the books were opened. ¹¹ “I looked then because of the sound of the great words that the horn was speaking. And as I looked, the beast was killed, and its body destroyed and given over to be burned with fire. ¹² As for the rest of the beasts, their dominion was taken away, but their lives were

prolonged for a season and a time.¹³ “I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him.¹⁴ And to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed.

¹⁵ “As for me, Daniel, my spirit within me was anxious, and the visions of my head alarmed me.¹⁶ I approached one of those who stood there and asked him the truth concerning all this. So he told me and made known to me the interpretation of the things.¹⁷ ‘These four great beasts are four kings who shall arise out of the earth.¹⁸ But the saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom and possess the kingdom forever, forever and ever.’

¹⁹ “Then I desired to know the truth about the fourth beast, which was different from all the rest, exceedingly terrifying, with its teeth of iron and claws of bronze, and which devoured and broke in pieces and stamped what was left with its feet,²⁰ and about the ten horns that were on its head, and the other horn that came up and before which three of them fell, the horn that had eyes and a mouth that spoke great things, and that seemed greater than its companions.²¹ As I looked, this horn made war with the saints and prevailed over them,²² until the Ancient of Days came, and judgment was given for the saints of the Most High, and the time came when the saints possessed the kingdom.”

²³ “Thus he said: ‘As for the fourth beast, there shall be a fourth kingdom on earth, which shall be different from all the kingdoms, and it shall devour the whole earth, and trample it down, and break it to pieces.²⁴ As for the ten horns, out of this kingdom ten kings shall arise, and another shall arise after them; he shall be different from the former ones, and shall put down three kings.

²⁵ 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.²⁶ But the court shall sit in judgment, and his dominion shall be taken away, to be consumed and destroyed to the end.²⁷ And the kingdom and the dominion and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High; his kingdom shall be an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.’²⁸ “Here is the end of the matter. As for me, Daniel, my thoughts greatly alarmed me, and my color changed, but I kept the matter in my heart.” (ESV)

Let's pray. Heavenly Father, as we get into these verses, this chapter of Daniel chapter 7, first of all, Lord, we want to thank you that you have spoken prophetically to Daniel. And as we're going to see here tonight also, to your servant John who wrote down in the book of Revelation many of the same things that are listed here and given to Daniel. And we thank you Father that you have done this so that we can know what is to come, so that we can understand that you are the sovereign and eternal God who holds all time in your hands. We thank you Father for your plan and we ask you to help us to lay hold of what you've said here, and we ask it in Jesus' precious name. Amen. Amen.

All right. Well, as we get into Daniel chapter 7 here, we're beginning to embark on some brand new territory. Up to this point, chapters 1 through 6 have all kind of dealt with, I don't know, just kind of life in the Babylonian and Medo-Persian kingdoms. But now here in chapter 7, as we move through the end of the book, we shift the entire sort of focus to the describing of various visions that Daniel received from the Lord and including a visitation from an angelic being that will take up the final 3 chapters.

And in terms of the timeline as to when this vision that we're reading here tonight in chapter 7 took place, this happened somewhere between Daniel chapter 4 and chapter 5, so time-wise, we've gone back in time. As you saw, he began by saying in the first year of king Belshazzar, but he's speaking now about matters related to the end.

But you'll notice that he begins in this chapter by saying, again that time reference *"the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon."* He says *"Daniel saw a dream and visions of his head as he lay in his bed,"* and it tells us here in the end of verse 1 that he wrote them all down and recorded what he saw. And he *"declared"* in verse 2, that what he began to see were the *"four winds of heaven."* And we are not even sure how to describe that, but the *"four winds of heaven"* who *"were stirring up the great sea."*

Now you need to understand that when Daniel describes a "stirring of the sea," this is a stirring work of the Lord to bring about the purpose and the plan for which He has set all these things in place. And, "the sea" is a common term in the Bible to describe the Gentile nations, all right.

So when he says that "the four winds stirred up the sea," we're talking about how the Gentile nations are stirred up to a particular goal and that goal is world dominion. And so what he begins to see, and he tells us what he sees beginning in verse 3, are *"four great beasts"* which you'll notice arise *"up out of the sea."*

And that means, they arise up out of the Gentile nations and they come one after the other.

Now, we're going to read later on, and we and we actually, we already have, but we're going to look once again here of the interpretation that is given to Daniel, related to these things. But I want to keep you with me as we go through these verses.

So if you'll skip down just for a moment to verse 17 in your Bible, you'll see who these four beasts are, we're told, verse 17, “*These four great beasts are four kings* (and of course, obviously the kingdoms that they rule, which he says) *who shall arise out of the earth.*” So, this is one of those times in the Bible, we don't have to guess as to what these symbols refer to. It's very clear these symbols refer to kingdoms and specifically four great kings who arise and become world powers upon the earth.

Now we'll look at the first one, and we'll identify these as we go along. Verse 4 tells us that, “*The first was like a lion and had eagles' wings.*” Now this is fairly easy to identify. Do you guys remember in Daniel chapter 2 when Nebuchadnezzar had a dream of a great statue, a huge statue with a golden head, a silver chest. And you remember how a bronze belly and then we went down to silver, and then bronze, and then iron, and then iron joined with clay.

Well, that was a picture to Nebuchadnezzar of succeeding world powers and we're going to see the same order of world powers. We're just, they're just, instead of in the form of different metals that had different worth and different strength, he's going to use pictures of animals. And the reason that this is a fairly easy one is because the Babylonian empire was commonly represented by the lion and the eagle.

And so what Daniel sees in this vision is this lion with eagle's wings. But then I want you to notice what he sees next. He sees that the wings are plucked off the lion, did you notice that?

So what Daniel is seeing here, he's watching as this first beast is humbled, right? Then he goes on to say, after that, “*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*” this beast.

Well, this perfectly fits Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, which is that first great world power, Gentile world power that we're looking at, because we know that this is what happened to him. He was humbled because of his pride. The Lord literally took his mind away, he had the mind of an animal, and he literally

for 7 years, lived like an animal, ate grass, lived outdoors until finally the Lord restored his mind, and then restored him to the kingdom, restored his throne as well.

So this is just another picture to Daniel of the kingdom, which in his timeframe has already passed away. Has already, well, the Babylonian empire hasn't yet passed away, but Nebuchadnezzar has passed away. So this first great king has already moved from the scene.

Then we move on to the second beast, it says, *“And behold, another beast, a second one, like a bear.”* And by the way, this is the next kingdom we know came after the Babylonians, this is the Medo-Persian empire because they are illustrated by a bear. But, and you think about a bear versus a lion, a bear is not as majestic, it's not as quick, it's slower, but it's more powerful.

And so, and that's exactly what we see in the Medo-Persian empire. And we're told that, *“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.’”* And these three ribs that we see in the mouth of the bear, we believe that they represent three of the main military conquests that the Medo-Persian empire had over the years and they were Babylon, Egypt, and Lydia. Lydia was a nation that is now encompassed in modern day Turkey. But those were huge conquests for the Medo-Persian empire and that I believe is what Daniel is seeing in this portion of the vision.

Verse 6 says, *“After this I looked, and behold, another, like a leopard,”* and this one again is easy to figure out. This is Greece, because they were the next world power under the leadership of Alexander the Great. Some of you may remember learning about Alexander the Great in your world history classes. And by the way, Alexander the Great invaded Asia Minor in like 334 B.C. and in the next 10 to 12 years, which is pretty rapid, he made his way all the way to the Medo-Persian empire and conquered it. And it was a considered a very rapid conquering of the land. And that is the reason why his image is seen as a leopard, but as we're going to see, not just a leopard, but a leopard with wings, and that again, speaks of that quickness, that rapid way of conquering.

And it goes on to say, we're in the middle of verse 6, *“with four wings of a bird on its back.”* Now that again, that four wings has to do with quickness, but it also has to do with something else and you'll notice that the number four appears again at the end of verse 6, it says, *“And the beast had four heads, and dominion was given to it.”*

Did you notice the repetition of the number 4, two times there and that's because Alexander the Great, if you remember your world history, died at a relatively young age and his kingdom was divided among 4 of his generals, essentially. And they ruled in his stead, but they inherited different parts of the kingdom.

And that's why you see that this beast had 4 heads. Now we move on to the fourth beast. Verse 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."* Now this is interesting that this fourth beast is different from all of the rest. You'll notice it isn't described by a specific animal, it is just called a "beast" and a "terrifying" one at that, that was "exceedingly strong." And this people is the Roman empire and this was the next empire to rise to world dominion.

They conquered the Grecian empire and kind of enveloped it in most cases, and this was the strongest and longest lasting kingdom of all of the four. You'll notice the reference to iron, *"iron teeth."* Now, these are the feet of the statue, the iron of the feet. But some of the iron was mixed with clay, which made it unstable, but that's frankly something of the other vision.

But there's something else that connects to Nebuchadnezzar's earlier vision of a statue with Daniel's vision here, because it goes on to say here at the end of verse 7, if you look with me, it says, *"It was different from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns."*

Now remember people, this is represented also by Nebuchadnezzar's statue and the portion of the feet. How many toes do you have on your feet? 10, right? So this is the connection, right? There's 10 toes in Nebuchadnezzar's picture of this kingdom that rises and we see here that there are 10 horns, and "horns" is always a symbol of power in the Bible. And so, we can see that this final kingdom has 10 seats of power, but we also see that these seats of power are in flux. This is a picture from Nebuchadnezzar's statue where the iron is mixed with clay, and so it didn't it, there was instability there.

And the very next thing that we read in verse 8 is he said, *"I considered the horns, (meaning the ten horns of this final beast) and behold, there came up among them another horn, (which starts off little, he says it was) a little one, before which three of the first horns were plucked up by the roots."* So you see that this, there's this other horn that starts off small that rises up, that gets rid of 3 of the other kings.

Now this is interesting and we'll talk about what this means as we go on, but I want you to notice, he goes on to speak of this little horn and he says, *“And behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great things.”*

So this is pretty interesting. Notice that this small horn is described as having *“the eyes of a man”* and a mouth that speaks, as the ESV says, *“great things”* that can be misunderstood. Some of the other Bible translations are frankly a little bit better. The New American Standard Bible says, *“uttering great boasts”* and the new King James says, *“uttering pompous words.”* And that's what this little horn is doing, he's bragging, he's speaking words. Now I want you to compare that with what John writes in Revelation chapter 13, up on the screen, he says,

Revelation 13:5-6 (ESV)

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

And the beast was given a mouth uttering haughty and blasphemous words, and it was allowed to exercise authority for forty-two months. (that's 3 and ½ years) It opened its mouth to utter blasphemies against God, blaspheming his name and his dwelling, that is, those who dwell in heaven.

John and Daniel are seeing the same beast and they are describing this beast in very similar language: *“Given a mouth to say these blasphemous things.”* And we're going to talk more about this fourth beast as we get into the interpretation that Daniel has given.

But first, let's read on, verse 9, *“As I looked, thrones were placed, (that's interesting, isn't it?) and the Ancient of Days took his seat; his clothing (he begins to describe it now) was white as snow, and the hair of his head like pure wool; his throne was fiery flames; its wheels were burning fire.”* Now we think back on Ezekiel's description of the throne of God and these wheels within a wheel that had eyes all around them.

And here Daniel sees them, literally a blaze and it's fascinating to see these things conveyed by two different individuals. But did you notice that Daniel says, *“I saw thrones”* plural *“were placed.”* Now, he doesn't describe anyone sitting on those thrones, but interestingly enough, John sees the same thing. We won't take a look at that reference right now, but John sees thrones too around

the throne. And John describes those who sit on the throne as the “24 elders who cast their crowns before the throne of God and worship him day and night.” (Revelation 4:9-11)

So Daniel goes on, verse 10, “*A stream of fire issued and came out from before him; a thousand thousands served him, (and I’m assuming that has to do with angels) and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him; the court sat in judgment, and the books were opened.*” Well, the scene is quite obviously related to judgment taking place and Daniel is being given a vision of God judging the nations of the world. But see what Daniel has just seen, visions, you have to understand something people, visions don't always stick to a consistent timeline. Many times a vision like this one does, will see some things and then it'll rush to a conclusion and then it will back up and it will go into detail about some of the things it talked about in a more general sense.

In fact, Daniel chapter 7 is, the whole vision is like that. It gives us kind of an overview of the last days, and then when we get into the next few visions that Daniel has given, we're going to get to go into detail, specific detail about what he said in this more general vision, all right.

So now we're going to, now that we've gone all the way to the judgment, we're going to back up, and we're going to look at, and get more insight about this fourth beast, because Daniel is very interested in this. He says in verse 11, “*I looked then because of the sound of the great words (again, that could be, that's most likely boastful words) that the horn was speaking. And as I looked, the beast was killed, and its body destroyed and given over to be burned with fire.*”

Now what have we just seen? Daniel, again, he goes back to talk about this fourth beast who we know to be the beast of Revelation chapter 13, or if you will, the beast that is the anti-Christ. And he basically takes, essentially, 3 and ½ years and just comes to an abrupt conclusion and says “he's going to be killed and his body is going to be burned with fire.”

Well, does that square with what we know about the end of the anti-Christ elsewhere? Yes, it does. Let me show you on the screen, Revelation chapter 19, it says,

Revelation 19:20 (ESV)

And the beast was captured, and with it the false prophet who in its presence had done the signs by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped its image. These two were thrown alive into the lake of fire that burns with sulfur.

So John and Daniel are both seeing the end of the anti-Christ at that particular juncture. Now Daniel says in verse 12, *“As for the rest of the beasts, (now these are the horns if you will, it says) their dominion was taken away, but their lives were prolonged for a season and a time.”*

So those who were aligned with the fourth beast were allowed to live a little while longer. Were told here, although “their dominion had been taken away,” and we're going to find out why their dominion had been taken away. Now, as we continue to read, I want you just to be aware of the fact that we're going to be reading here about Jesus and His coming to earth.

Verse 13, *“I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him.”* So here you have the Son coming before the Father. ¹⁴ *“And to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed.”* Quite obviously, these are, this is language related to the second coming of Jesus and the time that He will establish His throne on the earth and rule with an everlasting dominion.

And this will happen at the conclusion of the great tribulation. After, the whole tribulation is 7 years, but the really, the nastiest time of the tribulation is the last 3 and a ½ years when the anti-Christ will be given specific dominion over the earth and the saints at that time. And I'll explain in just a minute here who the saints are. And although we've already interpreted much of this vision, we're going to read now the insights that Daniel was given as the interpretation is given to him.

Verse 15 says, *“As for me, Daniel, my spirit within me was anxious, and the visions of my head alarmed me. ¹⁶ I approached one of those who stood there and asked him the truth concerning all this. So he told me and made known to me the interpretation of the things.”* So Daniel is basically explaining that all this upset him, he was frightened by these things because he didn't know how it fit. He didn't understand the dynamics of what was going on and how it works and all these other things, and he had a lot of questions.

So the interpretation goes like this. Verse 17, we've already read this verse, ¹⁷ *“These four great beasts are four kings who shall arise out of the earth. ¹⁸ But the saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom and possess the kingdom forever, forever and ever.”* Now, once again, what Daniel is being given here is an explanation, is a broad summary, and he's basically

saying, “all of these kings that you've seen in this vision are four successive world powers, but ultimately the saints are going to receive the kingdom and it'll be theirs forever and ever.” That's it, he isn't given much detail there at all.

So we're going to stop here and we're going to pose a question which is kind of the elephant in the room, because the vision that Daniel has is related to kings, some of whom were alive or who ruled while he was king or while he was alive rather, while Daniel was alive, and some who came after he passed from the scene. And again, those are Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome. But here's the question, and I'll put it up on the screen for you so we can all look puzzled together.



Why is Daniel shown a vision of four world powers starting with Babylon, then moving on to Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome, and what do those kingdoms have to do with the last days in the anti-Christ? How do you get to the end of Rome and jump ahead to the end of all things? Because the end of all things is still ahead of you and me, but the end of Rome happened around the fifth century A.D.

So, what's the connection? What's the connection between these four kingdoms and the anti-Christ? Doesn't the anti-Christ come and reveal himself at the beginning of the great tribulation? And that's still well off in the future. Well, this is actually a very good question. I don't know how many of you were thinking of it in your head, but if you were, congrats, it's a good question.

And here's the answer to the question. It all centers around this one beast that is different from all the rest, the one that frightened Daniel so much, the one that was not described by a particular animal, but was just called this “terrifying

beast,” which we said represents in the timeline, as Rome. But you got to understand that Rome, or as we call it “Imperial Rome” existed from some around time, around 31 B.C. to like A.D. 476, something like that, okay? And it ended.

But you have to understand that Imperial Rome is a pre-configuration, a foreshadowing of a world dominating government, kingdom, rule, power, whatever you want to call it, that is going to rise up in the last days and be ruled by the beast of Revelation, better known as the anti-Christ.

And that is precisely what Daniel will be told more about as we continue on. So, here's the connection, Rome is a foreshadowing of the anti-Christ. And this is one of those passages in the Bible that we've talked about many times throughout our study of the Old Testament, where we are given prophetic insights that pertain to a near fulfillment and a distant fulfillment, and there is a parallel connection to those prophecies.

In other words, a dual sort of understanding to the fulfillment of those prophetic statements. Look at verse 19 with me in your Bible, Daniel says, *“Then I desired to know the truth about the fourth beast, (because Daniel knows there’s something special about this last beast) which was different from all the rest, exceedingly terrifying, with its teeth of iron and claws of bronze, and which devoured and broke in pieces and stamped what was left with its feet, ²⁰ and about the ten horns that were on its head, and the other horn that came up and before which three of them fell, the horn that had eyes and a mouth that spoke great things, and that seemed greater than its companions.”*

Isn't this fascinating? He reiterates this entire description of this fourth beast to call our attention to it because of the significance, the ominous significance of this final beast. Now, Daniel describes more of what he was shown related to this, look at verse 21, *“As I looked, this horn (now he’s talking about that small horn that rose up, he says,) made war with the saints and prevailed over them,”*

Now, I want you to stop there because we need to talk about what this is. Daniel is being shown now how the anti-Christ is going to rise up during the great tribulation and he's going to be given power over the entire world, including power over the saints. And this squares with what we're told in the Book of Revelation, let me put it up on the screen. From Revelation chapter 13 verses 5 through the first part of verse 7. It says,

Revelation 13:5-7a (ESV)

And the beast was given a mouth uttering haughty and blasphemous words, and

it was allowed to exercise authority for forty-two months. It opened its mouth to utter blasphemies against God, blaspheming his name and his dwelling, that is, those who dwell in heaven. Also it was allowed to make war on the saints and to conquer them.

That's the same passage we read just a little bit ago, but I wanted to read the whole thing in context and then add that last line. Because you needed to see the context of when exactly this beast is going to be able to make war on the saints and conquer them.

Now you need to understand who these saints are because this is not the church. These are the tribulation saints, these are those people who come to Christ during the great tribulation. People, there is going to be a huge awakening, a huge revival during the first ½ of the great tribulation. People are going to come to the Lord by the thousands, and thousands, and thousands. And we read about this in the book of Revelation.

I won't put up the scripture or make you turn there, but you'll remember there's a section where John suddenly sees all of these, this multitude of saints, thousands and thousands of them. And he's asked, "who are these?" And John says, "I don't know, who are they, you know." He didn't recognize them, okay. Surely John would recognize the church, he's part of that church. He doesn't recognize these people. And then he's told, "these are they who have come out of the great tribulation and washed their robes." (Revelation 7:14)

And so these are they who will be killed, who will be martyred by the anti-Christ during that latter half of the great tribulation. And the reason they're going to be martyred is because the anti-Christ is not going to tolerate any competition, he is going to demand to be worshiped as God.

Remember, that's what marks the midpoint of the great tribulation. Because he is going to make some kind of an arrangement so that the Jews are going to be able to rebuild the temple. And we are not even sure how he's going to do that, but he's going to make a pact with the Jews and it's going to facilitate the rebuilding of the temple, and it's going to look great for the first 3 and ½ years of the great tribulation.

Then at the midway point, he's going to turn on them. He's going to go back on everything he said, and he's going to take his own image, establish it in the Holy of Holies, and he's going to demand that the world worship him as God. And he's not going to brook any kind of opposition from anybody who claims there is another God.

But you know what? The saints of God, the people who have come to Christ during the great tribulation, they're not going to bow the knee. They're not going to take the mark of the beast. They're not going to bow the knee, and they are going to pay with their lives because during this latter half of the great tribulation, the anti-Christ will be given dominion over the whole world, and he will conquer those saints during that time.

So how long is that persecution going to last? Remember I told you just the last half of the great tribulation. Look at verse 22, we're told how long this is going to last. *“until the Ancient of Days came, (in other words, till Jesus returns) and judgment was given for the saints of the Most High, and the time came when the saints possessed the kingdom.”* So that's how long it's going to last, until the Lord Himself returns.

Okay, now, we're going to rewind a bit as we go on to verse 23 with the interpretation of the vision. And he says in verse 23, *“Thus he said: ‘As for the fourth beast, (you see how much time we're focusing on this fourth beast, it's incredible, it's just, it's unprecedented) there shall be a fourth kingdom on earth, which shall be different from all the kingdoms, and it shall devour the whole earth, and trample it down, and break it to pieces.’”* Now people, this was true of ancient Rome, and it's going to be true of the anti-Christ kingdom too, because remember, ancient Rome is a foreshadowing of the kingdom of the anti-Christ.

And ancient Rome conquered, trampled nations in its path, but so will the nation or the kingdom of the anti-Christ, even more so than did Rome. And then he goes on in verse 24 and says, *“As for the ten horns, out of this kingdom ten kings shall arise, and another shall arise after them; (and now this is that small horn again) he shall be different from the former ones, and shall put down three kings.”* In other words, he's going to uproot 3 of the kings.

And this is the anti-Christ. ²⁵ *“He shall speak words against the Most High, (and listen, look at this language) 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.”* A time is a year, times is 2 years and a half a time is a ½ a year; 3 and a ½ years. So, this is just a different way of saying it, all right.

So, this is really pretty incredible. I want you to notice here that we're told that the anti-Christ is going to, again, he's going to set himself up as God during these last 3 and a ½ years, and it says he will *“think to change the times and the law”*. Isn't that interesting? He will *“think to change the times and the law.”* In

other words, he's going to change or he is going to try to change what is only lawful for God himself to change. Do you guys remember way back in Daniel chapter 2? I say way back, it seems like forever. In Daniel chapter 2, Daniel is praising the Lord and he says something about God, I'll put it up on the screen.

Daniel 2:20-21 (ESV)

Daniel answered and said: "Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, to whom belong wisdom and might. He changes times and seasons; he removes kings and sets up kings; he gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who have understanding"

Daniel answered and said: "Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, to whom belong wisdom and might. (look at, look at this) He changes times and seasons; he removes kings and sets up kings; he gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who have understanding" (and so on and so on)

God is the one who changes the times, but the anti-Christ who is going to be of course, empowered by the devil himself, is so drunk with power and desirous to be what Satan has always wanted to be and that is the usurper of God's throne is going to attempt to do what only God can do, which is changing the times and the law. And we don't know how exactly how he's going to try to change the times and the law. We're not really sure, either way, it's going to end badly for him.

Verse 26, *"But the court shall sit in judgment, and his dominion shall be taken away, (meaning the dominion of the anti-Christ or this beast) to be consumed and destroyed to the end. ²⁷ And the kingdom and the dominion and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven shall be given to (who?) the people of the saints of the Most High; ..."* That's a fancy way of saying what the Bible says many times, "that we will reign with Him."

The Bible says that the saints will come and reign with the Lord, so the kingdom is given to the saints of the Most High. And then we're told once again that *"²⁷ ...his kingdom shall be an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him."* Is that cool or what?

So, we're basically seeing here, the end of the great tribulation, Jesus comes. You'll notice that they don't really, Daniel isn't given a picture of the battle of Armageddon. He's not, that's not in the vision, that's not in his sight right here. John was given that information and frankly, some of the other prophets were given that that concept, but not Daniel. He just goes right to the dominion of the Lord Jesus and the saints of God along with Him.

And so we end the chapter by saying, “²⁸ *“Here is the end of the matter. As for me, Daniel, my thoughts greatly alarmed me, and my color changed, (that’s a fancy way of saying, he became pale) but I kept the matter in my heart.”*” So, these are statements that are made concerning the last days. And you got to, Daniel was given these revelations, but he was given so little to go on as far as how they were all going to play out. Daniel didn't know anything about the church because the church doesn't appear in the Old Testament.

Daniel didn't understand how these things were going to play out. He didn't understand, necessarily about the Son of God as we understand it from a New Testament perspective. He sees this Son of, the one like a son of man who's given rule and dominion forever and ever, who comes before the ancient of days.

And, and you could think maybe, well, maybe Daniel could have guessed, but he, it wasn't a full revelation. But we have been given a much fuller revelation. When we understand these chapters of Daniel alongside the book of Revelation, we're given a much fuller picture of these events, and we understand that they have to do with this period of time called “the great tribulation.”

Now remember something, remember something very important. The great tribulation is that 7 year period, now, it is my personal belief that what ushers in the great tribulation are 2 very important events. First, it's the catching away of the church. I believe the bride will be caught away in what we call “the rapture” and then the next thing is the appearance of the anti-Christ. He will be made known at that time, and then we enter into that 7 year time of the great tribulation. But remember, the first 3 and a ½ years really aren't going to look all that bad. They're not going to look all that different.

In fact, a lot of the world is going to think that there's peace going on. And that's what Jesus said, “When people are saying peace, destruction is going to come on them suddenly.” (1 Thessalonians 5:3) Because the anti-Christ seems to usher in this period of peace for 3 and a ½ years, and then turns his back on this covenant he made with the Jews, demands worship of the entire world.

That is when he institutes the mark of the beast whereby people must take the mark to buy and sell, okay. So, when does the mark of the beast happen? At the midpoint of the great tribulation. I get emails regularly asking me if we are seeing the mark of the beast today, particularly with the jab and I have to remind people, the mark of the beast doesn't occur until the midpoint of the great tribulation.

We're not in the mid-point of the great tribulation. How do we know? We're still here, the anti-Christ has not been revealed, they have not started building the temple. That has to be built and all of these things, which are going to happen during that first 3 and a ½ years of the great tribulation.

So no, the jab is not the mark of the beast. So if anybody asks you about it, settle their heart. Now having said that, I do believe it's a dress rehearsal. What we have seen in the last year particularly, is a dress rehearsal for what's going to be controlling the world. Fear will be the controlling force in the world during the great tribulation. And the anti-Christ, make no mistake about it will rule by fear. I mean, what else is it when somebody comes along and says, “hey, take this mark, or you can't buy or sell”, that's ruling by fear.

Well, we're getting primed for that right now, and that's one of the reasons why myself and many other pastors around the world are urging the body of Christ, don't live by fear. We've not been given a spirit of fear, but of faith and a sound mind. (2 Timothy 1:7) And we are to walk by faith, not by fear. And that and people think it's all about a shot or a virus. No, it's about not living in such a way that you can be controlled.

We are to live and be controlled by God, He doesn't rule by fear. The Bible says it is His kindness that leads us to repentance. (Romans 2:4) So the Lord our God, leads by love and by example, by the conviction of the Holy Spirit and by His tender urgings and things through His word and so forth. That's the complete opposite of the way the anti-Christ is going to rule.

So it is vitally important that the body of Christ hear and understand, we must never ever give into fear, to live by fear. We just, we can't do it. It doesn't matter who it's being foisted upon us by. Whether it's a political official or whoever, or somebody in your family, we refuse. I will not live by fear, I am to live by faith, so are you because we are children of the living God. Amen. Amen.

Let's pray. Father, I thank you so much for Your Word, the revelation of it. Powerful, it's insightful and Lord, I thank you that we've been able to cross reference much of what we've read here tonight from Daniel with the book of Revelation, which gives us further insight into these prophetic things so that we can understand, in a more complete way, your redemptive plan here at the end of the age.

And we thank you, Father God, that you have given us the privilege of living in the world during these dark days. Because Lord, it is ours, is given to us the opportunity to live by faith and not by fear. And that is what we choose to trust

in the Lord with all of our hearts, leaning not on our own understanding, acknowledging you in all of our ways and trusting and knowing that you will direct our path. Thank you, Father, for Your Word. Lord, may you continue to speak to us throughout the week. We ask it in Jesus' precious name, amen.