

## Daniel 7 John Karmelich

There are 2 lessons for Daniel Chapter 7. This is lesson **2**.

1. The 2<sup>nd</sup> half of this chapter I like to call “Don’t worry, everything is going to be ok.”
  - a) Chapter 7 is all a vision by the prophet Daniel.
  - b) Yet it seems to be taking place in two locations.
  - c) Most of it has to do with the coming Antichrist.
  - d) Yet the vision keeps getting “interrupted” by action at the throne of God.
  - e) It is almost as if God keeps trying to get the point across of “Yes, things are bad. Yes things are going to get worse. Don’t worry. I’m still in charge. In the end, the good guys win. So stop worrying and get back to what I call you to do!
2. With that positive reminder stated first, the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of chapter 7 is predominantly about the AntiChrist.
  - a) All the things the Antichrist does in this chapter are those:
    - i) 1) God *knew in advance* this guy is going to do.
    - ii) 2) God *allows* him to do all of this, ultimately for God’s glory.
    - iii) 3) To teach *us* about this man and the fact the world is attracted to him.
  - b) Remember that the Antichrist is not Satan himself, but a man controlled by Satan.
3. I know what some of you are maybe thinking: “I believe the church will be raptured before this guy appears on the scene. Why should I worry about him? I only plan to watch him from the mezzanine level in heaven”. ☺
  - a) Let me read from 1<sup>st</sup> John: “This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming and even now is already in the world.” (1<sup>st</sup> John 4:3b, NIV).
    - i) Well, there’s a comforting thought. ☺ The “spirit of this guy” is already out here in the world.
    - ii) Don’t get me wrong. I do believe the Antichrist will not be revealed until the 7-year tribulation period begins.
      - a) “For the secret power of lawlessness (“Spirit of AntiChrist”) is already at work; but the one who now holds it back (Jesus) will continue to do so till he (AntiChrist) is taken out of the way. And then the lawless one (Antichrist) will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will overthrow with the breath of his mouth and destroy by the splendor of his coming.” (2<sup>nd</sup> Thessalonians, 2:6-8, NIV, Parenthesis commentary and underlines added to the text).
    - iii) Remember that the Antichrist is not the devil himself. It is a man, who has the spirit of the devil within him. When you read through Revelation Chapter 13, you realize that there are actually 3 characters. Let’s call them “the false trinity”. One is Satan himself, one is the Antichrist, and the 3<sup>rd</sup> is a person who leads the world in worship of the Antichrist. It is sort of a “false-Holy Spirit”
      - a) These 3 form a satanic “false-trinity. (I hate to use that term as it implies equality with the “true” Trinity. It is Satan’s cheap substitute!)
4. Before I start, something else to think about is to read all of this from Daniel’s perspective.
  - a) Twice in this chapter, In Verses 15 and 28, Daniel said how “upset” he was at seeing this vision. The translation here in the NIV is “troubled in Spirit”.
    - i) My reaction is: “no kidding”, who wouldn’t be upset by all this?

- b) Remember that this vision was written in the 1<sup>st</sup> year of King Belshazzar. If you remember from the previous lessons, Daniel was in retirement at this time. Daniel had been at the right-hand of King Nebuchadnezzar all the years of his reign. At the end of his life, King Nebuchadnezzar made a proclamation acknowledging Daniel's God as "the" God. After his death, the Babylonian kingdom went downhill.
- c) After Nebuchadnezzar, there was a succession of kings who all reigned for a short period of time. This included some assassinations and seizures of the throne. Finally, Belshazzar came to power. He was the grandson (possibly by marriage) to King Nebuchadnezzar. As we read in Chapter 5, he scorned Daniel's God. By this time the Babylonian kingdom had become corrupt again morally.
- d) So here is Daniel, at this time, receiving this vision. I suspect God gave it to him now as Daniel was watching the Babylonian kingdom go downhill morally.
  - i) Here comes the parallel to us. As we watch America decline morally, as it has over the past few decades, look at the parallel between this vision and what is happening today.
  - ii) Daniel saw the rise of "terrible beasts", who do harm to the people of the earth, especially those who put their trust in God.
  - iii) Daniel saw God getting the ultimate victory.
  - iv) OK, so why is Daniel so "troubled in spirit", if he sees God win in the end?
    - a) The text doesn't say, so I'm free to speculate. ☺
    - b) I suspect Daniel was grieved at 1) the *long time gap* before God sets up his millennial kingdom.
    - c) I suspect he was further grieved by how much *damage* is done prior to God setting up his millennial kingdom.
  - v) Which leads back to us. We watch in horror the events of the evening news. We watch our society decay morally. We watch in grief of all the innocent people who get hurt. We ask God why? Why are you taking so long to come back and take revenge on this earth?
    - a) The answer is that God is waiting. He is waiting for all who going to turn to God. In the meantime, we have to suffer through a lot of grief and pain as God waits for those who are still going to commit their life to follow him.
      - (1) "The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance."  
(2<sup>nd</sup> Peter, 3:9, NIV).

5. OK, we've got a lot of ground to cover today, let's get going. Verse 11: "Then I continued to watch because of the boastful words the horn was speaking. I kept looking until the beast was slain and its body destroyed and thrown into the blazing fire. <sup>12</sup> (The other beasts had been stripped of their authority, but were allowed to live for a period of time.)

- a) We last left off with Verse 9 and 10. Verses 9 and 10 are sort of a "parenthesis" in the discussion of the 4 beasts and the 4 kingdoms. Verses 9-10 describe God the Father, "Ancient of Days" and describes God-the Son, or Jesus as the "Son of Man"
  - i) This is an example of what I mentioned in the opening paragraph of this lesson. Daniel's vision goes back and forth between describing the end-time events *on earth* and then describing what is happening at the throne of heaven.
  - ii) It is almost as if God was taking a break from describing all of this horror to Daniel to remind Daniel who will win in the end.

- b) In Verse 11 we're back to the main topic. We're back to the Antichrist character.
  - i) Remember in the last lesson I stated that every time the Antichrist is described in the Bible, the common description is "Mr. Big Mouth". The text always seems to include his boastful words.
  - ii) Remember that the *whole world* will be attracted to this guy. Most of us have seen enough politicians who are in love with the sound of their own voice. I suspect this guy is very charismatic. He will have the ability to draw an audience and keep them captivated. People will be drawn toward hearing this guy due to his charisma and great public speaking ability.
    - a) Personally, I see this guy having the ability to appeal to everyone's ego. Most people respect Jesus as a teacher. They don't follow Jesus because they don't want to change their lifestyle. I see this character as having appeal as he will use a lot of flattery about the "goodness of mankind".
- c) Verse 12 was discussed a little last week. It states the "other beasts" lost their authority, but were "still alive". Notice it refers to all 4 beasts, and not just the 1<sup>st</sup> three.
  - i) Last week I discussed the "classical" interpretation and the "modern" interpretation. The modern interpretation argues that all four beasts are futuristic to us, as well as Daniel. They all come to power in the end-times. Because verse 12 says (paraphrasing) that the "beasts are still live although their kingdom was taken away", many see these beasts as all four existing simultaneously.
    - a) The classical view sees this as the 4<sup>th</sup> beast, being the "Revised Roman Empire" being in place, while the Antichrist moves from a background character to the lead character.
      - (1) If this happens in our lifetime, many, including myself see the rise of the European Union as being the roots of the Revised Roman Empire.
      - (2) This view sees the fall of the first 3 kingdoms ("beasts") as all past tense. Because the countries still exist (Babylon is now Iraq, etc., ) that the interpretation of "lost their authority/still alive" refers to the modern countries, no longer in power.
- 6. Verse 13: "In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. <sup>14</sup> He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all peoples, nations and men of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed.
  - a) Now we switch scenes back to the happy ending again. Here we have a description of God the Father, called here the "Ancient of Days". God the Father gives authority to the "Son of Man" to rule over all of the earth. This is what the Jews call "The Messiah" and what Christians call the Lord Jesus! ☺
    - i) Jesus himself referred to himself as "Son of Man" in the gospels. It is a title that *definitely* refers to the Messiah, as indicated in this passage.
    - ii) It is not *literally* a "son of man(kind)", but a title, representing God coming in the form of flesh.
      - a) God described Ezekiel in several places as "son of man". That does not mean Ezekiel is Jesus, nor is Ezekiel described in here in Daniel.

- b) It is like describing the difference between a president of a corporation and the President of the United States. If I say “a president” and I say “*the* President”, you know that I’m taking about two different people.
        - (1) That’s the difference between “son of man” as described of Ezekiel and “Son of Man” as a title of Jesus.
        - (2) By the way, the same rule applies to the translation of “Messiah”. The word literally means king. There are many kings in the history of Israel. But there is only one “the” king.
    - b) Read Verse 14 again. This king, is given authority by God to rule over all mankind forever and forever. Then it says, “all nations...worshipped him.”
      - i) Looking around the world and studying history, this has not occurred yet.
      - ii) That is why this verse is futuristic. It is described in more detail in Revelation Chapter 20. This is the 1,000 year period, called “The Millennium” where Jesus will literally rule over the earth for a 1,000 years.
        - a) There is a view, common among Roman Catholics, and some Protestant denominations that the 1,000-year millennium is “figurative” and will not literally occur. My reaction – Nonsense! It goes against the text stated in Verse 14 as well as Revelation Chapter 20.
          - (1) That view states that Christianity will grow “until all the world” worships Jesus. Well folks, after 2,000 years, we are *still* a minority in the world.
          - (2) That view gives the credit to man for the ability to spread the gospel. God does not share his glory. That is why I believe in the *literal* interpretation of Jesus coming to rule on earth.
      - iii) To finish Verse 14, notice it says he will rule *forever*. “Forever” is longer than 1,000 years. After the 1,000-year millennium, God will destroy the heavens and earth, and create a new one. This is discussed in Isaiah 65 and 66, 2<sup>nd</sup> Peter 3:13 and Revelation Chapter 21. Jesus will *continue* to rule after the 1,000 years.
- 7. Verse 15; “I, Daniel, was troubled in spirit, and the visions that passed through my mind disturbed me.
  - a) No kidding! ☺ I’d be “troubled in spirit” too.
  - b) I’m fascinated that the “troubled in spirit” part comes *after* the revelation of the plans of the Messiah.
    - i) Daniel knew this, and had some concept that God will rule on earth one day. Moses himself gives hints of “another ruler” coming after him who will be a world leader under God (see Deuteronomy 18:15).
      - a) Plus, Daniel knew the prophecy given to King David, who lived centuries prior to Daniel that one of Daniel descendants would rule forever. (See 2<sup>nd</sup> Samuel 7:12-13 for cross-reference.)
    - ii) I suspect the “troubling” part to Daniel is the world being deceived by the Antichrist *prior* to the return of Jesus.
      - a) The reason I suspect this is that when you read Daniel’s questions to the angel of God and the interpretations, Daniel focuses on the “4<sup>th</sup> beast” and this “little horn”, which is the Antichrist. You get the impression *that* is what upset Daniel based on his questions.

- b) We're not much different. Like Daniel we focus too much on our worries and our problems and forget that God will win in the end. It is difficult, yet important during the difficult periods of our live to remember that God is sovern, God will win in the end and God has a wonderful plan for our life. God knows all things. He sees our life in our entirety. All we see, at that moment, is the painful aspects.
      - (1) Throughout this chapter God "interrupts" the vision of the Antichrist to go to the throne in heaven and remind Daniel that God wins in the end. We need to keep that same focus.
- 8. Daniel continues, Verse 16: I approached one of those standing there and asked him the true meaning of all this. "So he told me and gave me the interpretation of these things: <sup>17</sup> 'The four great beasts are four kingdoms that will rise from the earth. <sup>18</sup> But the saints of the Most High will receive the kingdom and will possess it forever--yes, for ever and ever.'
- a) Last week I stated that if you only want to remember one thing about Chapter 7, or say, one thing about all the "weird stuff" of Revelation, remember this "a lot of bad things happen, and Christians win in the end". ☺ That is a summary statement of both Chapter 7 and most of the Book of Revelation.
    - i) That summary statement is listed here in Verses 16 through 18.
    - ii) That is *also* where the 2 interpretations of "four great beasts" come together.
      - a) The "traditional" view, again, is that they represent, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome. These are the 4 empires that ruled over Israel from the time of Daniel. In the "end-times" the 4<sup>th</sup> beast (i.e., Rome) will return as a 10-king confederacy lead by the Antichrist.
      - b) The "modern" view" sees all the beasts as being end-times. They each have a different kingdom, possibly over different parts of the world. Eventually, the "10-king confederacy" will rise somewhere out of the territory of the original Roman Empire, again lead by the Antichrist.
  - b) Notice that the "saints of the Most High" will receive the kingdom".
    - i) A good theological question is does the "Most High" refer to God-the-Father or Jesus or both? All through the Book of Daniel, Daniel himself uses the term "Most High" to describe God. I would argue it refers to God-The-Father. Remember that heaven isn't *just* for New Testament Christians, although, believing in Jesus doesn't hurt things ☺. There will also be Old Testament saints in heaven as well as others, with limited or no Bible knowledge who are judged "fairly". God has two "judgments". One for believers and one for non-believers. The latter group (call them "the good naïve") probably don't get resurrected until the 2<sup>nd</sup> judgment.
- 9. Verse 19: "Then I wanted to know the true meaning of the fourth beast, which was different from all the others and most terrifying, with its iron teeth and bronze claws--the beast that crushed and devoured its victims and trampled underfoot whatever was left.
  - a) Personally, I wished Daniel had asked, "I want to know the true meaning of *all* this stuff." I would have saved a lot of speculation. ☺
  - b) Daniel focused his question on the 4<sup>th</sup> beast. Why? Because the 4<sup>th</sup> beast comes right before the return of Jesus, a.k.a., "Son of Man".
    - i) The question we *all* want to know is "when does Jesus return?" This is what we pray when we say "thy kingdom come".
  - c) Daniel also focuses on this question because *this* beast is worse than the others.
    - i) Daniel has seen a lot in history. He has watched the rise of the Babylonian Empire in his lifetime. Daniel watched a lot of people get killed during the rise of this kingdom. He is probably wondering how *this* one could be worse".

- a) I suspect it is “worse” in 1) its mythology and 2) it covers a bigger territory than any of the other kingdoms.
    - (1) Remember that Daniel was the head-administrator for the Babylonian kingdom. He understood kingdom growth and rule.
- 10. Verse 20: I also wanted to know about the ten horns on its head and about the other horn that came up, before which three of them fell--the horn that looked more imposing than the others and that had eyes and a mouth that spoke boastfully.
  - a) Daniel was saying, “Hey, tell me more about “Mr. Big Mouth, over there.” ☺
  - b) He is re-emphasizing what has been already discussed here in Daniel. This 4<sup>th</sup> kingdom is a “confederacy” of 10 kings, 3 of which fall, and then *another* king (horn) rises to run the whole thing.
  - c) Last week I quoted from Revelation 13. It bears repeating again.
    - i) <sup>REV 13:1b</sup> And I saw a beast coming out of the sea. He had ten horns and seven heads with ten crowns on his horns, and on each head a blasphemous name.
      - a) In Revelation 13, we have “10 horns and 7 heads.
      - b) In Daniel 7:20, we have 10 horns (kings), three of which fell.
      - c) Thus the connection between these two verses.
    - ii) By the way, I want to speculate on something. The 2<sup>nd</sup> beast, the “bear” had “3 ribs” in his mouth. If a rib represents a man (think “Adam’s rib”) could the “bear, who is striped of his kingdom/still allowed to live” be responsible for the fall of the 3 kings in this verse?
      - a) None of my commentaries agreed with me, so I’m probably wrong, but it is interesting to think about, especially with the “modern” view.
- 11. Verse 21: As I watched, this horn was waging war against the saints and defeating them,
  - a) Read this again carefully. This horn, a.k.a., “The Antichrist” is *defeating* the saints.
  - b) Back to Revelation 13: “He (Antichrist) was given power to make war against the saints and to conquer them.” (Revelation 13:7, NIV).
    - i) During the 7-year period of the tribulation, specifically, the last 3½-year period, the Antichrist will *specifically* given the power by God to *defeat* the saints.
    - ii) I suspect *that* is one of the things that troubled Daniel.
    - iii) Why would God allow that? The same reason he allows the troubles to exist in the world today. He is waiting for the “last call” to be complete. To see who, during that period, is willing to turn their life over to God.
    - iv) I also suspect part of the reason is to tell the world, “Ok, everybody, you don’t want me? Fine, here is what you are going to get”. Ok, everybody, you want a leader who is going to appeal to *your* ego? Here is what you are going to get.”
      - a) During this time many *do* turn to Jesus. During this 7-year period, many will get killed simply for believing in Jesus. Those who are martyred or just survive the 7-year period will also have their faith tested just as God tests our faith and keeps us close to Him.
  - c) I personally have a strong pre-tribulation rapture view. That view comes into play here. Let me compare these 2 verses with another quote of Jesus in Matthew:
    - i) “As I watched, this horn (The Antichrist) was waging war against the saints and defeating them.” (Daniel 7:21)
    - ii) “He (The Antichrist) was given power to make war against the saints and to conquer them.” (Revelation 13:7)
    - iii) Now here comes the “kicker”: “And I (Jesus) say also unto thee (Peter), That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I (Jesus) will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it” (Matthew 16:18, KJV).

- iv) So in Daniel and Revelation, the Antichrist *prevails* against the Church.
  - v) In Matthew, Satan shall not *prevail* against the Church.
  - vi) My point is, doesn't this sound like a contradiction?
  - vii) It is, unless there is more than one "group" of saints!
  - viii) These set of verses is one of the reasons I don't believe the church is "around" during the Great Tribulation. In Daniel and Revelation, the "saints" are those who accept Jesus *during* the tribulation. The only logical explanation to connect all these verses is that there is more than one group of saints.
  - ix) When we get to Daniel 9, I'll pick this up further.
  - x) There are many good Christians who disagree with this view on the rapture. They have every right to be wrong on this issue. ☺
  - d) Let me get back to the modern application. We tend to grieve when good Christians die. Many missionaries have been killed simply due to the fact that they preach the Gospel. There are places around the world *today* where people are killed just for preaching or just believing in Jesus. God often allows Satan "temporary" victories that are part of God's ultimate plan for our redemption.
    - i) We simply have to remember that our rewards for being faithful to Jesus don't always come in this lifetime. God often allows tragedies for his ultimate glory.
12. Verse 22: until the Ancient of Days came and pronounced judgment in favor of the saints of the Most High, and the time came when they possessed the kingdom.
- a) In Verse 21, the Antichrist was winning. Verse 22 announces it is only temporary.
    - i) That is what we have to remember as Christians. All our defeats are only temporary. We have the ultimate victory.
    - ii) This verse is comforting in times of pain and suffering. Pain is more bearable if you *know* there is a set time period before it goes away.
    - iii) Deep down, even when we are grieving, we can be comforted by the fact it is only temporary. We watch others go through grief, and we watch them get better. We see others deal with the grief of the loss of a loved one, and we see them hit "acceptance" after awhile.
      - a) The comfort is knowing that the loved one is now in a better place. One of the reasons of studying the Bible is to remind us of these facts. God goes *out of his way* in his Word to prove to us that the heavens exist and God's eternal plan is one of victory for us.
      - b) Thus, the ultimate victory, as described in Verse 22 should become burned in our hearts as a reminder as we suffer through the trials of this world. It is only temporary. The pain is real. The grief is real, but it is only temporary.
13. Verse 23: "He gave me this explanation: `The fourth beast is a fourth kingdom that will appear on earth. It will be different from all the other kingdoms and will devour the whole earth, trampling it down and crushing it. <sup>24</sup> The ten horns are ten kings who will come from this kingdom. After them another king will arise, different from the earlier ones; he will subdue three kings. <sup>25</sup>
- a) After a brief break of reminding Daniel (and us) that God has the ultimate victory, we are back to the Antichrist has the 10 kingdoms.
  - b) Here we have the supporting explanations of the verses already discussed. To summarize, we have this "end-time" confederacy of 10 kings. Out of this confederacy, an 11<sup>th</sup> king will arise. He will subdue 3 of the 10, and be the leader.
  - c) I've already discussed Verses 23-24 in length, so I'll move on to Verse 25.

14. He will speak against the Most High and oppress his saints and try to change the set times and the laws. The saints will be handed over to him for a time, times and half a time.
- a) I'm fascinated by Verse 25. The Antichrist will speak "against the most high".
    - i) Imagine someone speaking out against God. Personally, I have a tough time seeing that in a politician. Imagine someone on television saying, "you don't need God, just me". Personally I can't see that.
    - ii) I suspect it is subtler. It is probably more "anti-Jewish" in its tones. It is probably more like, "You are good people, just as you are. You don't need to follow the rules of any one religion. They all have their good points. You just continue being the good people you always are'. That is what appeals to the world. That is what I suspect is meant by "blasphemy of the Most High God".
    - iii) Another view is that this is a "double-cross". As you study Revelation, it speaks of a literal 7-year period. During the first half, or 3 ½ years, there is peace in the world. Everybody hails the Antichrist for bring peace to the world. He will allow the Jews to rebuild their temple. Many Jews will hail this man as "The promised Messiah".
      - a) Then comes "the double-cross". He will demand to be worshipped as God. He will speak out against the God of both of the Old and New Testament.
        - (1) This is the 3.5 years that is spoken of here in Daniel.
        - (2) This is the vision of the "defeat" of the saints.
        - (3) This is where many saints are killed as martyrs for God.
        - (4) God lays out this warning in detail in both the Old and New Testament as to prevent those who are living during those times to watch out for the double-cross and not to follow him.
        - (5) It is also a realization for us as to what the "world" wants in a leader and why they reject Jesus and God the Father.
  - b) The next part of this verse says that the antichrist will: "try to change the set times and the laws".
    - i) Because this sentence is not explained, the commentators speculate a lot on what this means. Most of the commentaries fall into one of two categories:
      - a) The Antichrist will "change the times and laws" by attempting to redo the calendar system (24 hours in a day, 7 days in a week, etc.) He may change the way we mark years. Instead of the year 2002, it may be "year 1 of the Antichrist" or something else.
      - b) Here is how I picture him saying this: "You know, the calendar system has an unfair bias toward the Christians. That calendar is based on the year of Jesus' birth. (Remember that this guy will be loved all over the world.) We need a new "fair" calendar system that acknowledges *all* religions and *all* people. Thus, I propose to make a new "year" beginning with the number...
      - c) Further, he may attempt to change the 7-day week into say, 6 days or 10 days. Can't you just hear him saying, "You know, a 7 day week is too long. We need more rest. Besides, it is biased toward all these different religions. How about a 6 day or a 5 day week?"
        - (1) Notice the verse says he will attempt to change the "times and the law". The "law" might refer the law, or the 10 commandments. The 10<sup>th</sup> commandment says to work for 6 days and rest on the 7<sup>th</sup>. If the Antichrist attempts to change the 7-day week, he is attempting to change the "law".



- ii) There is an alternative speculation I've heard about changing "the times and the laws" that is worth mentioning:
  - a) Satan has read Daniel and Revelation as well as us. He knows he only has a 7-year time frame in the end before he is bound up for 1,000 years (see Revelation 20:2).
  - b) Maybe Satan thinks he can "beat the system". If somehow, he can try hard enough, he can outdo the 7-year time period. Thus he is "changing the times and laws" appointed for him.
- iii) In summary, this is all speculation. The Bible is correct. It is a matter of "how".
- iv) The thing to remember is that the world will want to follow someone who will arrogantly turn away from the true and living God. The world will follow along with someone who wants to change the calendar system and the laws ordained by God. The whole world pretty much follows a 7-day week and uses our calendar system. That is the most likely explanation is that Satan wants to defy God and the system currently in place.
- c) Back to Verse 25: The last phrase of the verse is "time, times and half a time."
  - i) If you remember back when Nebuchadnezzar was "turned into a cow". Daniel proclaimed it would be done for 7 "times" (Daniel 4:16).
  - ii) The Aramaic word "id-dawn" usually means "years". It can also mean "season" as we think of the 4 seasons. In all probability, it means years.
  - iii) In Revelation, the 7-year period is described not only in 7 years, but also in "months" and even "days". The only missing phrase was how many "seconds" are part of the 7-year period! ☺
  - iv) This is why I support a *literal* 7-year period. Some Christians argue that the 7-year period is not literal. I believe God went *out of his way* both in Daniel and Revelation to show the literalness of this 7 year period.
  - v) Which leads us back to Verse 25: "time, times and half a time."
    - a) In English, we have "singular" and "plural" nouns, e.g. year and years.
    - b) In Hebrew & Aramaic, there is another word for "dual".
      - (1) An English language example is the word "both"
        - (a) "Both" means two of something.
      - c) So "time" means 1 time.
      - d) "Times" is a "dual" word. It means 2 times.
      - e) Half a time means just that "half a time".
      - f) One plus Two plus one-half is 3 ½ years. Thus the half-period of Revelation when the Antichrist persecutes the saints.
      - g) As further support, Remember that 3 ½ years is also 42 months:
        - (1) "The beast was given a mouth to utter proud words and blasphemies ("Mr. Big Mouth ☺) and to exercise his authority for forty-two months." (Revelation 13:5, NIV)
        - (2) Verse 7 of Revelation 13 talks about "overcoming the saints".
        - (3) Therefore, his power over the saints is only for 3½ years, although he may be on the scene during most if not all of the 7-year tribulation period.

15. Verse 26: “But the court will sit, and his power will be taken away and completely destroyed forever.”<sup>27</sup> Then the sovereignty, power and greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be handed over to the saints, the people of the Most High. His kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom, and all rulers will worship and obey him.”
- a) By now, you’re noticing this “back and forth, back and forth” description between the power of the Antichrist and the ultimate rule of Jesus Christ.
  - b) It is almost as if God is telling Daniel over and over, “don’t worry, yes it is going to be bad. In the end, this guy will lose.”
    - i) It is that constant reminder to us to not worry that God needs to lay on our hearts. It is so easy to focus on the pain, because the pain is so real. God is constantly including verses like these two to remind us of the ultimate victory.
  - c) By the way, notice that the Antichrist is destroyed in Verse 26, not Satan himself. Remember that they are not the same entity. The Antichrist, along with the “worship-leader” are destroyed at the end of the 7-year period, which is prior to the 1,000-year millennium where Jesus will rule on earth.
    - i) “But the beast (Antichrist) was captured, and with him the false prophet (“worship leader”) who had performed the miraculous signs on his (Antichrist) behalf... The two of them were thrown alive into the fiery lake of burning sulfur. (See Revelation 19:20)
      - a) Notice its just the “two of them” thrown in the lake. Satan is still alive.
  - d) During that 1,000-year period, Satan is bound in chains (Rev. 20:2). At the end of the 1,000-year period, Satan is released. He tries one final deception on the earth, and then he is destroyed. (See Revelation 20:7-9).
16. Verse 28: “This is the end of the matter. I, Daniel, was deeply troubled by my thoughts, and my face turned pale, but I kept the matter to myself.”
- a) Daniel’s vision had ended. He was “troubled” (who wouldn’t be? ☺), but he didn’t share the vision with anyone, he just wrote it down.
  - b) I can see why Daniel didn’t share this dream. Remember that Daniel was in retirement at this time. Can you imagine walking up to the King and saying, “oh by the way, I had this vision. You’ll die, along with this kingdom, and then more kingdoms will come, and finally, my God will destroy all of this and rule forever.
    - i) That’ wouldn’t go over real well in the palace courts. ☺
  - c) Daniel did write the dream down for us to learn and study. After two full lessons and 20-plus pages on Chapter 7, hopefully I’ve gotten the “main points” across. ☺
17. To those of you who have difficulty with Bible prophecy, it should be a little easier at this point. The next couple of chapters don’t get any easier to interpret, but by now, you understand the concept of “word-pictures” and comparing Bible-Verses-with-Bible-Verses for interpretation.
- a) You should also understand the difference between “direct interpretation” given by Daniel in some cases, and speculation on the part of commentators. The truth is on the speculative parts we won’t know “exactly how” the end plays out until it happens.
18. The every-day application to remember is “God wins in the end”.
- a) The text goes back and forth between
    - i) 1) Describing the horrible kings and
    - ii) 2) God winning over them.
  - b) A few lessons back I mentioned a Biblical study rule to remember is the following:
    - i) “The *plain* things are the *main* things and the *main* things are the *plain* things.
    - ii) The *plain* thing here is the sovereignty and ultimate victory of God the Father and Jesus ruling and reigning.
      - a) The rest is just the details. ☺

- c) Daniel wrote visions like this not only for us to learn how the end-times play out, but to remind us that God himself has the ultimate victory and we shouldn't be worrying.
19. I was thinking why God gave this vision, and the remaining visions to Daniel, as opposed to Isaiah or Moses, or David or someone else. What is distinct about Daniel?
- a) First of all, remember that at this time the nation of Israel was in ruins. The people were scattered all over the Babylonian Empire. There was a feeling of abandonment by God. All must have seen lost. (Just to note, Ezekiel was prophesizing during Daniel's lifetime of the *return* of Israel to the land.
- i) These visions given to Daniel further explained the future of mankind.
- b) So again, what is distinct about Daniel's life, that he gets to see these visions and not of the other great patriarchs of the Old Testament?
- i) Looking back through Daniel 1-6, the most distinct characteristic about Daniel is that he never sought revenge for the evil that was imposed on him.
- a) Three times in Daniel (9:23, 10:11 and 10:19) Daniel is called "greatly beloved" or "highly esteemed" depending upon your translation.
- b) Daniel was a man of great faith, as were many other characters in the Old Testament. I believe what separated Daniel from the others is that he accepted whatever false-punishment was dished out against him without complaining. He also always stood up for God despite the consequences. He never shied away from telling it like-it-is out of fear of his life.
- c) Given those qualities, Daniel makes the perfect person to be an end time prophet. Why? Because he is trustworthy. After reading the first 6 chapters to learn about Daniel's character, we now know we can trust him to be valid in his end-time visions. We can know they're not just bad-dreams that Daniel had 1) due to his character 2) history has supported that much of what Daniel predicted has already happened.
20. Let's pray: Father, we thank you for understanding these visions. The world has collectively turned their backs upon you, and this will be amplified in the end as they choose a world leader who willfully speaks out against you. As we recognize what the world wants, we understand that what *you* want for us is far greater than anything the world has to offer. We further understand the final fate of this Coming World Leader and all that follow him. Help us, like Daniel to be a shining example for you. To help people see the doom of turning away from the True and Living God and the eternal consequences thereof. For we ask this in Jesus name, Amen.

Bonus material....class handouts

## **Notes for Daniel- Chapter 7 Part 2 (Page 1 of 4)**

### Part 2: Questions and Answers about the “4th Beast”

Today's Lesson Covers Chapter 7, Verses 11-28
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#### A Summary of Chapter 7 Part 2 (Verses 11-28):

1. Verses 1-8 are mainly about a vision of 4 beasts. (Last week's lesson)
2. The vision changes to the throne of God. (Verses 9-10). (Last week's lesson)
3. A description of the Antichrist and his judgment. (Verse 11-12)
4. A vision of “The Son of Man” (Jesus) ruling over man forever. (Verses 13-14)
5. Daniel gets a “Question and Answer” session with an angel about this vision. (Verses 15-27)
  - a) We get further explanations about who is this “4<sup>th</sup> Beast”.
  - b) We discover that in the end, God wins, Jesus rules forever, and this beast is destroyed.
6. Verse 28 is an “epilogue” statement how this vision “shook” Daniel, and he keep this thoughts to himself about it.

#### Introduction Part 1: Why should I be concerned about the Antichrist?

1. The “spirit” of the antichrist is already out in the world.
  - a. “This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming, and even now is already in the world.” (1st John 4:3b, NIV).
2. The Antichrist himself is not revealed until the 7-year tribulation period begins:
  - a. “For the secret power of lawlessness (“Spirit of Antichrist”) is already at work; but the one who now holds it back (Jesus) will continue to do so till he (Antichrist) is taken out of the way. And then the lawless one (Antichrist) will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will overthrow with the breath of his mouth and destroy by the splendor of his coming.” (2nd Thessalonians, 2:6-8, NIV, Parenthesis commentary added to the text).
3. The Antichrist is not Satan himself.
  - a. He is a man who is used mightily by Satan.
  - b. He is a coming world leader during the tribulation period.
  - c. He becomes the leader of this 10-king “confederacy” which is the 4<sup>th</sup> “beast” of Daniel 7.

#### Introduction Part 2: The timing of this vision:

4. Daniel got this vision after the death of Nebuchadnezzar during the early reign of Belshazzar.
  - a. Babylon was in a state of moral decline since Nebuchadnezzar's “Pro-God” proclamation.
5. Daniel was grieved about all of the horrors and judgments that people will suffer prior to the Messiah coming to reign on the earth.
  - a. We also grieve about all the suffering that takes place in our world due to sin.
6. Why does God the Father take so long to send Jesus back to rule and reign?
  - a. So that as many people as possible can be saved first!
  - b. “The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.” (2nd Peter, 3:9, NIV).

#### Verses 11-12: Daniel saw the 4<sup>th</sup> beast slain. The other 3 beasts were “allowed to live for a time.”

- The “classical” and “modern/futuristic” views, as discussed last week, both see this as a “Revised Roman Empire” that is led by the Antichrist. In these verses, Daniel sees his judgment.

## Notes for Daniel- Chapter 7 Part 2 (Page 2 of 4)

### Verses 13-14: The vision of the “Son of Man”:

1. In the 4 Gospels Jesus uses the title “Son of Man” to describe himself.
  - a. The term is used about 80 times in the 4 gospels!
  - b. It is a title. It’s not “son-of-a-man” in the literal sense.
  - c. The title refers to God becoming man.
2. Be careful: The prophet Ezekiel is also called “Son of Man”.
  - a. The concepts are different. It is like comparing “a” president and “the” President!

### Verse 14: The “Son of Man” will rule forever:

The view of “pre-millennialists”: There is a literal 1,000-year period where Jesus rules from earth.

1. Jesus will rule over the earth for a literal 1,000-year period. (Revelation Chapter 20)
2. God will destroy the earth. (See Isaiah 65 and 66, 2nd Peter 3:13 and Revelation Chapter 21)
3. Jesus will reign forever via a “new heaven and new earth”. (Revelation 21:1)
4. This view is common in most Protestant churches. (This is the right view, of course. ☺)

The view of “a-millennialists”: There is **no** literal 1,000-year period where Jesus rules from earth.

5. The 1,000-year period is a word-picture and not meant to be taken literally.
6. Christianity will grow on this earth until the whole world accepts Jesus/dominant religion.
7. Jesus comes back to take all believers into heaven.
8. There is no literal 7-year tribulation period. This is also a word-picture not to be taken literally.
9. This view is common among Roman Catholics and some Protestant denominations.

### Verse 17: “The four great beasts **are** four kingdoms that will rise from the earth.”

- This is the key interpretation verse of the chapter. This verse explains the meaning of the beasts.

### Verse 18: “But the saints of the Most High will receive the kingdom and will possess it forever...”

- This is the “happy ending” of the vision of Daniel 7 and almost all of Revelation.
- To summarize Daniel 7 and almost all of Revelation:
  1. A lot of bad things happen.
  2. A lot of people get killed.
  3. In the end, God wins, and those who believe in him get eternal rewards.
- It helps to keep the “forever” perspective in mind when going through difficult times.

### Verse 20: “Ten horns on its head and about the other horn that came up, before which three of them fell”

- The 10 horns are a 10-kingdom “confederacy” that will eventually be led by the Antichrist.
- The Antichrist is the “other” horn. He is not one of the 10.
- Three (3) of the 10 will fall. Those three are defeated by the Antichrist (See Verse 24).
- Cross-reference: “And I saw a beast coming out of the sea. He had ten horns and seven heads with ten crowns on his horns, and on each head a blasphemous name.” (Revelation 13:1b NIV)

### Verse 21: “As I watched, this horn was waging war against the saints and (he was) defeating them,”

- Read this again carefully. This horn, a.k.a., “The Antichrist” is defeating the saints.
- Back to Revelation 13: “He (The Antichrist) was given power to make war against the saints and to conquer them.” (Revelation 13:7, NIV).
- During the 7-year period of the tribulation (sometime in the future), specifically, the last 3½-year period, the Antichrist was specifically given the power by God to defeat the saints.
- Why would God allow that? The same reason he allows the troubles to exist in the world today. He is waiting for the “last call” to be complete. To see who, during that period, is willing to turn their life over to God.

## Notes for Daniel- Chapter 7 Part 2 (Page 3 of 4)

Verse 21: A “support-verse” for those of us who believe the church will not go through this tribulation.

1. “As I watched, this horn (The Antichrist) was waging war against the saints and defeating them.” (Daniel 7:21)
2. “He (The Antichrist) was given power to make war against the saints and to conquer them.” (Revelation 13:7)
3. “And I (Jesus) say also unto thee (Peter), that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I (Jesus) will build my church; and the gates of hell shall **not** prevail against it” (Matthew 16:18, KJV).
4. My point is, doesn't this sound like a contradiction?
  - a. In the first two verses, the Antichrist is defeating the “saints”.
  - b. Jesus said, “The gates of hell shall **not** prevail against the church”.
  - c. It is not a contradiction if there is more than one “group” of saints!
  - d. That is why I believe the “church” is taken into heaven (raptured) prior to the tribulation.
  - e. “Saints” include 1) Old Testament believers, 2) Those that never heard of Jesus but live Godly lives (See Romans 1) and 3) Those saved during the tribulation.
    - i. The Christian “church” is a “sub-set” of those in heaven.
5. There are many good Christians who disagree with this view on the “rapture”.
  - a. They have every right to be wrong on this issue. ☺
  - b. “Don't worry if you disagree. We'll explain it to you on the way up.” (Chuck Missler)

Verse 22: God Pronounces Judgment On The Antichrist:

1. People often ask why we have to suffer so much to live the Christian life.
2. Many missionaries have been killed simply due to the fact that they preach the Gospel.
3. Many people (even today) are killed just for preaching or just believing in Jesus.
4. God often allows Satan “temporary” victories that are part of God's ultimate plan for our redemption.
5. We simply have to remember that our rewards for being faithful to Jesus don't always come in this lifetime. God often allows tragedies for his ultimate glory.

Verse 24: The Antichrist will 1) speak against God; 2) try to “change the times”; & 3) “win” for 3½ years.

1. The Antichrist will 1) “speak against God”:
  - a. I envision this as being subtler than just, “Don't worship God”.
    - i. It will be something like “You are all good people just as you are. You don't need to follow the rules of any one religion.” (That is also speaking out against God!)
  - b. Another view is the “double cross” against Israel and devout Christians.
    - i. He will come as a man of peace, and then disallow the worship of our God.
2. The Antichrist will 2) try to “change the times”:
  - a. This verse implies he may try to change our existing calendar system.
    - i. Here's a possibility: “Our current calendar is biased towards Christians. It is now 2,002 years since the birth of Christ. That calendar is not fair to Hindus, Buddhists and other religions. Here is my new calendar system.”
  - b. Other commentators see this as the Antichrist trying to “beat the system”.
    - i. The “times” may refer to the 7-year tribulation period.
    - ii. Maybe the Antichrist thinks he can “beat the system” and go longer than 7 years.
  - c. In summary, this is all speculation. The Bible is correct. It is a matter of “how” it is right.
3. The Antichrist will 3) “win”/defeat the saints for 3 ½ years.
  - a. This is the second half of the tribulation period. Believers will be martyred for their faith.
  - b. The literal translation is “times, time and half a time”.
  - c. “Times” means dual, as in two. Two (2) “times” plus one (1) plus one half (½) = 3½ years.

## **Notes for Daniel- Chapter 7 Part 2 (Page 4 of 4)**

### Verse 25 (cont.)

3. The Antichrist will 3) “win”/defeat the “saints” for 3½ years (cont.)
  - a. Cross Reference: “The beast (Antichrist) was given a mouth to utter proud words and blasphemies and to exercise his authority for forty-two months.” (Revelation 13:5, NIV)
  - b. “Forty-two (42) months” divided by 12 is equal to 3 years, 6 months, or 3 ½ years.

### Verse 26: “His power (Antichrist) will be taken away and completely destroyed forever”

- Notice the Antichrist is judged and destroyed. Satan is not destroyed until after the 1,000-year tribulation period. (Revelation 20: 7-9)
- The Antichrist will be destroyed at the end of the 7-year tribulation period (Verse 26), which ends prior to the 1,000 year “millennium” of Jesus ruling from earth.
- Cross-reference: “But the beast (Antichrist) was captured, and with him the false prophet (“worship leader”) who had performed the miraculous signs on his (Antichrist) behalf... The two of them were thrown alive into the fiery lake of burning sulfur. (See Revelation 19:20)

### Verse 27: “Then the sovereignty, power and greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be handed over to the saints”

- We rule and reign with Jesus during the 1,000 year millennium.

## **Final Thoughts on Daniel 7:**

1. Be careful to distinguish between “direct interpretation” and “speculation”.
  - a. It is ok to speculate on what future prophecy means.
  - b. The Bible is true. The prophecies will happen.
  - c. We are simply uncertain on the “how’s and when’s” of some of the details.
2. All our suffering as Christians is temporary. Joy comes from the “eternal perspective”.
  - a. Remember that we win in the end.
  - b. During the tribulation, believers will suffer horribly for their faith, but will win in the end.
  - c. During our lifetime, we suffer through many things, but it is all temporary.
  - d. You and I will live forever. How we act and live now has eternal consequences.
  - e. Living for Jesus now not only benefits your life on earth, but how you spend eternity.