

1. Last week I finished teaching Daniel chapter seven. When time ran out I was about to begin the analysis of Daniel Chapter Eight.
2. For the record I want to provide an expanded translation of Daniel chapter seven.

Dan 7:1 In the first year of the Babylonian co-regency of Nabonidus and Belshazzar in approximately 550 B.C., Daniel had a dream; he was lying on his bed when he saw several visions. He recorded the visions in summary fashion in his diary.

Dan 7:2 I Daniel was lying in my bed, I looked up and saw the four winds of heaven churning up the great sea - the Mediterranean Sea.

Dan 7:3 Four dreadful creatures, each different from the other, arose out of the sea; the sea represented the vast confused gentile world.

Dan 7:4 The first was like a lion, and it had the wings of an eagle; this first creature represented Babylon; I watched until its wings were torn off and it was lifted from the ground so that it stood on two feet like a man, and the heart of a man was given to it; here we have a reference to Nebuchadnezzar's bout with his zoanthropic malady, his temporary demise as ruler of Babylon and his recovery after his regeneration.

Dan 7:5 And then I saw a second awful creature, it looked like a bear. The beast represented the Medo Persian Empire. The giant grizzly had raised up on one of its sides, and it had three ribs protruding between its teeth. The three ribs represented Babylon, Lydia and Egypt; these were three nations recently conquered. A command from one standing near-by said, Get up and eat more!

Dan 7:6 And then I saw another beast rise out of the sea, one that looked like a leopard. On its back it had four wings like those of a bird. This beast had four heads, and it was given authority to rule; the nature of the leopard and its winged back spoke of Alexander the Great's speed of conquest when he would conquer the world in 12 short years. The four heads given authority represented his four generals who would rule the Hellenistic Empires; the four generals being Cassander, Lysimachus, Ptolemy and Seleucid.

Dan 7:7 As I slept in my bed I saw a fourth beast more terrifying and frightening and powerful than the other three. It had huge iron teeth and what it didn't grind with its teeth it smashed with its feet. It was different from all the former beasts and it had ten horns coming out of its head.

Dan 7:8 Just as I was thinking about these horns a little horn appeared before me; and three of the other horns were pulled up by the roots to make room for it. This horn had the eyes of a human and its mouth spoke boastfully of the things which he would do; he was particularly critical of God.

Dan 7:9 Suddenly I looked toward heaven. I saw thrones being set in place by, the Ancient of Days, He took His seat in the middle of the Throne Room. He wore a robe as white as snow signifying His absolute Righteousness; His hair was white a sign of His earned respect. His throne was surrounded by fire; the throne had wheels which were all ablaze to describe His omnipresence and severe judgment upon all who deny His rule.

Dan 7:10 I saw a river of fire flowing like a sea of lava from the throne room of God. Vast numbers of angels stood before him; I estimate their numbers in the billions. It was announced that the Supreme Court of Heaven would soon be in session; a large set of books were brought into the heavenly court room.

Dan 7:11 I watched in amazement as the little horn, the Antichrist, boasted of his greatness and power. I kept on watching until he was slain at the Second Advent of Christ; I watched further as Christ had the Antichrist's body thrown into the blazing fire of Hades.

Dan 7:12 Satan and his demons however were allowed to live but were chained for the greater part of 1000 years in Sheol and then they were released for a short period of time at the end of Christ's Millennial reign.

Dan 7:13 As I slept I continued to dream and there before me was the Christ, He looked like the Son of Man, the Incarnate Christ; He came clothed in the clouds of heaven. He approached the Throne of the Ancient of Days being led into his presence in the middle of the Throne Room in the middle of the Third Heaven.

Dan 7:16 I then asked one of the angels in the vision "what is the meaning of what I have dreamed?" The angel Gabriel began an extensive explanation of what had earlier troubled me so greatly.

Dan 7:17 The four great beasts are four world empires which will arise out from the turmoil of planet earth to be ultimately destroyed

Dan 7:18 and then believing Israel will be given an earthly Kingdom; they will possess it forever and ever.

Dan 7:19 I was greatly puzzled and wanted to know more of the fourth beast, for this beast was different from all the others and in fact he was more terrifying than all the others combined; with its iron teeth and bronze claws it could be seen crushing and devouring its victims and trampling them underfoot. This beast showed no mercy whatsoever.

Dan 7:20 I, Daniel also wanted Gabriel to tell me more about the ten horns on its head and about the other horn that came up, before which three of them fell--I was interested particularly in knowing of the horn that looked more imposing than the others; the one who had eyes and a mouth that spoke boastfully against all authority.

Dan 7:21 While I was looking, this horn, the Antichrist, attacked God's chosen ones and at times seemed to be winning the battle.

Dan 7:22 Then God, the Most High, the Eternal One, came and judged in favor of his chosen ones, because the time had arrived for them to be given the kingdom.

Dan 7:23 Then I was told by the one standing there: "The fourth beast will be a fourth kingdom to appear on earth. It will be different from all the others - it will trample the earth and crush it to pieces."

Dan 7:24 The ten horns you saw are ten kings ruling ten sovereign nations. They align themselves by treaty to one another forming a Federation. From one of the lesser kingdoms the Antichrist arises; he quickly strikes and conquers two of his neighbors. His military and political genius result in his being elected as chairman of the powerful European Federation and it is from Rome that he directs the activities of the Ten Nation

Federation of Europe.

Dan 7:25 He speaks against God and oppresses those who profess Christianity; he even changes the calendar and replaces national laws with international laws. Under the permissive will of God the saints of planet earth are handed over to him for three and one-half years.

Dan 7:26 The Antichrist establishes himself as military, political, religious and economic ruler of planet earth. But in the third heaven all attention has been directed to the throne room where the Supreme Court is called into session by God the Father. The Court rules that all power is to be taken away from the Antichrist and the False Prophet; the two are to be terminated and sentenced to the Lake of Fire.

Dan 7:27 The kingdoms of the earth are placed under the saints of the Most High. Christ is made ruler over both heaven and earth forever and all peoples and rulers will worship and obey him.

Dan 7:28 Daniel is told "this is the end." I, Daniel, was deeply troubled by my thoughts, and my face turned pale, but I kept the matter to myself.

And now we are ready for Daniel chapter eight and another vision.

1. Two important factors mark Daniel 8 as the beginning of a new section.

1.1 First, beginning with this chapter the language returns to Hebrew instead of the Aramaic used by Daniel from Dan 2:4 through Dan 7:28.

1.2 Second, the change of language is in keeping with the change introduced by this chapter. From here to the end of Daniel, the prophecy, even though it concerns the Gentiles, is occupied with human history as it relates to Israel.

2. Although many expositors divide the book of Daniel into two halves (Dan 1-6 [history] and 7-12 [prophecy]), there are also good reasons for dividing Daniel into three sections (Dan 1, [introduction] 2-7, [history of the nations] 8-12 [prophecy emphasizing Israel and their relationship with the nations]).

3. The first of Daniel's own visions recorded in Daniel 7 was a broad summary of the times of the Gentiles with emphasis on the climactic events culminating in the second coming of Christ to the earth.

3.1 You will recall in our introduction to the study of Daniel chapter seven I pointed out the lack of chronology. Verse one of chapter seven spoke of Daniel having a vision in the first year of Belshazzar King of Babylon and yet we studied his death in chapter five when Darius' forces entered the city and executed him.

3.2 I must again remind you that chapters one through six are histories over against chapters seven through twelve which are prophecies.

3.2.1 The prophecies occur at various times already covered as history; so it is necessary to overlay the dreams and visions recorded by Daniel in chapters seven through twelve.

3.3 And now again, like chapter seven, the revelation described in chapter eight actually occurred some twelve years before Belshazzar's death recorded in Daniel chapter five. More will be said of this later.

4. Let me briefly summarize what we are going to see in chapters eight through twelve. Beginning in chapter 8, Daniel's second vision concerns only the empires of Persia and Greece as they relate to Israel.

4.1 It is as though we are given a zoom lens to view that which is between the head and the legs and feet of the golden image of Daniel chapter two. Thus in chapter eight we zoom in on Persia and Greece omitting Babylon and Rome.

4.1.1 Under Persian government certain Israelites are sent back to rebuild their land and their city, Jerusalem.

4.1.2. Under Grecian domination by Antiochus Epiphanes, the city and the temple were desolated. Antiochus Epiphanes is seen as a type of Antichrist.

4.2 Daniel chapter nine presents Israel's history from the time of Ezra and Nehemiah to the inauguration of Christ's Kingdom at His second coming. There is included a prophecy of a great trouble for Israel which we call The Tribulation.

4.3 Beginning with Dan 10:1 through and including Dan 11:35 there is a resumption of the description of the events of the Persian and Grecian Empires as they relate to Israel, with emphasis on their oppression; the details of the Armageddon campaign are also summarized.

4.4 The final section, Dan 11:36-12:13, deals with the end of the age, the period of the revived Roman Empire, and the deliverance of Israel.

5. It is fitting then that the last five chapters of Daniel should be written in Hebrew the language of Israel.

6. Now for an analysis of Dan 8:1

KJV

Dan 8:1 In the third year of the reign of king Belshazzar a vision appeared unto me, even unto me Daniel, after that which appeared unto me at the first.

NIV

Dan 8:1 In the third year of King Belshazzar's reign, I, Daniel, had a vision, after the one

that had already appeared to me.

1. This chapter repeats much of the prediction of chapter 2, and especially of chapter 7.
2. It adds details regarding the Medo Persian and Grecian periods.
3. After a historical introduction, the vision of a ram and a goat is described followed by an interpretation.
4. This vision came two years after that of chapter seen (compare Dan 7:1).

Dan 7:1 In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon, (553 B.C.) Daniel had a dream, and visions passed through his mind as he was lying on his bed. He wrote down the substance of his dream.

5. The dream came when an exiled Israel needed encouragement to believe that God really would restore them as he had promised in Jer 25:11-12.

Jer 25:11 This whole country will become a desolate wasteland, and these nations will serve the king of Babylon seventy years.

Jer 25:12 "But when the seventy years are fulfilled, I will punish the king of Babylon and his nation, the land of the Babylonians, for their guilt," declares the LORD, "and will make it desolate forever."

6. You no doubt will recall Belshazzar was the ruler in Babylon who was killed when the city was captured in October, 539 B.C.
7. There is likelihood that Belshazzar's mother was the daughter of Nebuchadnezzar, making him the grandson of the great Chaldean king.
8. Belshazzar shared the throne as co-regent with his father Nabonidus.

8.1 From the site of Ur on the Euphrates river a tablet was discovered with the text of two dreams concerning which an unidentified astrologer studies the stars in regard to a favorable interpretation "for my lord Nabonidus, king of Babylon, as well as to a favorable interpretation for my lord Belshazzar, the crown prince."

8.2 A tablet in the series known as the Babylonian Chronicle states that Nabonidus (556-539 B.C.) stayed in Tema from the seventh through the eleventh years of his reign, while the crown prince, his officials, and his army were in Babylon.

8.3 Another document from antiquity called "The Verse Account of Nabonidus" complains that the king, when his third year was about to begin, "entrusted the country to his oldest son, his firstborn."

8.3.1 This document goes on to say "the troops everywhere in the country were ordered under his command. He let everything go, entrusted the kingship to him ... he started out for a long journey, "invading Arabia, capturing Tema ... rebuilding the town, and making his residence there ..."

8.4 Another inscription says the self-imposed exile extended to ten years. Just why he chose to live in Tema for so long a time is not known.

8.4.1 Wycliffe has written: ..."it may be conjectured that he needed to be near this important outpost to keep the Arab tribes that threatened his commercially lucrative caravan route that passed through Tema, or that in favoring Sin, the chief god of Ur and of Haran, his home town, he found himself at odds with the hierarchy and formalized worship of Marduk, the city-god of Babylon."

9. History clearly teaches Daniel accurately portrayed Belshazzar as the reigning king in Babylon.

10. After Cyrus took Babylon, Nabonidus returned there and was arrested, all according to the Nabonidus section of the Babylonian Chronicle.

11. Daniel mentions his "vision" as the second of two. The first would certainly seem to be that just studied in chapter seven.

12. Recall again the language changes with chapter seven from Aramaic to Hebrew and in chapter seven Daniel has the visions and dreams and angels interpret.

13. Now let's continue but first an expanded translation of Dan 8:1:

Expanded Translation:

Dan 8:1 In the third year of Prince Belshazzar's reign over Babylon, I, Daniel, had another vision. The year was approximately 550 or 551 B.C.

14. Let's see what we can learn from Dan 8:2.

KJV

Dan 8:2 And I saw in a vision; and it came to pass, when I saw, that I was at Shushan in the palace, which is in the province of Elam; and I saw in a vision, and I was by the river of Ulai.

NIV

Dan 8:2 In my vision I saw myself in the citadel of Susa in the province of Elam; in the vision I was beside the Ulai Canal.

1. There have been numerous expositors who have concluded Daniel was transported to Persia where he saw the Ulai.

2. It is my view Daniel was not so transported physically; it was instead by vision that Daniel saw ancient Susa (called Shushan in the King James Version).

3. Ancient Shushan was located about 150 miles north of the present head of the Persian Gulf. It was situated midway between Ecbatana and Persepolis; it later became one of the main residences of the Persian kings.

End Lesson Taught 5-19-2002