

Daniel Chapter 7 offers an expanded view of the Bible prophecies of Daniel Chapter 2, given by God through the dreams of the Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar. These prophecies were revealed by God and explained to His servant, Daniel the prophet. The chapter gives occasion for discussing certain *Literary Tools and Principles* found in Bible prophecy that arise frequently:

**Symbols, Imagery, Metaphors:** The Bible utilizes symbols, imagery, and metaphors in prophecy to illustrate important truths (Hos 12:10). Symbols and Imagery describe a subject by an object or illustration. Metaphors liken a subject to another object, or suggest the subject is on the same point of comparison to the other object. The Bible alone must be the interpreter of the symbols, imagery, and metaphors by means of the following methods of Bible analysis:

1. The Bible should be searched from cover-to-cover [*“line-upon-line, precept-upon-precept, here a little, there a little...”*] to gain understanding of a topic. This method is called **Proof Texting**:– Isaiah 28:9-13; Daniel 12:4
2. Unless explicitly stated by a verse, a conclusion should only be drawn if two or more verses confirm or agree upon a topic, thought, or idea: *“by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall be established”* – 2 Corinthians 13:1; John 8:17; Genesis 41:32

**Repeat and Enlarge:** When God would have His people understand a critical message, He repeats the message through His prophets, often using different symbols. The first occurrence of the message typically is the most

comprehensive. However, with each successive repetition additional details are incorporated, bringing added clarity and an expanded understanding of the message.

Daniel 7 begins with the description of four distinct animal-like beasts that arise from the "Great Sea" relative to Palestine, the land of the Jews. Each beast arises sequentially from the *Great Sea* after being stirred by four consecutive winds.

**Q:** *How does the Bible explain the following symbols?*

- **Beasts:** Daniel 7:17, 23
- **Winds:** Jeremiah 49:36, 37; Jeremiah 25:31-33; Revelation 7:1, 2
- **Water or Seas:** Revelation 17:15

**A:** The four animal-like *beasts* are four kingdoms or nations that arose from the *winds* of warfare and strife, blowing upon a densely populated region [*waters*] of the earth.

**Q:** *What body of water makes up the "Great Sea" based on the prophecies of Daniel chapters 2 and 7? What is the geographic location of the rise of the four great world empires described in these prophecies?*

**A:** The Mediterranean Sea is the body of water around which these four great kingdoms arose.

Let us now consider the four beasts individually. The first beast is described as a lion with eagle's wings. The beast is lifted from the earth, is made to stand upright, its wings are plucked off, and it is given the heart of a man (v4).

**Q:** *What great nation had power and might as a lion at its zenith, but ended in fear and trembling with the heart of a man? See Daniel 2:37, 38; 5:4-9; Isaiah 14:4; Jeremiah 50:41-43, 51:28-32*



**A:** The great Babylonian Empire was as a mighty lion under Nebuchadnezzar, but in its fall under Belshazzar, it had the frail heart of a man.

**Q:** *How does the Bible define the following symbol?*

- **Wings:** Consider the following verses: Deuteronomy 28:49 || Ezekiel 17: 1-7; Habakkuk 1:6-9

**A:** Wings are a symbol for swiftness, speed, and agility.

The second beast is described as a bear, raised-up on one side, having three ribs in its mouth (v5). The Medo-Persian Empire fulfills this prophecy. That the bear was raised-up on one side denotes one component of the alliance, namely



the Persians, was the stronger of the two. The Persians under Cyrus, and the Medes under Darius (Cyrus' uncle), conquered the Babylonian Empire in 539B.C. and Darius assumed the throne over the province of Babylon at the age of 62 (Daniel 5:30, 31). The three ribs in the bear's mouth denote the

three mighty empires, directionally all relative to Palestine that would eventually fall to Medo-Persia:

1. Babylon to the north
2. Lydia to the west
3. Egypt to the south

The third beast is described as a leopard, having four heads and four wings on its back (v6). Greece conquered Medo-Persia in 331B.C. and is therefore the leopard beast of Daniel 7. Alexander the Great swiftly conquered all other prominent world empires [note the four wings of the beast] in twelve years. However, he would be conquered by his own self-indulgences, dying at the age of thirty-three of alcoholism. After his death, four of his generals, Ptolemy, Lysimachus, Seleucus, and Cassander, represented by the four heads on the beast, arose to power, dividing and ruling the Greek Empire.



**Q:** *Consider that the Bible describes the first three kingdoms by beasts of prey found in nature; however, no animal could adequately describe the fourth kingdom (v7, 8). What might this*

*imply about the fourth kingdom?*

**A:** The fourth kingdom was an absolute marvel to the prophet Daniel. As no animal could adequately illustrate its strength, ferocity, and power, so too, this empire was unlike anything Daniel or the world had ever known.

The Fourth Beast is described in the following manner:

- Dreadful and terrible
- Exceedingly strong
- Having huge iron teeth, devouring, breaking in pieces, and trampling the residue of nations

• Different from the other beasts before it

• Having ten horns

• In time, A **Little Horn** would arise among the ten horns of the fourth beast (v8), which does the following:



- Uproots three of the ten horns (v8)
- Becomes greater than the remaining seven horns (v8)
- Has the eyes of a man and a mouth speaking boastful words against the Most High God (v11, 20, 25)
- Makes war against the saints of God and prevails against them for a period of time described by "a time, times and the dividing of time" (v21, 25)
- He "shall think to change times and laws" (v25)

**Q:** How does the Bible define the following symbol?

• **Horns:** Daniel 7:24, 8:5, 21; Revelation 17:12

**A:** Horns are also a symbol for a kingdom or a nation.

The time-elapsd view of the fourth and last great kingdom, represented by a beast with iron teeth, brass nails and ten horns, is the mighty Roman Empire. Rome began its conquest of the Greek Empire in 168B.C. and would continue until its final overthrow in 31B.C. Rome would rule the world for 360 years until its dissolution into



ten separate kingdoms, represented by the ten horns. The first of the ten divisions was established in A.D.351 and the others followed through A.D.476 at the hands of barbarian tribes that descended from northern Europe.



Never conquered by another world power, Rome continued to exist through the *Little Horn*, which we will identify and discuss at length in a future study. Established in A.D.538, the Little Horn arose out of the divided Roman Empire. Prior

to its full rise to prominence, the Little Horn uprooted three of the ten kingdoms that were part of the divided empire. This distinct power ruled over the kings of the earth, ruled over the minds and bodies of all people on the earth, and reigned for a period of 1,260 years, during which time it also made war against the people of God (v21, 24, 25).



The chapter concludes with a view of God's *Eternal Kingdom* that will judge the Little Horn power, and decisively conquer it and all other earthly kingdoms. God's Kingdom will be the last kingdom upon the earth and will reign forever (v18, 26, 27). The saints of God are portrayed as victorious, reigning with Jesus and being given the kingdom as their inheritance (Num 23:21, 24). Jesus spoke of the *meek and poor in spirit* as those who would in time inherit the earth and co-reign with Him in His kingdom. They recognize their poverty of spirit, their continual need of a Savior. They have learnt to trust God and His word, the Holy Bible, and to daily surrender their lives to His will. The kingdoms of this world are quickly crumbling with their fleeting wealth, power, and glory. Why not place your trust in Jesus, Who knows the beginning from the end and Who's Kingdom will last forever? **Why not ask Jesus into your heart today!**

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For additional Bible studies or if you have questions, please write or contact: [Life More Abundant](mailto:biblestudies@lifemoreabundantpa.com)  
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# The Rise and Fall of Nations

## Daniel Chapter 7 - Part 1 [Based on verses 1-8, 11, 12, 15-25]



Lesson 13