

## 05–15–2020 Daniel 7.1–10 Bible Study

Read Daniel 7:1–10 in your favorite translation. I will print the NET–2 translation.

7:1 In the first year of King Belshazzar of Babylon, Daniel had a dream filled with visions while he was lying on his bed. Then he wrote down the dream in summary fashion. 2 Daniel explained: “I was watching in my vision during the night as the four winds of the sky were stirring up the great sea. 3 Then four large beasts came up from the sea; they were different from one another. 4 “The first one was like a lion with eagles’ wings. As I watched, its wings were pulled off and it was lifted up from the ground. It was made to stand on two feet like a human being, and a human mind was given to it.

5 “Then a second beast appeared, like a bear. It was raised up on one side, and there were three ribs in its mouth between its teeth. It was told, ‘Get up and devour much flesh!’

6 “After these things, as I was watching, another beast like a leopard appeared, with four bird-like wings on its back. This beast had four heads, and ruling authority was given to it.

7 “After these things, as I was watching in the night visions a fourth beast appeared—one dreadful, terrible, and very strong. It had two large rows of iron teeth. It devoured and crushed, and anything that was left it trampled with its feet. It was different from all the beasts that came before it, and it had ten horns.

8 “As I was contemplating the horns, another horn—a small one—came up between them, and three of the former horns were torn out by the roots to make room for it. This horn had eyes resembling human eyes and a mouth speaking arrogant things.

9 “While I was watching,

thrones were set up,

and the Ancient of Days took his seat.

His attire was white like snow;

the hair of his head was like lamb’s wool.

His throne was ablaze with fire

and its wheels were all aflame.

10 A river of fire was streaming forth

and proceeding from his presence.

Many thousands were ministering to him;

many tens of thousands stood ready to serve him.

The court convened

and the books were opened.

### COMMENTS:

The Book of Daniel is divided into two parts. The first part (chapters 1–6) focus on the four faithful boys from Judah who stay loyal to their God in a foreign land and how God used them to bring his messages to the major rulers of the world at that time. God is the kingdom builder.

Now in the second part (chapters 7–12) we have apocalyptic (revelatory) or prophetic messages. There are similarities between events and visions described in Daniel with those presented in the book of Revelation.

Often people question why in the Jewish Bible, Daniel is not printed with the other prophets. The most reasonable answer is that although he did prophesy, he was never called to the office of a prophet. He was an administrator in the foreign governments where God used him, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego to reveal whom the true kingdom builder is—God himself.

The first and primary meaning of apocalyptic is a revealing. I like the description given by the designers of the Bible Project: “It is a moment when God pulls back the curtain and shows his

people what is going on from a heavenly perspective. In all apocalyptic literature, beasts unlike anything that ever has or ever will wander on the face of the earth are images from God.

We must be careful of those who start to tell you what each little description of the beast means. Often God gives us an explanation, but not always. The contrast is always between the work of man verses the work of God.

Chapter 2 and chapter 7 can be examined side by side. They are describing the same worldly events in similar, but different ways. Daniel receives a vision of four beasts rising out of the sea, the fourth beast being more fearsome than the others, and its little horn evoking concern (7:1-8).

Shifting from the sea to heaven, Daniel's vision continues with the Ancient of Days judging the fourth beast (vs. 9-12). Then "one like a son of man" receives everlasting dominion over all (vs. 13-14). An angel explains that the four beasts are kings and that the saints will receive an everlasting kingdom (vs. 15-18).

The Ancient of Days is God and "son of man" is a messianic title and the one most often used by Jesus to describe himself. The dream of Daniel made such a deep impression on him that he wrote down a summary so it would not be forgotten.

We will be coming back to the specifics of the vision when God give us his explanation.

**REFLECTION QUESTION:** I read a little saying today that expresses something I've always believed, but never heard expressed so succinctly. Jesus says, "It is written." Satan says, "Is it written?" We must know the difference! The reason why we must know what the Lord says is because he is the only one who knows it all, past-present-future. Getting us to doubt what God says is the first effort of Satan to disconnect us from God. Stick with the divine, inspired, Word of God. When you doubt the wisdom of God, focus on his love. We will never be wise enough to understand the ways of God. We can look at God's love in sending Jesus to be our Savior. You can see the love of God when you can't understand his ways. I don't understand how the heavenly Father could lay on Jesus the sins of the whole world, but I can see his love.