

Read Daniel 7:11–22 in your favorite translation. I will print the NET–2 Translation.

11 “Then I kept on watching because of the arrogant words of the horn that was speaking. I was watching until the beast was killed and its body destroyed and thrown into the flaming fire. 12 As for the rest of the beasts, their ruling authority had already been removed, though they were permitted to go on living for a time and a season.

13 “I was watching in the night visions,  
And with the clouds of the sky  
one like a son of man was approaching.  
He went up to the Ancient of Days  
and was escorted before him.

14 To him was given ruling authority, honor, and sovereignty.  
All peoples, nations, and language groups were serving him.  
His authority is eternal and will not pass away.  
His kingdom will not be destroyed.

15 “As for me, Daniel, my spirit was distressed, and the visions of my mind were alarming me.  
16 I approached one of those standing nearby and asked him about the meaning of all this. So he spoke with me and revealed to me the interpretation of the vision: 17 ‘These large beasts, which are four in number, represent four kings who will arise from the earth. 18 The holy ones of the Most High will receive the kingdom and will take possession of the kingdom forever and ever.’  
19 “Then I wanted to know the meaning of the fourth beast, which was different from all the others. It was very dreadful, with two rows of iron teeth and bronze claws, and it devoured, crushed, and trampled anything that was left with its feet. 20 I also wanted to know the meaning of the ten horns on its head, and of that other horn that came up and before which three others fell. This was the horn that had eyes and a mouth speaking arrogant things, whose appearance was more formidable than the others. 21 While I was watching, that horn began to wage war against the holy ones and was defeating them, 22 until the Ancient of Days arrived and judgment was rendered in favor of the holy ones of the Most High. Then the time came for the holy ones to take possession of the kingdom.

#### COMMENTS:

The vision continues to unfold. The fourth beast which had appeared in v. 7 had 10 horns, a then another small horn appeared that tore out three of the original horns. Its eye resembled a human being and a mouth that spoke boldly and proudly Then God (the Ancient of Days) showed up.

God was dressed in white and his throne was on fire, including its wheels. Then a river of fire poured out and there were many thousands and tens of thousands who ministering to God or prepared to serve him. Now the judge is prepared to pronounce the sentence and Daniel sees it killed, its body destroyed and discarded into the burning fire.

Daniel seems to have had a special interest in the fourth beast, the ten horns, and the little horn [vv. 19–20]. It is possible, however, to miss the woods for the trees and fail to see that this chapter was first written to help those who were incapable of identifying these symbols.

Whatever our own identification may be, we surely miss a basic thrust of this part of God’s Word if we regard our task as finished when we have solved the identification problem. We could conceivably do that (at least to our own satisfaction) and fail to hear what God is really saying to His people through this chapter.

If the Lord had simply wanted Daniel to know the facts of history ahead of time, why did He give him such a complex, curious, multicolored, sense-appealing revelation? To ask the question is to answer it.

God not only revealed facts about history in advance; he revealed himself to Daniel, impressing on him something of His own awesome and glorious purposes. Miss this and we miss almost everything.

Like Revelation, Daniel is essentially a book of pictures, appealing to our senses. We are meant to see, hear, and smell the strange beasts that appear throughout this chapter. We are meant to be overwhelmed as Daniel was by the revelation of the Ancient of Days and the coming of the Son of Man.

Daniel sees the Ancient of Days give authority to the Son of Man. V. 14 is a pictorial example of Philippians 2:9–11 and his authority will be eternal and his kingdom will not be destroyed. Now we begin to get an explanation from God about this vision.

As I said earlier, Daniel 2 and 7 can be laid beside each other. Most conservative Christian scholars have generally agreed that the first beast is Babylon. The second beast is Mede–Persian Empire. The third beast is Greece (Alexander the Great) and the fourth beast is the Roman Empire.

Then the story jumps ahead to God’s eternal kingdom, the Messianic Kingdom, the kingdom of God. Some believe that the end of v. 25, means three and a half times as we find referenced in Revelation. But when God breaks in, it brings an eternal kingdom. This refers to the final return of Jesus at the end of human time.

On Monday, we will take a closer look at the closing explanation by the angel of God.

**REFLECTION QUESTION:** Does God still speak to people in dreams or visions? I have had people tell me stories of their dreams or visions which they said came true. I have had people tell me dreams or visions which they had which did not come true. I have one rule which I use. I will not base my behavior, preaching or teaching on someone else’s vision or dream. If it seems possible, I will carefully examine the scriptures to make sure it doesn’t conflict with anything that God has revealed to all of us in the Bible. Thus far I have never had a vision or dream that I considered to be from God. Do you have a plan if someone shares a dream or vision with you?