



THE DEVOTED LIFE OF DANIEL
“The Ancient of Days” Daniel 7:1-28

No. 3481

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After the opening stories of Daniel we come now to the more challenging chapters, which deal with Daniel’s apocalyptic visions. What they mean and how they apply have been the subjects of intense debate for centuries but they teach its many basic lessons nevertheless.

I. Daniel Records a Vision. vv. 1-14

- A. A vision of earth. vv. 1-8
 - 1. Four winds of heaven churning up the great sea. v. 2
 - 2. Four great beasts come tip out of the sea. vv. 3-8
 - a. An eagle-winged lion given the heart of a man. v. 4
 - b. A rib-devouring bear with a voracious appetite. v. 5
 - c. A four-headed, winged leopard with great authority. v. 6
 - d. A ten horned beast with iron teeth and awesome power. vv. 7-8
 - i. A little, eleventh horn uprooting three horns.
 - ii. This horn has boastful, arrogant human qualities.
- B. A vision of heaven. vv. 9-14
 - 1. A throne room where the Ancient of Days presides. vv. 9-10
 - His: a. Appearance. b. Authority. c. Attendants. d. Actions
 - 2. The fourth beast destroyed, the others stripped of authority. vv. 11-12
 - 3. “One like a son of man” is given universal authority. vv. 13-14

II. Daniel Requests an Explanation. vv. 15-27

- A. A brief response to a troubled question. vv. 15-18
 - 1. The four beasts are four empires.
 - 2. The “saints of the most High will receive the kingdom.”
- B. A fuller response to further questioning. vv. 19-27
 - 1. What is the meaning of the fourth beast and the little horn?
 - 2. The little horn is a particularly vicious oppressor of “the saints.”
 - 3. The Ancient of Days will triumph and the saints receive the Kingdom.
- C. The kind of questions we like to ask!
 - 1. Is the “fourth beast” a symbol of the empires of Greece or Rome?
 - 2. If the former is the little horn Antiochus, is the latter the Antichrist?
 - 3. Is the deliberate ambiguity designed to allow for successive application?
 - 4. Is the “son of man” Messiah, if so why do the saints get the kingdom?

III. Daniel Reacts with Consternation.

- A. He witnessed the overthrow of Jerusalem, the demise of Nebuchadnezzar.
- B. He recognizes that human history is governed by heaven, not earth.
- C. He wonders at the role a small person can play in a cosmic struggle.

Points to Ponder: What is my worldview? Is it even close to Daniel’s?