

Daniel's Duplicative Dream of Five Kingdoms

Daniel 7:1-14

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Daniel is given visions that confirm the scope of the key kingdoms of human history.

I. Daniel was given frightening visions in a dream that paralleled Nebuchadnezzar's previous dream. (v. 1-3)

In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon, Daniel had a dream, and visions passed through his mind as he was lying in bed. He wrote down the substance of his dream.

602 or 603 BC - Nebuchadnezzar's Dream

553 BC – Belshazzar's co-regency with Nabonidus begins

A. The great sea represents the mass of humanity. (v. 2-3)

² *Daniel said: "In my vision at night I looked, and there before me were the four winds of heaven churning up the great sea. ³ Four great beasts, each different from the others, came up out of the sea.*

B. The winged lion corresponds to the golden head of the statue and represents the Babylonian empire. (v. 4)

⁴ *"The first was like a lion, and it had the wings of an eagle. I watched until its wings were torn off and it was lifted from the ground so that it stood on two feet like a human being, and the mind of a human was given to it.*

C. The lopsided bear corresponds to the silver chest and arms of the statue and represents the Medo-Persian empire. (v. 5)

⁵ *"And there before me was a second beast, which looked like a bear. It was raised up on one of its sides, and it had three ribs in its mouth between its teeth. It was told, 'Get up and eat your fill of flesh!'*

Rydelnick (Moody): "The book of Daniel never views the kingdom of the Medes and the Persians as two distinct empires but consistently links them together (for example, in 8:20 the two-horned ram 'represents the kings of Media and Persia,' and in 6:8 & 15 refers to 'the law of the Medes and Persians'). It would be decidedly inconsistent of Daniel to link the two empires as one in these other chapters but view them as separate kingdoms in Chapters 2 and

here. And in 5:28 Daniel told Belshazzar, ‘your kingdom has been divided and given over to the Medes and Persians.’

D. The four-headed and winged leopard corresponds to the bronze belly and thighs of the statue and represents the empire of Greece. (v. 6)

⁶ *“After that, I looked, and there before me was another beast, one that looked like a leopard. And on its back it had four wings like those of a bird. This beast had four heads, and it was given authority to rule.*

i. Alexander the Great very swiftly conquered a great swath of the near east.

Alexander conquered the known world in just 10 years.

ii. At his untimely death, the kingdom was divided among four generals.

E. The fourth beast corresponds to the statue’s legs of iron and represents the Roman empire that conquered and crushed the largest territory of all. (v. 7a)

⁷ *“After that, in my vision at night I looked, and there before me was a fourth beast—terrifying and frightening and very powerful. It had large iron teeth; it crushed and devoured its victims and trampled underfoot whatever was left.*

F. The ten horns correspond to the statue’s ten iron and clay toes and represents the revived Roman empire during the End times.

^{7b} *It was different from all the former beasts, and it had ten horns.*

⁸ *“While I was thinking about the horns, there before me was another horn, a little one, which came up among them; and three of the first horns were uprooted before it. This horn had eyes like the eyes of a human being and a mouth that spoke boastfully.*

II. Daniel is also given a vision of the Kingdom that will supplant all others. (v. 9-14)

A. The white clothing and hair represent God’s purity and eternal nature. (v. 9a)

⁹ *“As I looked,
“thrones were set in place,
and the Ancient of Days took his seat.
His clothing was as white as snow;
the hair of his head was white like wool.*

B. The fire represents God's holiness and righteous judgment to come.

*His throne was flaming with fire,
and its wheels were all ablaze.*

¹⁰ *A river of fire was flowing,
coming out from before him.*

*Thousands upon thousands attended him;
ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him.*

*The court was seated,
and the books were opened.*

Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. The earth and the heavens fled from his presence, and there was no place for them. And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books. The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was judged according to what they had done. Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death. Anyone whose name was not found written in the book of life was thrown into the lake of fire. (Revelation 20:11-15)

C. In God's perfect timing, the blasphemous beast will be cast into hell. (v. 11)

¹¹ *"Then I continued to watch because of the boastful words the horn was speaking. I kept looking until the beast was slain and its body destroyed and thrown into the blazing fire. ¹² (The other beasts had been stripped of their authority, but were allowed to live for a period of time.)*

Then I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies gathered together to wage war against the rider on the horse and his army. But the beast was captured, and with it the false prophet who had performed the signs on its behalf. With these signs he had deluded those who had received the mark of the beast and worshiped its image. The two of them were thrown alive into the fiery lake of burning sulfur. The rest were killed with the sword coming out of the mouth of the rider on the horse, and all the birds gorged themselves on their flesh. (Revelation 19:19-21)

D. The final glorious kingdom seen by Daniel is the Eternal Kingdom of the Messiah. (v. 13-14)

¹³ *"In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence.*

i. The clouds of heaven indicate this is God Himself. (v. 13)

“At that time people will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory...”
(Mark 13:26)

The LORD wraps himself in light as with a garment;
he stretches out the heavens like a tent
and lays the beams of his upper chambers on their waters.
He makes the clouds his chariot
and rides on the wings of the wind.
He makes winds his messengers,
flames of fire his servants. (Psalm 104:2-4)

The LORD is slow to anger but great in power;
the LORD will not leave the guilty unpunished.
His way is in the whirlwind and the storm,
and clouds are the dust of his feet. (Nahum 1:3)

Clouds and thick darkness surround [the LORD];
righteousness and justice are the foundation of his throne.
Fire goes before him
and consumes his foes on every side. (Psalm 97:2-4)

The high priest said to him, “I charge you under oath by the living God: Tell us if you are the Messiah, the Son of God.”
“You have said so,” Jesus replied. “But I say to all of you: From now on you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven.” (Matthew 26:63-64)

ii. Indeed, Jesus of Nazareth is this individual. (v. 14a)

¹⁴ He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all nations and peoples of every language worshiped him.

Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.
(Matthew 28:18)

And there is no God apart from me,
a righteous God and a Savior;
there is none but me.
“Turn to me and be saved,
all you ends of the earth;
for I am God, and there is no other.
By myself I have sworn,
my mouth has uttered in all integrity
a word that will not be revoked:

Before me every knee will bow;
by me every tongue will swear. (Isaiah 45:21b-23)

Then those who were in the boat worshiped him, saying, “Truly you are the Son of God.”
When they had crossed over, they landed at Gennesaret. And when the men of that place recognized Jesus, they sent word to all the surrounding country. People brought all their sick to him and begged him to let the sick just touch the edge of his cloak, and all who touched it were healed. (Matthew 14:33-36)

Therefore God exalted him to the highest place
and gave him the name that is above every name,
that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father. (Philippians 2:9-11)

iii. Hallelujah! Jesus’ Kingdom will endure forever. (v. 14b)

His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed.

For to us a child is born,
to us a son is given,
and the government will be on his shoulders.
And he will be called
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
Of the greatness of his government and peace
there will be no end.
He will reign on David’s throne
and over his kingdom,
establishing and upholding it
with justice and righteousness
from that time on and forever.
The zeal of the LORD Almighty
will accomplish this. (Isaiah 9:6-7)

While you were watching, a rock was cut out, but not by human hands. It struck the statue on its feet of iron and clay and smashed them. Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver and the gold were all broken to pieces and became like chaff on a threshing floor in the summer. The wind swept them away without leaving a trace. But the rock that struck the statue became a huge mountain and filled the whole earth. (Daniel 2:34-35)

“In the time of those kings, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed, nor will it be left to another people. It will crush all those kingdoms and bring them to an end, but it will itself endure forever. This is the meaning of the vision of the rock cut out of a mountain, but not by human hands—a rock that broke the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver and the gold to pieces. (Daniel 2:44-45)

You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over Jacob’s descendants forever; his kingdom will never end.” (Luke 1:31-33)

The seventh angel sounded his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, which said:
“The kingdom of the world has become
the kingdom of our Lord and of his Messiah,
and he will reign for ever and ever.” (Revelation 11:15)

For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, mutual affection; and to mutual affection, love. For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But whoever does not have them is nearsighted and blind, forgetting that they have been cleansed from their past sins. Therefore, my brothers and sisters, make every effort to confirm your calling and election. For if you do these things, you will never stumble, and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. (2 Peter 1:5-11)