DANIEL 7

Four Beasts & the Son of Man

Daniel 7 — A Deep Dive

> *"And to Him was given dominion, Glory and a kingdom, That all the peoples, nations and men of every language Might serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion Which will not pass away; And His kingdom is one Which will not be destroyed.*
> DANIEL 7:14

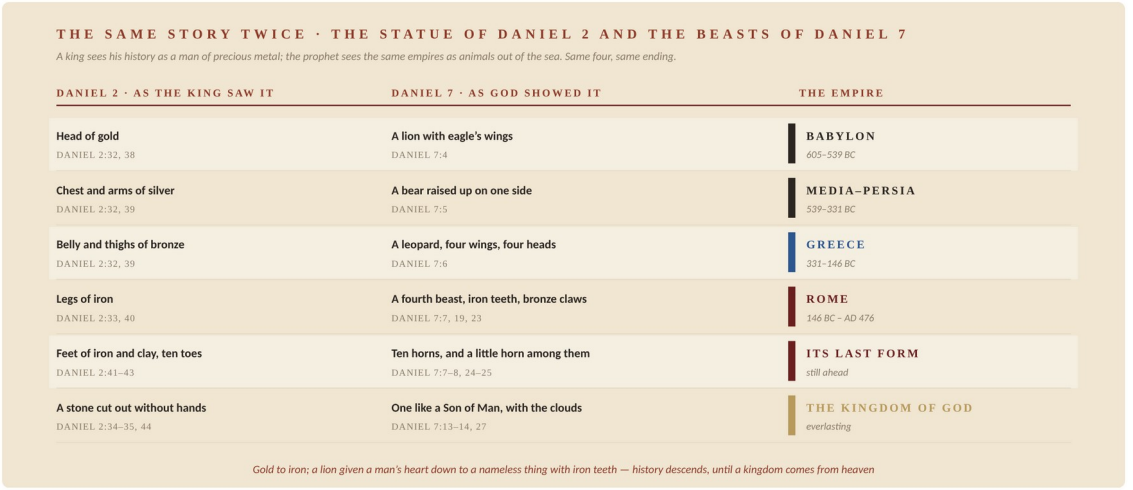
A SMITH FOR CHRIST STUDY · THREE VOICES: TSARFATI · MACARTHUR · GUZIK

Where the story stands

1. Chapter 7 opens in the first year of Belshazzar, about 553 B.C.

2. That date matters: the vision comes before the handwriting on the wall (chapter 5) and the lions' den (chapter 6), even though the book places it after them.

3. Chapters 1–6 are the story of Daniel in Babylon; chapters 7–12 are the visions God gave him, and the book turns here from narrative to prophecy.



Four Beasts from the Sea

DANIEL 7:1

In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon Daniel saw a dream and visions in his mind as he lay on his bed; then he wrote the dream down and related the following summary of it.

AMIR TSARFATI

Tsarfati opens with the calendar. The first year of Belshazzar puts this vision roughly fourteen years before Babylon falls, and the sea it starts with is the Mediterranean world, the stage on which every empire that ever touched Israel has played.

JOHN MACARTHUR

MacArthur notes the shift in the book: in chapters 1–6 Daniel interprets other men's dreams; from chapter 7 he receives his own. And he receives them, he stresses, not for curiosity but for comfort, the Jews…

DAVID GUZIK

Guzik makes the point that Daniel 7 and Daniel 2 are the same prophecy from two sides. Nebuchadnezzar, a pagan king, saw the empires as a dazzling man of metal, the way man sees his own achievements.

THE ORIGINAL **CHEZEV · "VISION"**

Four Beasts from the Sea

FOUR BEASTS FROM THE SEA · DANIEL 7:3–8 WITH THE INTERPRETATION (7:17, 23–24)

Three the prophet can name by an animal; the fourth he can only call "different" — and out of it comes a horn that is a man

THE LION
v. 4

Babylon

eagle's wings
Jeremiah 4:7; 49:22

wings plucked
the empire stops flying

stood like a man
Nebuchadnezzar humbled

a human mind given
chapter 4, in one verse

→

THE BEAR
v. 5

Media-Persia

raised on one side
Persia over Media (8:3)

three ribs
Lydia · Babylon · Egypt

"Arise, devour much"
a command spoken to it

heavy and slow
armies in the millions

→

THE LEOPARD
v. 6

Greece

four wings
speed — eleven years

four heads
Cassander · Lysimachus · Seleucus · Ptolemy (8:22)

"dominion was given"
handed, not seized

→

THE FOURTH BEAST
vv. 7, 19, 23

Rome — "different"

no animal to name it
only adjectives: dreadful

iron teeth, bronze claws
the iron legs of 2:40

crushed the remainder
absorbed all three before it

ten horns
its last form — still ahead

AMONG THE TEN — A LITTLE HORN · vv. 8, 11, 20–21, 24–26

Comes up after the ten; uproots three; eyes like a man and a mouth uttering great boasts; speaks against the Most High, wears down the saints, changes times and law — for a time, times, and half a time. Not an empire but a man: the Antichrist of 9:27, 11:36, 2 Thessalonians 2 and Revelation 13. Slain while still talking (v. 11).

The Court and the Son of Man

DANIEL 7:9

I kept looking Until thrones were set up, And the Ancient of Days took His seat; His vesture was like white snow And the hair of His head like pure wool. His throne was ablaze with flames, Its wheels were a burning fire.

AMIR TSARFATI

Tsarfati calls this the hinge of the chapter and of the book. Everything before verse 9 is man's history seen from God's side; everything after it is God's answer.

JOHN MACARTHUR

For MacArthur the throne room is the sermon. Daniel has watched four empires rise and he has had no vision of God in any of them, and then, in one verse, the thrones go up and the beasts are small.

DAVID GUZIK

Guzik draws out the detail that is easy to pass over: the throne has wheels. It is the same mobile throne Ezekiel saw by the river Chebar (Ezekiel 1), the throne that comes to where the judgment is needed.

THE ORIGINAL **ATTIQ YOMIN · "ANCIENT OF DAYS"**

The Court and the Son of Man



The Interpretation Begins

DANIEL 7:15

As for me, Daniel, my spirit was distressed within me, and the visions in my mind kept alarming me.

AMIR TSARFATI

The summary in verses 17–18 is the whole book of Daniel on a card: four kings from the earth, and then the saints possess the kingdom forever. Tsarfati emphasizes that "the saints of the Highest One" is Israel…

JOHN MACARTHUR

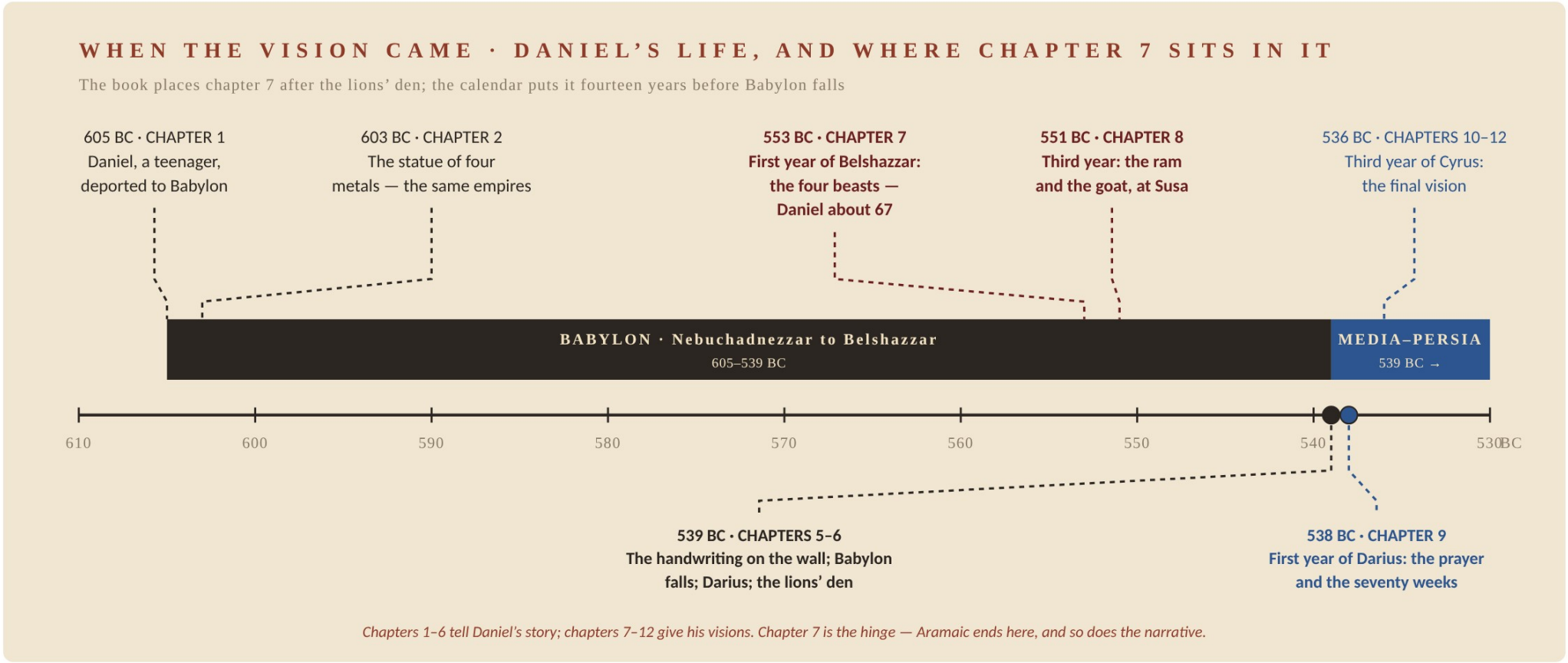
MacArthur draws attention to the honesty of verse 15. The man of God is alarmed.

DAVID GUZIK

Guzik notes that "four kings" (verse 17) and "four kingdoms" (verse 23) are used interchangeably, a kingdom is embodied in its king, which is how a horn can be a man in one verse and a power in the next. He…

THE ORIGINAL **ETKERIYYAT RUCHI · "MY SPIRIT WAS DISTRESSED"**

The Interpretation Begins



The Fourth Beast, the Horn, and the Verdict

DANIEL 7:19

Then I desired to know the exact meaning of the fourth beast, which was different from all the others, exceedingly dreadful, with its teeth of iron and its claws of bronze, and which devoured, crushed and trampled down the remainder with its feet,

AMIR TSARFATI

Tsarfati walks verses 21–22 as the second half of the Tribulation: the Antichrist breaks his covenant with Israel (chapter 9, verse 27), sets himself up in the temple (2 Thessalonians 2, verse 4), and for…

JOHN MACARTHUR

“Until the Ancient of Days came.” MacArthur lets the word carry the weight: the saints are overpowered until.

DAVID GUZIK

Guzik observes that Daniel asks about the fourth beast and not the first three, they were history he could decode; this one was different, and the horn was worse. He also notes a sobering realism: the saints are “overpowered.”

THE ORIGINAL **QERAV IM-QADDISHIN · “WAR WITH THE SAINTS”**

The Fourth Beast, the Horn, and the Verdict

"A TIME, TIMES, AND HALF A TIME" · DANIEL 7:25 — ONE NUMBER, COUNTED FIVE WAYS

The only number in the chapter. The war on the saints is real, and it has a clock — the second half of Daniel's seventieth week



THE SAME 3½ YEARS, FIVE WAYS

DANIEL 7:25	a time, times, and half a time	*the saints given into the horn's hand*
DANIEL 12:7	a time, times, and half a time	*"the shattering of the power of the holy people"*
REVELATION 12:14	a time and times and half a time	*the woman (Israel) nourished in the wilderness*
REVELATION 11:2 · 13:5	forty-two months	*the holy city trampled; the beast's authority to act*
REVELATION 11:3 · 12:6	1,260 days	*the two witnesses; the woman kept in the wilderness*

An iddan is a set time — seven of them were Nebuchadnezzar's seven years (4:16). One + two + a half = three and a half: the war ends on God's day, not the horn's

What to carry from this chapter

1

Daniel 2 and Daniel 7 are the same story twice.

A statue of metals as a king sees his history; four beasts from the sea as God sees it.

2

Given is the spine of the chapter.

A man's mind given to the lion, dominion given to the leopard, the kingdom given to the Son of Man, the saints given into the horn's hand for a time, the kingdom given to the saints forever.

3

The court sits before the horn is judged.

Thrones, fire, myriads, open books (verses 9–10), and only then the beast slain (verse 11).

4

"Son of Man" is Jesus' claim to this chapter.

Used of Himself more than eighty times; quoted to the high priest at His trial (Mark 14, verse 62).

More to carry

5

Rome has no fifth beast after it.

The fourth beast ends in ten horns and a little horn, not in a successor empire, a future form of the old Roman world and the Antichrist who rises from it (Revelation 13;

6

The war on the saints is real, and it is timed.

“Overpowering them… until” (verses 21–22).

7

Aramaic ends here.

2, verse 4b–7, verse 28 is the Gentile-world section, framed by the statue and the beasts.

8

The last word is obey.

Not “destroyed” but “all the dominions will serve and obey Him” (verse 27).

Talk it through

1. Nebuchadnezzar saw the empires as a golden statue; Daniel saw the same empires as beasts. Where are you looking at something in your own life the way the king saw it, impressive from the front, that God may see as an animal with teeth?

2. “Dominion was given to it.” Every power in the chapter is handed its authority. What authority are you holding right now, at work, at home, in ministry, and what changes when you treat it as a grant instead of a possession?

3. The horn was still boasting when the beast was slain (verse 11). Where are you tempted to answer a loud mouth yourself instead of “keeping looking until” God does?

CLOSING

Four beasts came up out of the sea and took what they could hold; One like a Son of Man came with the clouds and was given what they fought over. The court sat, the books were opened, the mouth was stopped, and the last word of the vision is not destroyed but obey.

Teaching the Word. Watching the Times. — Smith For Christ

Full Deep Dive, O·I·A study, reflection journal and film: see the Daniel study page.