

THE FOUR BEASTS

(Daniel 7)

SUMMARY

The setting for Daniel's vision is 553 BC, 14 years before the fall of the Babylonian empire. His dream foresees the rise and fall of four world empires, ultimately giving way to the everlasting kingdom of Jesus Christ.

Babylonian Empire (4; 605-539 BC)

- **The Winged Lion:** a majestic and glorious empire of which Nebuchadnezzar was “king of kings” (*Dan 2:37*)
- wings plucked; Nebuchadnezzar was humbled by God and shown to be only a man (*Dan 4*)

Medo-Persian Empire (5; 539-331 BC)

- **The Bear:** ferocious, but less majestic than Babylon
- one side raised; Persia more powerful than Media
- 3 ribs = peoples of Media, Persia & Babylon

Greek Empire (6; 321-63 BC)

- **The Winged Leopard:** less grand than the former empires but swifter – Alexander the Great quickly conquered south to Africa and east to India
- four heads: kingdom divided amongst generals
 - Ptolemy, Seleucus, Philip and Antigonus

Roman Empire (vv7-8; 63 BC - 70AD+)

- **The Beast with Iron Teeth:** cruel, ruthless and destructive
- ten horns = ten leaders of a future revived Roman empire
- little horn = “Antichrist” (*Zec 11:16-17; 2 Thess 2:3-4; 1 Jn 2:18;4:3; Rev 13*)
 - speaks against God (20,25)
 - persecutes saints (21,25; *Rev 13:7*)
 - cast into Lake of Fire (11,26; *Rev 19:20*)

Christ’s Everlasting Kingdom (9-14; Future)

- the world’s kingdoms will not prevail
- Christ will have an everlasting kingdom; all dominion, glory and power will be His (*13-14,27; Rev 5:11-14*)
- all will serve Him (*14,27*)

Practical Application

The world has known many great kingdoms and rulers, but all have given way to others. Powerful men and their kingdoms come and go, no matter how impressive and unbeatable they may seem at their peak. We need to keep this in mind, lest we become entangled in this world’s power struggles. Humans will always be human – flawed (sinful) and mortal – we should not put our hope and trust in such, nor is any member of the human race worthy of the adoration we should only have for our Creator and Saviour God. The Bible gives us assurance that the world’s kingdoms will ultimately give way to the everlasting Kingdom of Jesus Christ – the only person worthy of our praise and worship. The day will come when all will come under His rule. Christ is worthy of our trust and worship, not only in the kingdom that is to come, but today. Stop looking to the world for salvation and put your faith and hope in Jesus Christ. World powers will always fail and disappoint, but Christ always triumphs.