



## Introduction

*After the chapters about Daniel's career, the remaining chapters detail his own prophetic visions. This vision of beasts has similarities to the prophecy in Nebuchadnezzar's dream in Daniel 2.*



## Questions

1. What does Daniel say he saw in his vision by night?
2. What is told Daniel about the interpretation of the things?
3. What finally happens to all kingdoms?



## Summary Points

- **v 1 to 8** Daniel has a vision of four beasts (see information), the first three being partly recognisable from the natural world and the fourth completely unlike any known creature
- **v 9 to 14** Daniel sees a vision of the coming kingdom of God, similar to that in chapter 2 v 44
- **v 15 to 28** Daniel is told that the four beasts represent Babylon and the three following kingdoms. The fourth kingdom will oppose God and mistreat his servants. Eventually God will set up his kingdom in place of these kingdoms. Daniel is troubled and mystified by what he sees

**Timeline** 570 BC (see below)



## Information

### Daniel's four beasts

Daniel, in chapter 7, tells us he has a rather disturbing dream one night involving four great animals.

Daniel is told what these animals represent:

*Daniel 7 verses 17 and 18*

He starts by telling us about the first beast:

*Daniel 7 verse 4*





We have a big clue as to which nation the lion with eagles' wings represents. A lion is a symbol that the Babylonians used. Lions are to be seen on the Ishtar Gate, one of the eight gates to the inner city of ancient Babylon. A reconstruction of the Ishtar Gate using original bricks is in Berlin's Pergamon Museum.



Then he describes the second beast:

*Daniel 7 verse 5*



The Babylonian empire was conquered by the Medes. Soon after the conquest the Persians took control of the empire. The Persians under Cyrus the Great expanded the empire to span three continents. The Bear is raised up on one side indicating the transfer of power from the Medes to the more powerful Persians. The bear is told to "Arise, devour much flesh" indicating the vast increase in the size of the empire under the Persians.



The third beast then follows:

*Daniel 7 verse 6*

In 331 BC the famous Greek general Alexander the Great defeated the Persian army. This marked the beginning of the Greek empire.



After Alexander's death the Greek empire was split by his four generals into four kingdoms. Ptolemy was given Egypt and adjacent



territories. Seleucus was given Syria, Asia Minor,



and the East. Lysimachus took control of Thrace and adjoining territories. Cassander ruled over Macedonia and Greece itself. This is indicated by the four heads and wings which the leopard had.

Finally he describes a very strange creature:

*Daniel 7 verse 7*



It was around 150 BC that the Roman power began to eclipse the Greek empire. The Roman empire in its early years was a formidable power. For over 200 years (27 BC to AD 180) there was the "Pax Romana" during

which there was an unprecedented period of peace because the Romans had defeated all opposing armies. Horns in the Bible are a symbol of power held by a ruler. The ten horns indicate that during the period of the Roman empire and beyond there would be several rulers vying for power. When the empire disintegrated there were many different rulers fighting for control of territories.

*Daniel 7 verse 8*

Daniel is then told that three of the horns would be replaced by another little horn which would speak great things. A power which arose from the Roman empire and makes great claims is the Roman Catholic Church.



These beasts tell a similar story to that told by the interpretation of the image of Nebuchadnezzar's dream.

### **?** Answers to questions

Verses which answer the questions:

Q 1: v 2 and 3, Q 2: v 16 to 18, Q 3: v 27



# Bible timeline

