

# DOMINION

CORE PASSAGE: DANIEL 7:2-14

## CONTEXT

The book of Daniel is divided into two main parts. The first six chapters are narratives, such as the fiery furnace, the writing on the wall, and the lions' den. The last six chapters contain four visions of the future the Lord gave to Daniel as a prophet. Daniel 7 is the pivot point bridging the two halves, connecting the narratives to the grander events happening in the world. In this first vision, which Daniel received in the first year of King Belshazzar's rule over Babylon (7:1), sometime before the writing on the wall, Daniel describes four beasts representing four powerful kingdoms, but above them all is the kingdom of God.

## KEY CONCEPT

**God will establish His forever kingdom through Jesus Christ, the Son of Man.**

As you examine Daniel 7:2-14:

- Recognize that because of sin, human empires will try to establish dominion over this world.
- Rejoice that Christ is reigning and will reign and judge over all people at the end of time.



## TIMELINE

Daniel and His Friends  
Serve Nebuchadnezzar  
(Daniel 1–4)

**2:** A Ram and a  
Goat (Daniel 8)

Babylon Is Conquered by  
Darius/Cyrus (Daniel 5)

Cyrus Issues Decree  
Allowing the Jews to  
Return to Judah (Ezra 1)

**Daniel's Four Visions:**  
**SESSION STUDY:**  
**1: Four Beasts (Daniel 7)**

Daniel Interprets the  
Writing on the Wall for  
Belshazzar (Daniel 5)

**3:** "Seventy Weeks"  
(Daniel 9)

**4:** A Glorious Man  
and the Last Days  
(Daniel 10–12)

## Daily Readings

- |                                                 |                                                     |
|-------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Day 1:</b> Daniel 7 | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Day 4:</b> Daniel 10–11 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Day 2:</b> Daniel 8 | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Day 5:</b> Daniel 12    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Day 3:</b> Daniel 9 | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Day 6:</b> Psalm 93     |



Scan this QR code  
to access this session's  
Scripture passages.

## PERSONAL PREPARATION

DANIEL 7:2-8

### THOUGH OPPRESSIVE POWERS SEEM UNSTOPPABLE, THEY ARE TEMPORARY.

*Highlight the descriptions of the four beasts using different colored pens.*

**2** Daniel said, “In my vision at night I was watching, and suddenly the four winds of heaven stirred up the great sea. **3** Four huge beasts came up from the sea, each different from the other. **4** The first was like a lion but had eagle’s wings. I continued watching until its wings were torn off. It was lifted up from the ground, set on its feet like a man, and given a human mind. **5** Suddenly, another beast appeared, a second one, that looked like a bear. It was raised up on one side, with three ribs in its mouth between its teeth. It was told, ‘Get up! Gorge yourself on flesh.’ **6** After this, while I was watching, suddenly another beast appeared. It was like a leopard with four wings of a bird on its back. It had four heads, and it was given dominion. **7** After this, while I was watching in the night visions, suddenly a fourth beast appeared, frightening and dreadful, and incredibly strong, with large iron teeth. It devoured and crushed, and it trampled with its feet whatever was left. It was different from all the beasts before it, and it had ten horns. **8** While I was considering the horns, suddenly another horn, a little one, came up among them, and three of the first horns were uprooted before it. And suddenly in this horn there were eyes like the eyes of a human and a mouth that was speaking arrogantly.”

#### THEOLOGY CONNECTION

**THE KINGDOM:** The Kingdom of God includes both His general sovereignty over the universe and His particular kingship over men who willfully acknowledge Him as King. Particularly, the Kingdom is the realm of salvation into which men enter by trustful, childlike commitment to Jesus Christ.



Careful readers will notice the similarities between the four beasts in this vision and Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the layered statue in chapter 2. Daniel's vision is divided into four sections, each describing a different beast and kingdom (see Daniel 7:15-28). There has been much discussion about which kingdoms the beasts represent, but the consensus among scholars is that the beasts represent Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome, respectively.

**Why do you think Daniel's vision represented kingdoms with beasts?**

The first beast was like a lion with an eagle's wings. The prophet Jeremiah used these images to describe Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon (Jeremiah 49:19-22). The wings were torn off, and later, the beast was lifted up from the ground and restored with a human mind (Daniel 7:4). These events correspond with Nebuchadnezzar's humiliation and restoration in Daniel 4.

The second beast looked like a bear on its side, feasting on some previous prey. Someone told it to get up and eat more. This beast represented the Medo-Persian kingdom of King Cyrus, who conquered the Babylonians.

The third beast was like a leopard with four wings and four heads. This represented Greece. The kingdom and army of Alexander the Great was certainly as swift as a leopard and as vast as a bird's flight through the air. The four heads may mean this beast was looking in all directions for prey.<sup>1</sup>

The fourth and final beast, representing the kingdom of Rome, was the most terrifying of them all, so much so that it wasn't likened to any animal. With its incredible strength and large iron teeth, it devoured anything in its path, and anything that escaped the teeth was trampled by its feet. Significant among its ten horns was one little horn that came up and uprooted three others. It was personified with eyes and a mouth that communicated human arrogance and rebellion.

**How have you seen earthly kingdoms and nations devour people and display arrogance?**



## PERSONAL PREPARATION

DANIEL 7:9-14

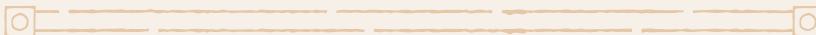
### GOD ALONE REIGNS SUPREME, AND EVERY OTHER KINGDOM IS SUBJECT TO HIS WILL AND JUDGMENT.

*Circle the ways the Ancient of Days exercises His supreme authority over the kingdoms of the world.*

**9** “As I kept watching, thrones were set in place, and the Ancient of Days took his seat. His clothing was white like snow, and the hair of his head like whitest wool. His throne was flaming fire; its wheels were blazing fire. **10** A river of fire was flowing, coming out from his presence. Thousands upon thousands served him; ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him. The court was convened, and the books were opened. **11** I watched, then, because of the sound of the arrogant words the horn was speaking. As I continued watching, the beast was killed and its body destroyed and given over to the burning fire. **12** As for the rest of the beasts, their dominion was removed, but an extension of life was granted to them for a certain period of time. **13** I continued watching in the night visions, and suddenly one like a son of man was coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was escorted before him. **14** He was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, so that those of every people, nation, and language should serve him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will not be destroyed.

#### CHRIST CONNECTION

God will give Jesus the authority to rule an everlasting kingdom of those who follow Him in faith. The “one like a son of man” (Daniel 7:13) is fulfilled in Jesus, who ascended into heaven in the presence of a cloud after His resurrection (Acts 1:9).



After contemplating the horror of the beastly kingdoms, we are refreshed through Daniel's vision of the Ancient of Days on His supreme throne of judgment. Every human heart should long for this heavenly kingdom. No matter how bleak things look in one kingdom or the next, there is always hope with God. The Lord has not forgotten His people. His plan is not disrupted by any earthly kingdom nor any demonic spiritual influence. The Ancient of Days rules over them all.

**What differences do you notice between the kingdoms of the earth and God's kingdom?**

The beastly kingdoms of this world may think they are in control, but they are only sandcastles by the shore. God's kingdom is the ocean coming to knock them all down and wipe them all away. Their periods of dominance are in His hands, as is their very existence. And those rulers who would speak arrogantly should prepare themselves for the Lord's judgment. Nebuchadnezzar was brought low and then graciously restored (Daniel 4), but the arrogance of the little horn reaped its death and destruction by fire (7:11).

By contrast, there will be a kingdom instituted by the Ancient of Days that will far outweigh all the others. In Daniel 2, it is pictured as an untouched stone that destroyed the layered statue in Nebuchadnezzar's dream and then became a mountain filling the whole earth. Here in Daniel 7, we see this kingdom will be ruled by "one like a son of man . . . coming with the clouds of heaven" (v. 13). The dominion of the kingdoms was taken from them, but an everlasting and all-encompassing dominion is given to this righteous figure who is able to approach the Ancient of Days.

This "one like a son of man" is none other than the God-man, Jesus Christ. Prior to His crucifixion, Jesus foretold His heavenly enthronement and His coming judgment with the clouds of heaven (Matthew 26:64). After His resurrection, He ascended to the Father in the presence of a cloud, fulfilling this vision, and He will return the same way (Acts 1:9,11). For all the glory every beastly kingdom thinks it has, it pales in comparison to the kingdom God is bringing to earth through Jesus.

**How can the promise of the kingdom of God help you respond faithfully to political turmoil and uncertainty today?**

## THE ANCIENT OF DAYS AND THE SON OF MAN

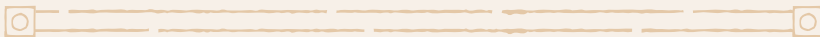
*Read Daniel 7:9-14. Record in the gaps descriptions of “the Ancient of Days” and “one like a son of man,” especially as they contrast with the beasts.*

THE  
ANCIENT  
OF DAYS

ONE LIKE  
A SON  
OF MAN

How do the qualities of “the Ancient of Days” and “the Son of Man” help us?

**Key Concept:** God will establish His forever kingdom through Jesus Christ, the Son of Man.



## HEAD

How does your thinking about the world's kingdoms need to change considering Daniel 7?

### PRAYING SCRIPTURE

Read and pray through Psalm 93. Express your hope in the powerful and everlasting kingdom over which God rules. And praise the Lord with your trust in His Word and His promise that Jesus will reign over all forevermore.



## HEART

How are you comforted knowing Jesus's everlasting kingdom is coming?

### PRAYER REQUESTS AND PRAISES



## HANDS

How can you help people see the better kingdom of Christ contrasted with the sin-infected kingdoms of this world?

