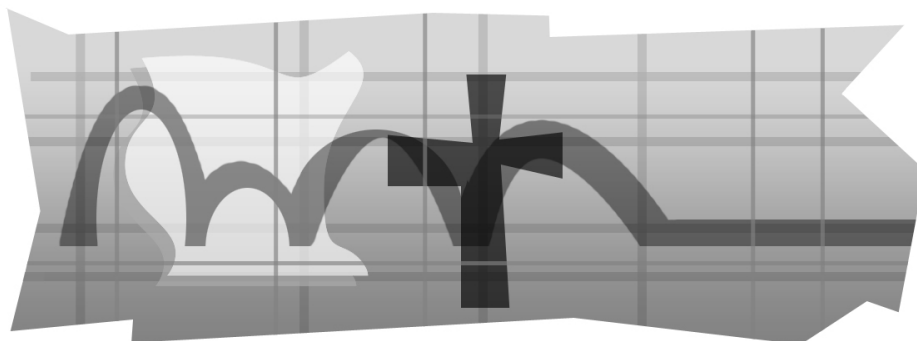


# Daniel 7



**SABBATH—JULY 15**

**READ FOR THIS WEEK'S STUDY: Daniel 7.**

**MEMORY VERSE:** “But then the Eternal<sup>1</sup> God came. He decided in favor of his holy people. So the time came when the kingdom was given to them” (Daniel 7:22, NlrV).

**DANIEL 2 GIVES POWERFUL PROOF THAT GOD IS REAL AND THAT HE HAS POWER TO CONTROL THE FUTURE.** But Daniel 7 gives even more proof. Daniel 7 covers the same material as Daniel 2. Daniel 7 also shows an important part not shown in Daniel 2. Daniel 7 shows the great judgment in heaven that leads directly to Jesus’ second coming. Daniel 7 shows the pre-Advent judgment!<sup>2</sup>

The key to understanding Daniel 7 is found in Daniel 2. “In fact, Daniel 2 and 7 show almost the same pattern of development. They cover the same time period, from Babylon to the end of human time. They point to the same four kingdoms. These kingdoms are symbolized in Daniel 2. In Daniel 7, the kingdoms are symbolized by different beasts. This different pattern is the key to our method of interpreting Daniel 2 and 7. We must read Daniel 7 on the basis of Daniel 2.” —Adapted from Doukhan, *Secrets of Daniel* (Hagerstown, Md.: Review and Herald Publishing Assoc., 2000), p. 100.

There is so much in Daniel 7. But for now, we will do a quick review of this wonderful chapter. We need to keep in mind its closing scene: the pre-Advent judgment. This judgment leads to Christ’s return. Then our great hope in Jesus will be fulfilled.

<sup>1</sup>eternal—forever; without beginning or end; lasting forever.

<sup>2</sup>the pre-Advent judgment—the judgment that will take place before Jesus’ second coming. Adventists believe that God’s judgment comes in three parts. The first part began in 1844 and is continuing until Jesus’ return to the earth. This is the pre-Advent judgment. The pre-Advent judgment is also called the investigative judgment.

**SUNDAY—JULY 16****DANIEL'S DREAM (Daniel 7:1-14)**

**Read Daniel 7:1-14. Summarize the important message in Daniel's dream.**

You have probably noticed a few comparisons<sup>3</sup> between Daniel 2 and Daniel 7. These comparisons show (1) the same number of metals in Daniel 2 and beasts in Daniel 7, (2) the focus on the last kingdom (in Daniel 2 it was the iron), and (3) both chapters end with God establishing His eternal<sup>4</sup> kingdom.

**What other comparison can you find between Daniel 2 and Daniel 7?**

**In Daniel 7:16, 17, God quickly gives Daniel the basic interpretation of the dream. What is that interpretation? How is this interpretation the same as Daniel 2?**

The four beasts in Daniel 7 represent the four kingdoms in Daniel 2. Bible thinkers have long recognized them as the following:

Babylon (Lion)  
Media-Persia (Bear)  
Greece (Leopard)  
Rome (Fourth Beast)  
God's final kingdom

Daniel 7 gives more details about these kingdoms. In Daniel 7, we

again see that the prophecies in Daniel are based on history. Daniel reviews world history from olden times right through to our time and afterward.

How blessed we are to know that our God is always in control, and that He will set up His eternal kingdom no matter what happens to the world.

**God's final kingdom is sure to happen. What hope do you have that you will be in that kingdom? What is your hope based on?**

**MONDAY—JULY 17****THE FOURTH BEAST  
(Daniel 7:19-27)**

There's an important comparison between Daniel 2 and Daniel 7 that we do not want to miss. In Daniel 2, the fourth power (iron), arose after Greece (Daniel 2:32, 33, 39-45). The fourth power changes some, but it remained until the end. It was destroyed only when God set up His kingdom.

In Daniel 7, with the fourth power (the fourth beast), the same thing happens. The fourth beast arose after Greece (Daniel 7:6, 7) and remained until the end of time. It changed to another form when it was destroyed at the coming of God's eternal kingdom (Daniel 7:19-27).

So, in both Daniel 2 and Daniel 7, the fourth power, coming after Greece, remains until the end of the world.

<sup>3</sup>comparisons—how things are the same.

<sup>4</sup>eternal—forever; without beginning or end; lasting forever.



The fourth beast.

**Read Daniel 7:19-27. Then answer the following questions:**

1. What comparisons do you see between the description of the fourth beast in Daniel 7:19 and the description of the fourth power in Daniel 2:40?
2. Where does the little horn arise from?
3. What causes the death of the little horn in Daniel 7?

Daniel 7 spends more time describing this little-horn power than any of the other powers. This little horn arose out of the fourth beast and remains part of it. The little horn must be very serious because so much

time is spent on it. This power arose out of the fourth beast but continues until the end of time, when God sets up His kingdom on earth after the judgment in heaven. Then the little-horn power is destroyed.

**People have often talked about trying to build a kingdom of God on earth here and now. But they all have failed. Why? Why is our hope only in God's rescue of His people, as shown in Daniel 7?**

## TUESDAY—JULY 18

### THE LITTLE HORN (Daniel 7:19, 25)

Daniel 7 goes from Babylon, Media-Persia, and Greece to pagan Rome.<sup>5</sup> Pagan Rome was the part of Rome that arose right after Greece. Then, while showing this Roman power, Daniel 7 describes the rise of the little horn. The little horn is part of the fourth beast. Who is this little horn? Most Protestant Reformers<sup>6</sup> believed it was papal Rome.<sup>7</sup> Even before the Reformation, some Jewish experts also believed the little horn was papal Rome. It is hard to see how the beast could be anything else. In fact, it cannot be anything else. You might need faith to believe in the Second Coming or the resurrection.<sup>8</sup> But you do not need much faith to see that papal Rome is the power shown here.

<sup>5</sup>pagan Rome—the political Roman Empire from 27 B.C. to A.D. 395.

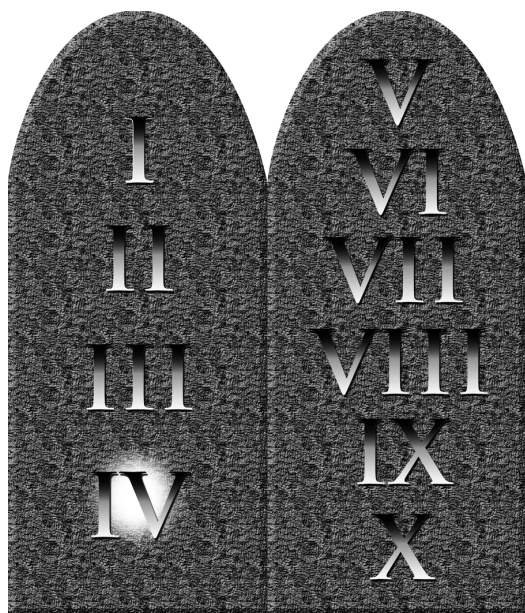
<sup>6</sup>Protestant Reformers—church leaders (such as Luther, Zwengli, Huss, etc.) who started the movement (rebellion) against the Roman Catholic Church in the Middle Ages. This period is called the Reformation.

<sup>7</sup>papal Rome—Rome during the Middle Ages (A.D. 500 to A.D. 1500); when Rome was ruled by the church of the Middle Ages; having to do with the pope, who is the head of the Catholic Church.

<sup>8</sup>resurrection—return to life from the dead.

**Below are some traits of the little horn. How do these traits match papal Rome?**

1. The little horn arose from pagan Rome (Daniel 7:19, 20).
2. The little horn made war with the saints and prevailed (succeeded) against them (Daniel 7:21, 25).
3. The little horn thought to change “times and laws” (Daniel 7:25).



The little horn changed God's law.

4. The little-horn power will be blasphemous<sup>9</sup> (Daniel 7:25).

All these traits have been very clearly shown in history. There is no question about who this little-horn power is. We have to be careful in how we teach these prophecies so

that we will not hurt other people. But we would be unfaithful in our responsibility to God (Revelation 13:1-9; Revelation 14:6-12) if we failed to present truth from the Bible.

### WEDNESDAY—JULY 19

#### TIME, TIMES, AND DIVIDING OF TIME (Daniel 7:25)

**What is the time prophecy given in Daniel 7:25?**

Even non-Adventists have recognized that the time, times, and dividing of time means three and a half years. One study Bible by Thomas Nelson says: “A time, times and the dividing of time . . . is used in Daniel and in Revelation to mean three and a half years, or 1,260 days, or 42 months (Daniel 12:7; Revelation 11:2; Revelation 12:6, 14; Revelation 13:5).” —Adapted.

**How do the verses in the above quote help you understand why the time prophecy in Daniel 7:25 is the same as 1,260 days?**

As others have done, Adventists use the day-year rule for this prophecy. This means 1,260 years, not 1,260 real days. Later, we will spend a whole week on the day-year rule. For now, we can see that Daniel 7 is full of symbols: a lion with wings, a beast with iron teeth, and a little horn that has eyes. So the time prophecy is also a symbol.

<sup>9</sup>blasphemous—claiming to be equal to God.

So, we are given a 1,260-year period showing papal Rome. This part was also a period of persecution.<sup>10</sup> If papal Rome began in the late fifth or early sixth century, then 1,260 years later brings us to the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century. Again, history shows a long period of papal control with massive (great) persecution. This persecution faded away in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

**What happens in the prophecy after the 1,260-year period shown? (Daniel 7:25-27; see also Daniel 7:8-10, 21, 22).**



**The judgment in heaven opens  
(Daniel 7:9, 10).**

After the rise of the little horn, the prophecy shows a great judgment in heaven that leads to the Second Coming.

Here is a very important point: This prophecy shows that the judgment in heaven comes after the period of 1,260 prophetic days. The judgment comes sometime after the persecution that ended in the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century, but before the Second Coming.

So, with this interpretation, we are given historical proof to help us understand the timing of this judgment. The judgment then leads to the death of the little horn and to the end of this world.

**One thousand two hundred and sixty years is a long time. Lots of faithful people died during those years. They did not live to see their hopes become real. What message is there for us, who might die before seeing all our hopes and dreams become real in this life?**

#### **THURSDAY—JULY 20**

#### **HORN, JUDGMENT, KINGDOM (Daniel 7:7-10, 14)**

Daniel 7 shows an important series of events.<sup>11</sup> There was the little-horn power. Then a judgment in heaven followed. This judgment ended in the establishment of God's kingdom. This series is so important, it shows

<sup>10</sup>persecution—attacks against God's people; suffering harm for Jesus' sake.

<sup>11</sup>events—things that happen.

up three times in Daniel 7.

**Read Daniel 7:7-10, 14. How is this series (little horn, judgment, God's kingdom) shown there?**

**How is the series given in Daniel 7:24-27?**

Three times in Daniel we are given this series:

Little horn  
Judgment in heaven  
God's kingdom

Clearly, this series must be very important. If not, why would the Lord have given it three times in the prophecy? What is interesting is that with the little horn, we are given our first apocalyptic time prophecy. (The word *apocalyptic* means dealing with end-time events.) It is a time prophecy that helps us understand the timing of this judgment. The judgment takes place after the 1,260 years, but before God's eternal kingdom is established.

So, we can show the prophecy like this:

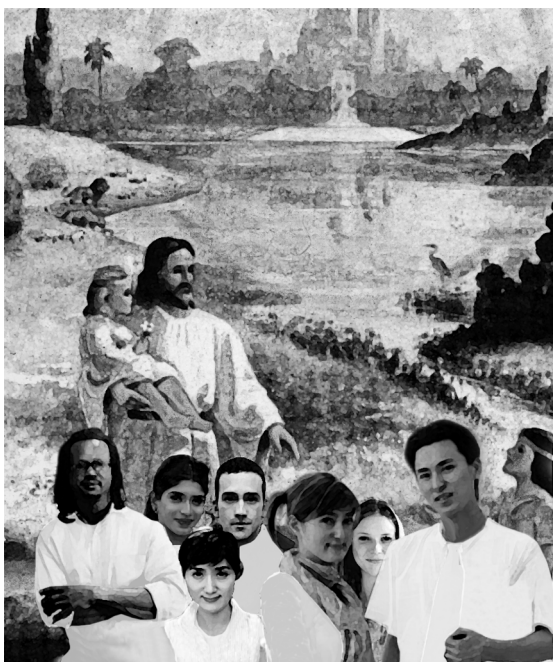
Little horn  
(late eighteenth or early nineteenth century)

Judgment in heaven  
God's eternal kingdom

There is one more important thing to understand about this judgment.

The judgment results in the death of the little-horn power. But it also results in the end of this world. As Daniel 2 shows, God's kingdom will replace all the other kingdoms.

**Daniel does not show the end of the world as a half-won, half-lost victory. Instead, Daniel shows the total victory of good over evil. What lesson is there for us in how we deal with evil in our daily lives?**



There will be total victory over evil.

## FRIDAY—JULY 21

**ADDITIONAL STUDY:** Below is all of Daniel 7, with the first apocalyptic time prophecy in a series of events. We also have added the times that each of the four empires fell. Historians often put certain dates on these events based on great military

battles. But the downfall of one empire and the rise of another usually happens over many years. (Remember, too, that the fourth beast and the little horn that comes out of it are shown in the Bible as one power.) Here is the list:

### **Babylon**

(Ends early-mid-sixth century B.C.)

### **Media-Persia**

(From early-mid-sixth century to early-mid-fourth century B.C.)

### **Greece**

(From early-mid-fourth century to mid-second century B.C.)

### **Pagan Rome**

(From mid-second century B.C. to fifth-sixth century A.D.)

### **Papal Rome**

(Persecution from sixth century A.D. to eighteenth-nineteenth century A.D.)

### **Judgment in heaven**

### **Second Coming**

Papal Rome did not end in the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century. But that is not what the prophecy says. Instead, it says only that persecution would last for this length of time, or at least that part of that persecution. (Revelation 13 talks about a return of papal persecution, but that is another topic.)

So, Daniel 7 makes it clear that the judgment leads to the establishment of God's kingdom. The judgment is to take place after the 1,260 years of papal persecution. This means after the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century, but before the Second Coming.

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

1. Daniel 7:22 says that judgment was given in "favor of the saints" (NIV). As a class, discuss what that means. What else in Daniel 7 shows us that the judgment is good news?
2. As a class, go over the proof that points to who the little horn is. How can we as a church show this important teaching in a way that does not insult or hurt people, but at the same time teaches Bible truth?