

You may be forgiven for thinking that Daniel had over-indulged on cheese before bedtime to have a dream as weird as his. That said, it is an introduction into 'apocalyptic literature' which doesn't always mean what it sounds like. What it does mean is that it, usually, involves dreams and visions, quite often linked with numerology: numbers with imagery and hidden meanings.

To help construct these fantastic beasts, first note that 'the Great Sea' is symbolic of chaos. Lions, especially with wings may refer to the statue in Babylon and standing 'like a man' could represent the statues in the old gate to the city.

I'm sure you can all work out the rest. I'll give you a hint about the fourth beast, early empires used copper weapons, then bronze, then the later ones used iron weapons. All you have to work out is what empires these beasts represented. Simple, to quote the famous meerkat.

### **Read Daniel 7:1-14**

1. Daniel teaches us a valuable lesson. When we have a dream that we can recall, we should write it down. It may be important. Do you? What have you learned?
2. There is a very famous statue of a winged lion with a man's head which is attributed to the Assyrians, yet could almost be the design of Daniel's first 'dream beast'. History teaches that cultures overlap. Can you think of examples where Christianity has, or is being, changed by other cultures?

3. Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the statue of a 'man' [Daniel 2] suggested a succession of events/empires that would follow his own. Now there had already been a change of control. Was Daniel's dream instructing him to tell Belshazzar that his own, new throne wasn't safe either? Have you experienced a 'Here we go again' moment? What happened and how did you respond?
4. Horns, in animals, are used for both attack and defence. They are also used as a demonstration of prowess. In apocalyptic literature they symbolise, amongst other things, power, authority, kingdoms, glory and fierceness. The third and fourth beasts – Greece and the ten-horned beast – are future to Daniel. So his insights here are truly prophetic. What is your reaction to reading prophecy in Scripture?
5. Verses 9-12 speak of God's rule and him limiting earthly powers. 'There came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him' (7:13). Even we can figure out who these figures are. The first is Jesus and the second is God. How do you feel when you read that one like a son of man is coming and that Jesus will eventually return to set things right?
6. Jesus often referred to himself as the 'son of man' from this passage. What authority was Jesus given? In Matthew 28:18-20, Jesus gives us authority, but what does it mean?

## Prayer Points

Please pray for those who are awaiting results for various scans and test. Pray for grace in the waiting and peace in the unknown.

Pray as preparations are being made to share the gospel over the Christmas period. Pray for the groups and individuals preparing for various events.

Give thanks to God for the opportunity to make disciples in Algeria. Pray that God will open the hearts of the people to receive the message of His love demonstrated through Christ.

## Sermon Notes



# BIBLE STUDY

November 3<sup>rd</sup> 2024

**Daniel - Defiant Faith:**

**Thy Kingdom Come :**

**Daniel 7:1-14**

The book of Daniel tells Daniel's story—and a fascinating and instructive story it is. But the main purpose of Daniel is to reveal to us who God is - His character, His purposes, His way of working in the world for the good of His people. The main lesson of Daniel, then, is not, as is sometimes assumed *Dare to be a Daniel!* Rather, the main point is this: *Dare to trust in Daniel's God, even when the world seems against you.* How do we remain faithful to God, especially in an age where it seems a great deal is moving in a different direction? What does it look like to trust in God when our world is turned upside down? Daniel remained faithful and God used him to great effect, how can God use us in the fiery challenges of life?

If you would like to join a Connect Group, please contact the church office 01424 730001