Chapter 7
Daniel's First Vision

In Belshazzar's first year as king of Babylon, Daniel had a dream. He saw visions as he was lying on his bed, and he wrote down what he had dreamed. Daniel said: "I saw my vision at night. In the vision the wind was blowing from all four directions, which made the sea very rough.

The Boastful Little Horn

"While I was thinking about the horns, another horn grew up among them. It was a little horn with horns on its head, and it was different from all the other horns. The ten horns that were on its head were given power to rule.

Daniel's Vision Interpreted

"I, Daniel, was worried. The visions that went through my mind frightened me. I looked near one of those standing there and asked what all this meant. So he told me and explained to me what these things meant. "The four great animals are four kingdoms that will come up from the sea. The holy people who belong to the Most High God will receive the power to rule, and will have the power to rule forever, from now on.

A New World Order Coming

"And he explained this to me: 'The fourth animal is a fourth kingdom that will come on the earth. It will be different from all the other kingdoms and will destroy people all over the world. It will walk on crush and destroy the whole earth. 'The ten horns are ten kings who will come from this fourth kingdom. All those ten kings are gone, another king will come. 'He will be different from the kings who ruled before him, and he will defeat three of the other kings. 'This king will speak against the Most High God, who ruled before him, and he will defeat three of the other ten horns and look greater than the others. 'And about the little horn that grew there. It had pulled out three other horns and looked greater than the others. And three of the other ten horns were permitted to live for a certain period of time.

A Strong, Cruel Beast Appears

"After that, I looked, and there before me was another ram. This animal looked like a leopard with four wings on its back that looked like a bird's wings. This animal had four heads and was given power to rule.

Will "Asian Tigers" Quickly Unite?

"Then I saw a second animal before me that looked like a bear. It was raised up on one of its sides and had three ribs in its mouth between its teeth. It was told, 'Get up, and eat all the meat you want!'

Fierce Anger From the West

"And as I was considering, behold, an goat came from the west on the face of the whole earth, and touched not the ground; and the goat had a notable horn between his eyes.

The Number One King Is Broken

"Therefore the he goat waxed very great: and when he was strong, the great horn was broken; and for it came up four notable ones toward the four winds of heaven. And out of one of them came forth a little horn, which waxed exceeding great, more than all the before, and it was cast down to the ground, and stamped upon him: and the rest of his days were limited.

And it came to pass, when I, even I Daniel, had seen the vision, and sought for the meaning, then, behold, there stood before me as the appearance of a man. And I heard a man's voice between the hands of Chai, which called, and said, 'Gabriel, make this man to understand the vision. 'So he came near where I stood: and he said, 'Understand, O son of man: for at the time of the end shall be the vision. 'Now as he spoke with me, I was in a deep sleep upon my face: but he said unto me, 'Understand, O son of man: for at the time of the end shall be the vision. 'And he said, 'Behold, I will make thee know what shall be in the last end of the indignation: for at the time appointed the end shall be.

The Beginning of the End

'The ram which thou sawest having two horns shall come. and one of them was higher than the other. 'And out of one of them came forth a little horn, which waxed exceeding great, more than all the other: and it had eyes as the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great things.
About 605 B.C., Babylon was the world’s Superpower. The legendary Nebuchadnezzar, (Hanging Gardens of Babylon fame), was General turned King, and the driving force behind Babylonian imperialism. Nebuchadnezzar had visions of grandeur and believed he was destined to rule the world. Egypt was Superpower number two and the tiny kingdom of Judea (modern Israel and Palestine) stood between these warring giants. Judea was trampled.

On his march toward Egypt, Nebuchadnezzar’s armies besieged Judea and its capitol city of Jerusalem. Jerusalem’s walls were breached and the city was completely destroyed. Tragically, King Solomon’s magnificent temple, built to the glory of Yahweh, and standing for 300 years, was also destroyed. Thousands of Hebrew captives with the treasures of their Great Temple were taken to Babylon where they were to remain in exile for 70 years. This happened in fulfillment of a prophecy by Jeremiah, an important Jewish prophet.1

A youth named Daniel was among the Hebrew captives taken from Jerusalem to Babylon. In Babylon, through propitious circumstance, Daniel would become a respected Hebrew Seer, an “interpreter of dreams.” After correctly interpreting one of the king’s troubling dreams, Daniel became a trusted advisor to King Nebuchadnezzar and in time, an important figure in Babylonian government, serving a succession of kings.

In his later years, Daniel claimed to have received at least four visions2 from his Hebrew God, visions his angelic instructors told him, related to “the time of the end.” At the close of his book, the mightiest of Daniel’s angelic visitants commanded him to “shut up the words and seal the book, even to the time of the end.”

Daniel’s book and mysterious, “sealed visions” have long held a place in Judeo-Christian lore. Today the Book of Daniel is part of every Hebrew, Christian and Orthodox Bible and is viewed generally as an apocalyptic, eschatological, “end of the world” writing.

A well known Jewish historian, Flavius Josephus (A.D. 37–c. 100), recorded attempts by Hebrew interpreters to decipher and apply Daniel’s visions to events that occurred more than 2,000 years ago. Jesus, in the New Testament, recognized “Daniel the prophet,” and quoted from Daniel’s visions in an “end of the world” context.3

Daniel’s visions appear to repeat and reinforce one another, each vision introducing fresh prophetic information by adding or changing “cartoonish” characters. But the theme and scenarios played out in his visions are always the same—a cataclysmic, cosmic/global, political/social, supernatural, end-of-the-world scenario.

Recent events in America and growing unrest in the Middle East have sparked renewed interest in Daniel’s book, particularly his first two visions. In one vision, Daniel is shown Media and Persia (modern Iraq and Iran) in a “time of the end” context. In 1980, Saddam Hussein’s Iraq attacked Ayatollah Khomeini’s Iran. For eight years (1980–1988), Saddam’s brutal war with Iran seesawed back and forth over the exact ground Daniel described in his second vision. In 1988, then U.S. President, Ronald Reagan, ordered a show of American naval force in the Persian Gulf and a brief, uneasy peace in the region followed. Two years later, in 1990, Saddam’s Iraqi forces invaded Kuwait. Early in 1991, United Nations Coalition Forces in Operation Desert Storm drove Iraqi forces into full retreat. The tragic events of September 11, 2001, whether directly or indirectly involving Saddam and Iraq, have never-the-less focused U.S. and world attention on a very troubled part of the world. Could this be the time that Daniel’s long sealed visions of the end times will come true? Daniel’s prophecies have never seemed more relevant. Will the United States, with her British ally, deal with Saddam and Iraq (old Media), and then be forced to reckon with an even greater threat: Iran (old Persia)?

In his first vision, Daniel saw a Lion and Eagle Coalition suffer stinging, humiliating defeat. In his second vision, a Notable Horn, said to represent the Number One King of the Rough Goat power from the West, is likewise shattered. Daniel’s visions of the end times—an omen of evil to come for Western powers? Does the looming Mid-East war portend a pyrrhic victory for a Western coalition, particularly the United States?

1 Book of Jeremiah, Chapter 25, Verses 8-13
2 Book of Daniel, Chapters 7-12
3 The Works of Josephus, Book 10, Chapter 11, Section 7
4 Gospel of Matthew, Chapter 24, Verses 14-21

Recent events in America and growing unrest in the Middle East have sparked renewed interest in Daniel’s book, particularly his first two visions. In one vision, Daniel is shown Media and Persia (modern Iraq and Iran) in a “time of the end” context. In 1980, Saddam Hussein’s Iraq attacked Ayatollah Khomeini’s Iran. For eight years (1980–1988), Saddam’s brutal war with Iran seesawed back and forth over the exact ground Daniel described in his second vision. In 1988, then U.S. President, Ronald Reagan, ordered a show of American naval force in the Persian Gulf and a brief, uneasy peace in the region followed. Two years later, in 1990, Saddam’s Iraqi forces invaded Kuwait. Early in 1991, United Nations Coalition Forces in Operation Desert Storm drove Iraqi forces into full retreat. The tragic events of September 11, 2001, whether directly or indirectly involving Saddam and Iraq, have never-the-less focused U.S. and world attention on a very troubled part of the world. Could this be the time that Daniel’s long sealed visions of the end times will come true? Daniel’s prophecies have never seemed more relevant. Will the United States, with her British ally, deal with Saddam and Iraq (old Media), and then be forced to reckon with an even greater threat: Iran (old Persia)?

In his first vision, Daniel saw a Lion and Eagle Coalition suffer stinging, humiliating defeat. In his second vision, a Notable Horn, said to represent the Number One King of the Rough Goat power from the West, is likewise shattered. Daniel’s visions of the end times—an omen of evil to come for Western powers? Does the looming Mid-East war portend a pyrrhic victory for a Western coalition, particularly the United States?

1 Book of Jeremiah, Chapter 25, Verses 8-13
2 Book of Daniel, Chapters 7-12
3 The Works of Josephus, Book 10, Chapter 11, Section 7
4 Gospel of Matthew, Chapter 24, Verses 14-21

Recent events in America and growing unrest in the Middle East have sparked renewed interest in Daniel’s book, particularly his first two visions. In one vision, Daniel is shown Media and Persia (modern Iraq and Iran) in a “time of the end” context. In 1980, Saddam Hussein’s Iraq attacked Ayatollah Khomeini’s Iran. For eight years (1980–1988), Saddam’s brutal war with Iran seesawed back and forth over the exact ground Daniel described in his second vision. In 1988, then U.S. President, Ronald Reagan, ordered a show of American naval force in the Persian Gulf and a brief,