

Daniel's Visions Assignment

Name _____ Instructor _____ Date _____

To prepare for next week, you will be studying the book of Daniel. Daniel provides a prophetic framework for God's future dealings with Israel. This framework will be the foundation for our study of eschatology.

To complete this assignment:

- A. Read the handout titled: *Major Events in Israel's History: From 931 B.C. until the Birth of Christ.*
- B. At class, you should have picked up 6 pages that form a large chart. Clear off a table and arrange the six sheets in this order:

Page 1	Page 4
Page 2	Page 5
Page 3	Page 6

The chart you've constructed contains the contents of three visions that Daniel recorded in Daniel 2, 7, and 8. The visions are related to each other and describe a series of kingdoms that will rise and fall during the course of human history, culminating in the arrival of God's kingdom which will destroy and replace all kingdoms that come before it.

Start with the left-most column and read DOWN the column. Then shift one column to the right and read down that column. Repeat this process until you have read all of the columns on the chart.

- C. Read the *Commentary on Daniel 2, 7, & 8* section of this handout.
- D. Relying on everything you've read, do your best to identify each item on the chart on the back of this page. In the middle column define who or what it is. In the column on the right, describe what it is like. Some of these things are kingdoms, some are people.

	Who/ what is it?	Description
1st Kingdom		
2nd Kingdom		
3rd Kingdom		
Four kingdoms arising from the 3rd kingdom		
“small horn”		
4th Kingdom		
Divided kingdom of iron and clay		
“little horn”		

Commentary on Daniel 2, 7, 8 ¹

2:32-43 The gold head represents the Neo-Babylonian empire (v. 38; see Jer 51:7).

The silver chest and arms corresponds to the Medo-Persian empire established by Cyrus in 539 B.C. (the date of the fall of Babylon).

The bronze belly and thighs symbolizes the Greek empire established by Alexander the Great c. 330.

The iron legs and feet point to the Roman empire.

The toes (v. 41) are understood by some to represent a later confederation of states occupying the territory formerly controlled by the Roman empire.

2:44 The fifth kingdom is the eternal kingdom of God, built on the ruins of the sinful empires of man. Its authority will extend over "the whole earth" (v. 35) and ultimately over "a new heaven and a new earth" (Rev 21:1).

7:2 "the great sea" = the world of nations and peoples (compare 7:3 with 7:17).

7:4-7 The lion with an eagle's wings symbolizes the Neo-Babylonian empire.

The rest of v. 4 perhaps reflects the humbling experience of Nebuchadnezzar recorded in Daniel 4. The bear (v. 5), raised up on one of its sides, refers to the superior status of the Persians in the Medo-Persian federation.

The three ribs may represent the three principal Medo-Persian conquests: Lydia (546 B.C.), Babylon (539) and Egypt (525).

The leopard with four wings (v. 6) represents the speedy conquests of Alexander the Great (334-330), and the four heads correspond to the four main divisions into which his empire fell after his untimely death in 323 (see 8:21,22):

- Macedon and Greece (under Antipater and Cassander)
- Thrace and Asia Minor (under Lysimachus)
- Syria (under Seleucus I)
- Palestine and Egypt (under Ptolemy I)

The fourth, unnamed, beast (v. 7), with its irresistible power and surpassing all its predecessors, points to the Roman empire. The ten horns correspond to the ten toes of 2:41-42.

7:8 "another horn, a little one" = the antichrist, or a world power sharing in the characteristics of the antichrist. "Mouth that spoke boastfully" – this language is repeated in other descriptions of the antichrist (see Daniel 11:36; 2 Thessalonians 2:4; Revelation 13:5-6).

7:9 "the Ancient of Days" = God.

¹ These notes are adapted from the *Zondervan NASB Study Bible*. Kenneth Barker, General Editor, *Zondervan NASB Study Bible* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1999).

7:13 “like a son of man” = the first reference in the Bible to the Messiah as the Son of Man. Jesus applied this title to himself. See also Revelation 1:13. The messiah will be enthroned as ruler over the whole earth (previously misruled by the prior kingdoms of men), and his kingdom "will never be destroyed" (v. 14), whether on earth or in heaven. coming with the clouds of heaven. See Mark 14:62; Revelation 1:7.

7:16 “one of those standing there” = an angel.

7:18 “saints” = those who follow God. Christ's followers will rule with him during the Messianic kingdom (see Matthew 19:28-29; Luke 22:29-30; Revelation 1:6; 20:4-6).

7:24 “ten kings” = political powers that arise out of the fourth kingdom. The three kings come from the ten.

7:25 “a time, times and half a time” = 3.5 years.

8:3 The ram represents the Medo-Persian empire (see 8:20). The longer of his two horns reflects the predominant position of Persia.

8:5 The rapidly charging goat is Greece. The prominent horn is Alexander the Great ("the first king" - 8:21).

8:7 “shattering his two horns” refers to how Greece crushes Medo-Persia.

8:8 “his large horn was broken off” refers to the death of Alexander the Great at the height of his power (323 B.C.). The four prominent horns represent the four kingdoms his empire was divided into (see 8:21,22).

8:9-12 A "rather small horn" (v. 9) emerges NOT from the ten horns belonging to the FOURTH kingdom (as in 7:8), but rather from one of the four horns belonging to the THIRD kingdom.

The small horn that "grew exceedingly" is Antiochus IV Epiphanes, who during the last few years of his reign (168-164 B.C.) made a determined effort to destroy the Jewish faith. He in turn served as a type of the even more ruthless beast of the last days, who is also referred to in 7:8 as a "little" horn.

Antiochus IV was to extend his power over Israel, "the Beautiful Land" (v. 9; see Jer 3:19), and defeat the godly believers there (referred to as "the host of the heavens," v. 10; see also v. 12), many of whom died for their faith. Then he set himself up to be the equal of God ("the Prince of the host," v. 11) and ordered the daily sacrifices to end. Eventually the army of Judas Maccabeus recaptured Jerusalem and rededicated the temple (v. 14) to the Lord (December, 165)--the origin of the Feast of Hanukkah (see Jn 10:22), still celebrated by Jews today (in the Apocrypha see 1 Maccabees 1-4).

8:13 “holy one” = an angel.

8:14 The phrase “evenings and mornings” means evening and morning sacrifices, and refers to the time from the desecration of the altar by Antiochus IV to the restoration of temple worship under Judas Maccabeus in 165 BC. The 2,300 evenings and mornings probably refer to the number of sacrifices consecutively offered on 1,150 days.

8:23-25 Describes Antiochus IV and his rise to power by intrigue and deceit (he was not the rightful successor to the Seleucid throne – one of the four division of Alexander’s empire).

8:25 “Prince of princes” = God. “Destroyed, but not by human power” – Antiochus Epiphanes IV died in 164 B.C. at Tabae in Persia through illness or accident; God "destroyed" him.