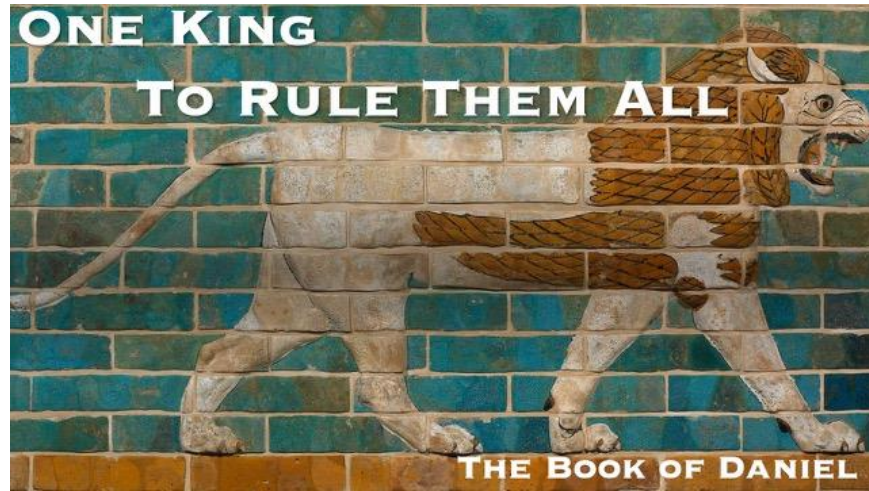


Taming Beastly Empire

Daniel 7:15-28



Background

Happy New Year—Lunar New Year. We are now in the Year of the Tiger. There are no tigers in Daniel, but there are ferocious wild beasts: a lion, a bear, a leopard, and a fourth beast beyond comparison, all representing oppressive empires. We return to the Book of Daniel midway through chapter 7. Daniel wants to know the meaning of the fourth beast, the ten horns, and the little horns. He is in good company: very many people have wanted to know the meaning of these. Join us Sunday as we try to make sense of them.

Sermon Text: Daniel 7:15-28 (NIV)

15 "I, Daniel, was troubled in spirit, and the visions that passed through my mind disturbed me.

16 I approached one of those standing there and asked him the meaning of all this. "So he told me and gave me the interpretation of these things:

17 'The four great beasts are four kings that will rise from the earth. 18 But the holy people of the Most High will receive the kingdom and will possess it forever—yes, for ever and ever.' 19 "Then I wanted to know the meaning of the fourth beast, which was different from all the others and most terrifying, with its iron teeth and bronze claws—the beast that crushed and devoured its victims and trampled underfoot whatever was left. 20 I also wanted to know about the ten horns on its head and about the other horn that came up, before which three of them fell—the horn that looked more imposing than the others and that had eyes and a mouth that spoke boastfully. 21 As I watched, this horn was waging war against the holy people and defeating them, 22 until the Ancient of Days came and pronounced judgment in favor of the holy people of the Most High, and the time came when they possessed the kingdom.

23 "He gave me this explanation: 'The fourth beast is a fourth kingdom that will appear on earth. It will be different from all the other kingdoms and will devour the whole earth, trampling it down and crushing it. 24 The ten horns are ten kings who will come from this kingdom. After them another king will arise, different from the earlier ones; he will subdue three kings. 25 He will speak against the Most High and oppress his holy people and try to change the set times and the laws. The holy people will be delivered into his hands for a time, times and half a time.

26 “But the court will sit, and his power will be taken away and completely destroyed forever.
27 Then the sovereignty, power and greatness of all the kingdoms under heaven will be handed over to the holy people of the Most High. His kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom, and all rulers will worship and obey him.’

28 “This is the end of the matter. I, Daniel, was deeply troubled by my thoughts, and my face turned pale, but I kept the matter to myself.”

Discussion Questions

1. Preparation

- a. As you reflect on the sermon, what stands out to you the most?
- b. What is one thing you hoped to talk about today/tonight?
- c. What question(s) did you come away with from the sermon?

2. Sermon questions

- a. During the song set, James shared his story of isolation. Are you feeling isolated right now? Explain. If so, name specific ways your group can help.
- b. During times of suffering, have you ever asked the question “How long, O Lord?” Explain.
- c. During times of suffering, how did you endure? What was it that gave you hope to endure?
- d. Each Wednesday we put a persecuted church in our e-newsletter. Are you praying for the persecuted church? Why or why not?
- e. To live in this complex time calls for wisdom. Where do you go to find wisdom for living the way of Jesus? Where do you need wisdom right now in your life?