**Times Are Changing!**

**Daniel 7:1-14**

**Introduction**

You have either heard or said the following phrase, “My, how times have changed!” It may have been made about the rapid pace of change in technology. Just consider how things have changed with cell phones. The same statement applies to the price of fuel, houses, and land. Certainly, the phrase is properly applied to the religious and moral climate of our beloved country. Times have changed! Daniel lived in changing times. Daniel’s vision in the first year of Belshazzar’s reign indicated that a multitude of changes were on the horizon. Some of the changes were alarming to Daniel. As we turn in our Bibles to Daniel 7, we have come to the prophetic section of Daniel. From here on, it is not easy reading, but very applicable to our times. Through prophetic visions and interpretations, God showed Daniel the only solution to the changing situations on earth. It will help you to know how to deal with all the changes ahead.

1. **Review: The historical section of Daniel proves God delivers those who put their faith in Him.** 
   1. Our series in Daniel is entitled, “Standing by Faith.” Because there is an enemy that continues to oppose all that is right and good, there must be people of God who stand by faith.
   2. The Jews of Daniel’s generation were reaping the harvest of generations that had neglected God. The wrong choices of their parents made the next generation an easy target for their enemy. Babylon targeted their youth and their faith. If the godless can change the minds of our youth regarding how they view faith and morality, they have changed the direction of a whole nation without a military revolution.
   3. Faith brought men like Daniel into conflict with the world in which they lived.
   4. It also brought them into contact with God. He proved to be greater than all they encountered.
2. **The prophetical section of Daniel demonstrates God will deliver those who put their faith in Him.** 
   1. It is estimated that approximately one-fourth of the Bible is devoted to prophecy.
   2. There have been 333 distinct prophesies literally and exactly fulfilled by the first coming of Christ. For every verse referring to Christ’s first coming, there are eight that refer to His second!
   3. Bible prophecy is not designed to spark the curiosity of a few. It is intended to equip all saints for ministry in a culture adverse to their spiritual lives. Every time Jesus gave prophetic insight, it was in the context of exhorting His disciples to participate in His mission.
   4. Our approach in this section of Daniel will be to understand what is communicated and how it applies. This is a section rich in symbolism. Therefore, we must use caution and allow the Bible to make clear what is intended.
3. **Daniel was given a vision of the rapidly changing world scene. (7:1-8)**
   1. This is a very significant chapter in the Bible. John Waalvoord said, “The vision of Daniel provides the most comprehensive and detailed prophecy of future events anywhere in the Old Testament.”
   2. You can follow the progression by following the “behold” statements. (v. 2, 5, 6, 7, 13)
   3. In his vision, the four winds stirred the water of the great sea. (v. 2) The sea represented humanity. The world is in a restless, chaotic, and agitated state.
   4. The beasts came out of the sea, depicting the world powers that came out of humanity. (v. 17) There were four in number. This coincides with Nebuchadnezzar’s dream: gold, silver, brass, and iron. In Nebuchadnezzar’s dream in chapter 2, the kingdoms of man were represented as a multi-metallic man. Men tend to think of themselves above what they should. From God’s perspective, the kingdoms of man are represented as ferocious beasts! You will notice that the description becomes more dreadful with each beast. This depicts that man is not in a constant state of improvement. Rather, man is waxing worse and worse. (2 Timothy 3:13)
   5. The lion with eagle wings represents Babylon. (v. 4) The lion is a symbol of regal power. Nebuchadnezzar was described as a lion and an eagle in other biblical passages. Winged lions have been found in ancient Babylon. Babylon rose to great heights under Nebuchadnezzar’s reign. The wings plucked off represents the humbling of Nebuchadnezzar. It stood on two feet to walk as a man, symbolizing his humiliation. The man’s heart given to him represents the change that occurred in Nebuchadnezzar.
   6. The bear represents the Medo-Persian Empire. (v. 5) The bear is noted for its size and fierce nature. Being raised on one side represents that Persia would be the more prominent of the two. The three ribs in his mouth represents the areas conquered by Medo-Persia: Egypt, Lydia (Asia Minor), and Babylon.
   7. The leopard represents Greece. (v. 6) The leopard is noted for its swiftness and thirst for blood. The four wings represent the exceptional swiftness of Alexander the Great. By the age of 32, he conquered the Medo-Persian Empire within 10 years. History records that he sat and wept because he had no more land to conquer. The four heads symbolize the four divisions of the empire following Alexander’s death. Cassander ruled Greece and Macedonia. Lysimachus ruled a large part of Asia Minor. Seleucus I ruled Syria, Babylon, and much of the Middle East. Ptolemy I ruled Egypt and Palestine.
   8. The final beast represents Rome. (v. 7-8) This beast was terrifying to Daniel and defied any animal he had ever seen. The iron teeth demonstrated the military might of Rome. “Nations were crushed under the iron boots of the Roman legions, its power was virtually irresistible, and the extent of its influence surpassed the other three kingdoms.” (Miller)
4. The horns symbolize ten kings or kingdoms. (See v. 24) Since there is no historic fulfillment of the “ten horns,” it is to be understood as a reference to ten kings of the revived Roman empire during the tribulation period. This aligns with the ten toes of Daniel 2 and the ten horns and crowns of Revelation 13. This part of the prophecy is yet to be fulfilled.
5. As Daniel studied the ten horns, a little horn began to grow among them. (v. 8) It increased in size above the other ten and uprooted three horns in the process of its growth. It had eyes symbolizing intelligence and insight. It had a mouth and spoke great things against God. (v. 25) This is the future Antichrist (Revelation 13:1-10).
6. **The vision shifted to the scene in Heaven. (v. 9-14)**
   1. All attention is given to the Ancient of days. (v. 9-10) This literally means one advanced in days. It refers to the One who has been living forever! His garment was as white as snow, depicting His absolute moral purity. His hair was white as wool, symbolizing His eternal nature. His throne was flaming with fire, a symbol of judgment. His throne had wheels of blazing fire. A river of fire ran forth from His throne. An innumerable host was before Him. (Revelation 5:11) The judgment was set. Court was convened! The books were opened detailing the wrongs of men. (Revelation 20:10)
   2. Daniel was amazed that the little horn continued his arrogant verbal assault. (v. 11-12) Finally, God’s judgment was poured out and he was silenced. The other kingdoms had lost their authority, but not their existence. They had simply absorbed into the next kingdom.
   3. Daniel’s attention was then directed to the Son of man who came to the Ancient of days. (v. 13-14) He came with the clouds of heaven, a symbol of His deity (Matthew 24:30; Revelation 1:7) He was served by the saved inhabitants of the earth.
   4. The term Son of man is highly significant! It is understood as the term of Messiah. Jesus identified Himself as the Son of man (Matthew 13:41; 25:31; Mark 14:61-62).
   5. The Father (the Ancient of days) and the Son (Son of man) are distinct persons (v. 13) who are sovereignly in control and are equally worthy of worship, service, and praise (7:10, 14)
   6. His Kingdom will never pass away.
7. **Central Idea: Daniel saw in the vision that the only solution to the changing situations on earth is the establishment of God’s Kingdom that has no end.** 
   1. World governments will not improve the scene on earth.
   2. As God’s servants, we know the solution to the situation: The coming of the Lord Jesus Christ!
   3. What should we do in the meantime? What did Daniel do? He served where he was, without compromise. He studied the Bible and spent time in prayer. He did not get overly involved or consumed in the earthly kingdom. He allowed the heavenly perspective to guide him in earthly business. Remember, there is no panic in Heaven, just plans. (Adrian Rogers)

**Conclusion**

Times are changing. Submit your life to the One who remains the same!