

Daniel
Part 10 – When it Starts Getting Weird
Daniel 7

Reading apocalyptic literature

1. It wasn't as foreign to them as it is to us – they're not the ones who need the help, we are
2. It has a certain shape – plot, symbols, etc. – and because we're unfamiliar with the shape, it's crazy sounding
3. Its power lies in its purpose, not in its predictions (1-to-1 correspondence is not its purpose or its power – people have tried “88 in 88” etc)
 - The point of the literature is to encourage us to live faithfully until the end – how do we KEEP living faithfully, even in Babylon? (1 Thes. 4.18)
 - The symbols CAN correspond (but don't always – we'll say so when the Bible is clear) and CAN be applied over multiple situations
 - MOUNTAIN RANGE from different perspectives

Beasts emerge

- From the chaos come monsters – they are not of their kind (Gen 1) and are not objects of curiosity but terror and fear – a complete set of them (4 winds, 4 beasts)
- Examples of monsters arising from chaos abound:
 - Promise of stateliness but still very much just a man
 - Brutal monster bent on devouring (rather than ruling)
 - Swift conqueror who seems unstoppable
 - Each one is different and dangerous in its own way and is experienced by people as different levels of threat – but it's a rolling threat: one then another then another
 - Megabeast – worse than the others (devouring the whole earth, wear out the saints, etc)
- Be sure – there are ALWAYS spiritual forces at work behind the scenes

Pause: what's our encouragement so far?

- We are not alone in this
- This does not last forever
- We can be faithful to the end (which IS the calling) – Daniel is given this before the lion's den!

Judgment comes

- Court is in session (v.9-10)
 - Authority (takes His seat) Purity (white as snow) Wisdom (white hair) Jurisdiction (wheels)
- Evil loses (v.11-12)
- Son of Man wins (v.13-14)
 - He's a human, coming up from the earth
 - He's divine, riding on the clouds
 - His Kingdom is established after His victory

Summary Statement: stay faithful to the end because Jesus wins

Questions for Discussion

1. What's been your experience with how the crazy parts of the Scripture (called apocalyptic literature) have been interpreted? Is it more a code to be broken, something to be read and not understood, or something that's happened in the past? Some combination of those? Something else?
2. In the sermon, we stated that there are always spiritual forces at work behind the scenes. Read Ephesians 6.10-13. How does the Bible talk about those spiritual forces?
3. In the sermon, we argued that the power of apocalyptic literature is in its purpose. Paul writes about this in 1 Thessalonians 4.13-18. What is its purpose and how is it tied to its power?
4. Which of the beasts described in Daniel 7 is scariest to you? Why?
5. COVID Check in: How are you? Your family? Your neighbors? Your One?