*CSB – Ignatius Catholic Study Bible - Daniel*

*NJBC – New Jerome Biblical Commentary*

*SN = Special Notes*

*NAB = New American Bible*

*SK = Chinese Bible*

*CCC = Catholic Catechism*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **A** | **Overview** * Daniel ‘s vision: four great beasts “came up out of the sea, different from one another”. They are like a lion, a bear, a leopard, and a beast with ten horns.
* In the vision, “Thrones were placed … a thousand thousands served him”, preparing to judge “the Ancient of Days”. Then, the beast with ten horns is thrown into the fire. The rest of the beasts, “their dominion was taken away”. Then, “with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man … And to him was given dominion and glory and kingdom”.
* One of those who remains explains the vision to Daniel: The four great beasts are the four kings who will rule over the kingdom for a period before being destroyed. Then “the saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever.
 | Dan 77:1-87:9-147:15-28 |
| **B** | **Visions of the Four Beasts*** Historical background: Around 552 B.C., Belshazzar became deputy regent of Babylon in his father’s absence (Nabonidus).
* “… four great beasts came up out of the sea” – According to the traditional semitic interpretations, the sea represents chaos. God is the conqueror of the chaos of the sea. => God will conquer the chaos in the world and reign forever.
* Daniel’s dream, which features four beasts from the sea, parallels Nebuchanezzar’s dream. Both represent a succession of the Near Eastern empires that gives way to the messianic kingdom of God. The four Near Eastern empires could be Babylon (the winged lion symbolizes Babylon, “the mind of a man was given to it” represents the healing of the king); Medo-Persia (the three ribs in its teeth begin its three major conquests of Lydia in 547 B.C., Babylon in 539 B.C. and Egypt in 525 B.C.), therefore it is told to ‘Arise, devour much flesh’); Greece (the leopard enlarged its dominion with incredible speed, having four wings and heads representing the four generals of Alexander the Great); and Rome (the horns are its emperors).
* “there came up among them another horn, a little one” possibly represents Caesar Nero or Antiochus IV Epiphanes, the Antichrist.
 | Dan 7:1-8CSB 7:1, Note 5B17:2-3, Job 26:12-13Ps 74:12-14, CSB7:2-8, SN1, CSBCSB, CCC 675-62Tim 2:4-12, NAB 7:7 |
| **C** | **The Heavenly Court*** The presiding judge is God (“Ancient of Days”). The Lord is seated on a chariot throne (Ezek 1:15-28), which is represented in Israel’s Temple by the Ark of the Covenant.
* The fourth beast shares the same fate as the beast in the Book of Revelation in which the beast from the sea is hurled into a like of fire (Rev 19:20). The reign of the other beasts are taken away and their lifespan is truncated.
* “One like the Son of Man” – an exalted figure coming on the clouds of heavenly glory, a common image in the study of scripture (see Ex 16:10, 24:15, Ps 104:3, etc). He is mortal, therefore, seen as a Messianic figure. Jesus adopts a messianic interpretation when he identifies himself as the “Son of man”; he is born of human but comes from God. Daniel pronounced the same truth in a figurative way when he called him “a stone cut by no human hand” (2:34). His kingship is eternal and his kingdom will never be destroyed.
 | Dan 7:9-14Dan 7:9, 1 Chron 28:187:11-12, CSB7:13-14 CSBMt 24:30, 25:31 |
| **D** | **Daniel’s Vision Interpreted*** “But the saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, for ever, and ever” – The Church is the messianic kingdom, the heavenly Jerusalem.
* “for a time, two times, and half a time” – points to the imperfect eras (half of seven is three and a half years. This could mean the persecution during the time of Antiochus IV or what is described in Rev 11:2, the time of the Roman conquest of Jerusalem and Christians were scattered into the wild.
 | Dan 7:15-287:18, Rev 21:9-27Ezk 47:1-77:25, NAB, CSB |

**Special Notes:**

1. A Comparison between the 4 metals, representing the 4 succession of empires, appeared in Chapter 2 and the imagery used in Chapters 7 and 8 (Ref: CSB p 21)

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| The Four Empires | Daniel 2 | Daniel 7 | Daniel 8 |
| Neo-Babylonian (612-539) | Gold Head | Lion | -- |
| Medo-Persia (539-331) | Silver Chest | Bear | Ram |
| Greece (331-63) | Bronze Torso | Leopard | He-Goat |
| Rome (63 – AD 476) | Iron Legs & Feet | Ten-Horned Beast | -- |