

**INTRODUCTION:**

1. This morning we're kicking off a BRAND NEW series in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the book of Daniel, (PP) "**CONTROL** in **CHAOS**."
  1. In the 1<sup>st</sup> 6 chapters – we learned so much about living **SURRENDERED** — a counter culture lifestyle.
  2. In this series it's our hope to learn to lead of life of **SERENE CONTROL**.
2. So much of life is really out of our control — that's why this prayer really resonates w/ so many; I know it does me.
  1. (PP) Serenity prayer: *God grant me the **SERENITY** to accept the things I cannot change, **COURAGE** to change the things I can, and **WISDOM** to know the difference.*
  2. Life can seem & even at times genuinely be **CHAOTIC** — things happening that we may wish, weren't
    1. There may be a situation in which want change, but may feel powerless/be powerless to effect change.
    2. Life can be **CHAOTIC**, & we often desire **CONTROL**
      1. Did anyone play this game as a kid? (Jenga)
      2. The OCD in many of us wants it to say **CONTROLLED** — but, it's gonna get **CHAOTIC**. that's life!?!)
    3. How can we learn to have **CONTROL** in **CHAOS**?
3. Here's the deal ... here's the hope of this series through the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of Daniel
  1. There is something within all of us that desires to be **IN CONTROL**.
  2. But the Bible doesn't promise nor is it God's heart for us to arrive at a place in our lives where we feel like...
    1. Ahh.... We've got this. We've arrived. We're safe. We're in control.
    2. If that's your hope ... you'll be disappointed.
  3. (PP) it's not our **GOAL** to be in **CONTROL** but to have **SELF CONTROL** because we know & trust **WHO** is ultimately **IN CONTROL**.
4. Now, we've entered the 2<sup>nd</sup> section of Daniel & it's radically different than the 1<sup>st</sup> — look at v1 of ch7 (NLT) **1** *Earlier, during the first year of King Belshazzar's reign in Babylon, Daniel had a dream and saw visions as he lay in his bed. He wrote down the dream, and this is what he saw.*
5. Daniel 1-6 describes the life & times of Daniel as he lived **SURRENDERED** — his life countered culture....
  1. CH 7-12 describe visions that Daniel had, here in CH 7... took place in the timeline between Daniel 4 & 5.
  2. This vision came to Daniel after the reign of Babylonian Neb, but b4 the Medo-Persian Empire. (Dan 5/6).
6. Today... this 1<sup>st</sup> vision, is the 1<sup>st</sup> of 4 described in Daniel 7-12 — this is the most comprehensive of the 4, as the other 3 go into greater detail of this 1<sup>st</sup> vision.
7. This morning, we're going to pick up in v2 & read through the chapter to catch all of the vision that Daniel had.
  1. Then, as you'll see we're desperately going to need to do... we'll **PRAY** for God's wisdom, discernment, & voice to speak to us through this **ROBUST** text .
  2. Then we'll consider **text**, **context**, the **content** of the text, & what God has for us today w/ 3 **take-a-way truths** as it relates to living **CONTROLLED** in the midst of **CHAOS**.

**TEXT — Daniel 7.1-28 — Wow. Let's PRAY!**

**CONTEXT:**

1. Now, the Bible is a unique book in that it deals w/ both history & prophecy — what has happened + what is to come.
2. Sometimes people make predictions & they just don't get it right...
  1. For example, Western Union put out a memo in 1876 that said: *"The telephone has too many shortcomings to be seriously considered as a means of communication. This device is inherently of no value to us."* Poor Western Union... they're the Blockbuster of the 20th century.
  2. Thomas Watson, Chairman of IBM stated, *"I think there is a world market for maybe five computers."* What's interesting about that statement is I got it off the Internet on my computer at home.
  3. Record company executive for Decca Records in 1962 said, *"We don't like their sound. We don't think the Beatles will ever do anything, and guitars are on their way out,"*
3. But the Bible has proven to give us prophecy that proves true in reality.
  1. There are sections in which we are looking back into history, but also sections that look forward to the future.
  2. Daniel, chapter 7, does that — when Daniel wrote what he saw in this chapter, it was all future to him.
    1. But for us today, it's both history, some of it has been fulfilled
    2. And prophecy, a lot of it has not been fulfilled.
4. When we consider the things of God, we have to remember that God is different.
  1. God doesn't have the same kind of time constraints that we have.
  2. He doesn't live in the space — time continuum — He's outside the realm of time; he's in eternity.
5. We can only think of time in a linear fashion, & so when we think of eternity, we just think that line keeps going.
  1. But, it's best to think of eternity as the removal of the line altogether.
  2. There is no constraint of time that we know of in eternity — God is in the eternal now.
  3. That's why when reading prophecy, sometimes it's written in past tense verbs as if it's already happened.
6. Here's what it's like — we go to a parade, & show up little late, & missed the opening act of clowns on bicycles.
  1. Now, the mayor's float is still to come & a friend finds us, & they really want to see the clowns on bicycles.
    1. You say, "You missed it, but if you go up ahead you can see what's past."
    2. Somebody else comes and says, "Well, I want to see the mayor's float."
    3. "It hasn't come yet, but if you go to the end, you can see what's future."
  2. Now imagine if we can get in a helicopter and hover above the parade.
  3. Now, we're able to see everything in one single moment, the mayor's float where you use to sit and the clowns on bicycles—all at one time.
7. Daniel 7, is like a helicopter ride where you see past, present, & future in 28 verses all condensed into one.
8. So, it can be a little confusing — Here's what Daniel 7 records for us — **(PP)** it's 3 sets of kingdoms
 

1. Kingdoms of this World	v1-7 / 15-23
2. Kingdom of Satan	v8, 11-12 / 21-26
3. Kingdom of God	v9-14 / 27-28
9. Like we said earlier, our goal for our time together today is to consider the TEXT, CONTEXT, & the CONTENT of Daniel 7 & lean into what has for us today as it relates to living **CONTROLLED** in the midst of **CHAOS** ....

**CONTENT:****#1 Kingdoms of This World**

1. In v1-7 we have the explanation & a description given in v15-23 of 4 kingdoms
2. These 4 animals/ kingdoms are the same kingdoms rep in Dan 2 w/ Neb's dream
  1. **(PP)** Remember the vision of the multi-metallic man & the 4 kingdoms?
  2. **(PP)** This vision of Daniel represents the same 4 kingdoms
  3. *The lion with the wings of an eagle*
    1. Babylon, which in Nebuchadnezzar's image was the head of gold.
    2. The description of the lion being lifted up to stand like a man, and then given a man's heart, reminds us of how God humbled King Neb, and made him live like a beast for 7 years (Dan. 4:16, 28–34).
  4. *The bear with 3 ribs in its mouth*
    1. The Medo-Persian empire who defeated Babylon (Dan. 5) & parallels the arms & chest of silver in the great image (2:39).
    2. The bear was raised up on one side because the Persians were stronger than the Medes.
    3. The ribs most likely represent Lydia, Egypt, and Babylon, nations that the Medes and Persians had conquered.
      1. The Medo-Persian Empire armies were well known.
      2. They overwhelmed their opponents w/ their size & strength.
    4. "The command to arise and devour much flesh indicates the extreme cruelties often practiced by the Persians, and the wide extent of their conquests."
  5. *The leopard with 4 wings*
    1. Each animal is mighty, but dominates its prey in a different way. "The lion devours, the bear crushes, and the leopard springs upon its prey."
    2. The leopard represented the Greek Empire.
      1. Alexander the Great quickly conq the civilized world by age 28.
      2. "Nothing in the history of the world, was equal to the conquests of Alexander, who ran through all the countries from Illycium and the Adriatic Sea to the Indian Ocean and the River Ganges; and in *twelve* years subdued part of Europe, and all Asia."
    3. This beast is identified with the number 4: 4 heads and 4 horns.
    4. Alexander died w/out a successor & his kingdom was divided into 4 parts & assigned to 4 of his leaders.
  6. *The "dreadful and terrible" beast (Dan. 7:7)*
    1. The Roman Empire, as strong & enduring as iron & as uncompromising as a beast on the rampage.
    2. The Roman Empire was the largest, strongest, most unified, & enduring of all the kingdoms.<sup>1</sup>
3. That's the 1<sup>st</sup> set of kingdoms, remember in Daniel 7 we see 3 sets.... Of... still with me? Need to see a picture of a bunny rabbit or a cute kid? Renner, we're considering 3 sets of Kingdoms .... Here's the 2nd one...

<sup>1</sup> Wiersbe, W. W. (2000). *Be resolute* (pp. 86–87). Colorado Springs, CO: Victor.

**#2 Kingdom of Satan**

1. The 4 kingdoms represented by the 4 beasts have already come and gone;
  1. What's interesting is that verse 12 indicates that each kingdom continues to exist in some way within the succeeding kingdom that "devoured" it.
  2. **(PP)** <sup>12</sup> The other three beasts had their authority taken from them, but they were allowed to live a while longer.
2. Daniel saw that the last human kingdom on earth would be a frightful kingdom
  1. Unlike any of the previous kingdoms, & it would even declare war on God!
  2. This is the kingdom of Antichrist, described in Revelation 13–19, an evil kingdom that will be destroyed when Jesus Christ returns to earth.
  3. Daniel mentions 3 things here that we need to unpack: 10 Horns... a 'little horn... a 'War on the Saints'
3. *The 10 horns (v7–8, 24).*
  1. These represent 10 kings or kingdoms.
  2. The 10 kings don't have a literal fulfillment in the Roman Empire of history.
    1. If they are literal, then they are still in the future.
    2. The only way to say this has been fulfilled is to spiritualize this prophecy and take away its plain sense.
  3. Daniel wrote in language the people of his day could understand
    1. Concept of nations as we have today would've been foreign to them.
    2. In Daniel's day kings ruled countries, but the "kingdoms" spoken of here will be nations as we know them.
    3. It is out of this future confederation of 10 nations, which in some way is an extension of the Roman Empire, that the Antichrist will come, a final world kingdom will be organized & actively oppose God/His people.
4. *The "little horn" (v8, 11, 24–26).*
  1. This represents the last world ruler, the man called Antichrist.
  2. The Greek prefix *anti* can mean "against" and "instead of."
  3. The final world ruler will be both a counterfeit Christ & an enemy who is against Christ.
  4. According to Dan. 7:24, the Antichrist has to overcome 3 other rulers to do what Satan has planned for him to do.
    1. According to Dan 7:25 & Rev 13:5, his dictatorship will last for 3.5 yrs
    2. It's stated as "time, times and half a time" (Dan. 7:25)
  5. Daniel doesn't go into all the details that John shares in the Book of Rev
    1. But he does say that kingdom of Satan & his counterfeit Christ
    2. Will be defeated and destroyed by Jesus Christ (Dan. 7:22, 26)
5. *War on the saints (Dan. 7:21–23, 25).*
  1. The "saints" are mentioned in verses 18, 21–22, 25, and 27
  2. Refer to the people of God living on the earth during the Tribulation period.
    1. John makes it clear that there will be believing Jews & Gentiles on the earth during the 7 years of the Tribulation (Rev. 7).
      1. If the church is raptured before the Tribulation, then these will be Jews & Gentiles who believe on

Jesus after the rapture.

2. If the church goes through either part or all of the Tribulation, then they will be the “saints” mentioned by Daniel.

2. In either case, some of them will die for their faith (14:9–13).

3. However, his victory is not complete and final.<sup>2</sup>

### #3 The Kingdom Of God

1. Daniel has seen the rise & fall of 5 kingdoms:

1. Babylonians, Medo-Persians, Greeks, Romans, & the kingdom of Satan.

2. But the most important is the kingdom that Christ shall establish on earth.

3. Daniel mentions 2 things here that we need to unpack

1. Heavenly throne & Ancient of Days

2. Earthly Throne & Son of Man

2. He sees the *heavenly throne of the Father (v9–12)* — authority

1. “Ancient of Days” (v9, 13, 22) name for God that emphasizes His eternality

2. He is the God who had existed from eternity past, has planned all things, and is working out His plan.

3. Now the physical description of God must not be taken literally

1. B/c God doesn’t have a body, wear clothes, or grow white hair.

2. These things are symbolic of His nature and character

3. He is eternal, holy, and sovereign.

3. *The earthly throne of the Son of God (Dan. 7:13–14, 27).*

1. “Son of Man” is a familiar title for our Lord Jesus Christ

2. It’s used 82x in the Gospels, frequently by Jesus Himself.

3. “Clouds of heaven” reminds us of His return in glory & reign on the earth (Matt. 24:30; Mark 13:26; Rev. 1:7).

4. **(PP)** *The Son of Man is presented before the throne of the Father and given dominion over all nations, an everlasting dominion that will never pass away. Unlike the previous four kingdoms, and the kingdom of Antichrist, the kingdom of Jesus Christ can never be removed or destroyed.*

5. **(PP)** *This is the kingdom that God had in mind when he told David that his throne would never end. He will share this kingdom with His people and they shall reign with Him. In this dramatic vision, Daniel had seen the vast sweep of history, beginning with the Babylonian Kingdom and closing with the thousand-year reign of Christ on earth.<sup>3</sup>*

6. Now, I know what you might be thinking — I know why you called this series “Control in the midst of Chaos” — this is chaos. (JENGA pieces)

<sup>2</sup> Wiersbe, W. W. (2000). *Be resolute* (pp. 89–91). Colorado Springs, CO: Victor.

<sup>3</sup> Wiersbe, W. W. (2000). *Be resolute* (pp. 91–93). Colorado Springs, CO: Victor.

### **3 Take-A-Way-Truths:**

1. Well, here's the thing we've consider text, context ... let me share 3 "Take-A-Way Truths" as it relates to living **CONTROLLED** in the midst of **CHAOS**.
2. One of the things that really strikes me as interesting, is the fact that God repeats himself here in the book of Daniel.
  1. What do you mean? — Well, Daniel 2 & Daniel 7 — Different methods — But same message
  2. Here's the takeaway truth I want you to consider:
3. **(PP)** Often, God's **INSTRUCTION** comes through **REPETITION**.
  1. We know & experience this in life, right?
  2. Think about our educational system
    1. As you move from grade to grade you build on a foundation of things learned & often you repeat the fundamentals, but building upon them.
    2. As we raise our children — we often say the same things over & over again — clean your room, brush your teeth, eat those veggies
    3. In Marriage — always seems to come back to LOVE/RESPECT — Communication // Dying to Self
  3. Think about the Word of God
    1. **(PP)** The people of God in the time of Judges (sin, oppression, supplication, salvation, rest) 7x
    2. The people of God when God sent Moses to deliver / 10 plagues / Red Sea / Manna from Heaven / Water from Rock / Promise Land — God is FAITHFUL.
    3. Jesus w/ His disciples: calming the storm, walking on water, feeding the 5,000 — Jesus is faithful
4. **(PP)** Often, God's **INSTRUCTION** comes through **REPETITION**.
  1. What instruction is God bringing into your life, over & over again?
  2. Are you listening? Trust Him. Listen to Him. That's how you have CONTROL in midst of CHAOS.
4. It was a subtle point this morning, but don't miss it — Daniel was given a PROPHECY... a vision... **WORD** from **GOD**
  1. The vision described here took place in the timeline between Daniel 4 & 5.
  2. This vision came to Daniel after the reign of Neb, but before the Babylonians were conquered by the Medo-Persian Empire. (Dan 5/6).
  3. We can look back and see how w/ great exactness the vision that was given transpired into reality w/out flaw.
  4. Here's the thing I don't wan you to miss: **(PP)** we've been given the **WORD** of **GOD**.
    1. Don't say... oh yeah, sure... Let that sink in... the power of the WORD of GOD!
    2. When a ship is in the midst of a CHAOTIC storm what keeps it stable and moving forward?
    3. A rudder — The Word of God is THE best rudder of control in the midst of chaos.
5. Think about this...
  1. When Jesus came in human flesh, spent time in the wilderness after fasting for 40 days what was his weapon of choice when facing temptation from Satan.
  2. It was the Word of God — what active role does the Word of God play in your daily life? It's powerful!!!
  3. The longest chapter of the Bible is dedicated to describing it's power in your life: Psalm 119.
  4. I want to challenge you to read it this week.

6. We have the **WORD** — Let that be an **encouragement** — And a **challenge**... get into it... own it... stand on it... let the **WORD** form and fashion your mind where the battle for control or chaos is most often waged.
7. And let me says this... **(PP)** it's not our **GOAL** to be in **CONTROL** but to have **SELF CONTROL** because we know & trust **WHO** is ultimately **IN CONTROL**
5. **(PP) JESUS** is coming **BACK AGAIN**
  1. We're introduced the Jesus' favorite description of Himself here in Daniel 7 — the Son of Man — a description seen by the Jews as the coming Messiah — 82x in the 4 gospels to refer to Jesus
  2. Verse 13 is talking about the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming of Christ — the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming dominates the Bible — there is no subject more discussed in the Bible —next to the subject of faith, than the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming.
  3. The 2<sup>nd</sup> coming is dealt with 1,845 times in the Bible.
    1. That means 1 out of every 30 verses either mentions the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming or the last days.
    2. 20/25% of all Scripture refers to it.
      1. 7 out of 10 chapters in the NT refer to the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming.
      2. For every 1 mention of the 1<sup>st</sup> coming... the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming is mentioned 8 times.
      3. For every 1x the atonement is mentioned... the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming is mentioned 2x.
  4. Jesus personally referred to his 2<sup>nd</sup> coming 21x, & no less than 50x in the Bible we are told to be ready...
  5. Be ready for it, Jesus is coming, when he comes back the 2<sup>nd</sup> time/different than when he came the first time.
    1. He came the first time to deal with sin.
    2. You know what he's going to do the second time?
    3. He's going to take over. He's going to rule the earth.

## **EXHORTATION:**

1. May these truths drive us, guide us, & remind us that we can have **CONTROL** in the midst of any **CHAOS**.
2. Here they are ... these 3 take-a-ways:
  1. Often, God's **INSTRUCTION** comes through **REPETITION**.
  2. We've been given the **WORD** of **GOD**.
  3. **JESUS** is coming **BACK AGAIN**