

KING OF THE BEASTS

REQUEST: I was watching a documentary that mentioned that the lions in Daniel's story must have been imported into the region. What do you know about it?

The 6th century prophet, Jeremiah, used the local lion as an illustration of an instrument of divine judgment – “Like a lion coming up from the Jordan's thickets to a rich pasture land, I will chase Edom from its land in an instant.” (N IV, Jer.49:19)

“Lion, the well-known king of beasts, formerly abundant in Palestine (Judges 14:5; 1 Samuel 17:34; 2 Kings 17:25; Jer.49:19), and not extinct there until the end of the 12th century.” (Unger, pg.61)

This lesson will study SEVEN different usages of the lion as King of the Beasts in the Scriptures to illustrate doctrinal principles.

1. The lion was used to illustrate the angelic conflict.

Jesus Christ is called the “Lion of Judah.” (Gen.49:9; Rev.5:5)

Devil is called the “roaring lion.” (1 Pet.5:8-9; Rev.9:7-11).

2. The lion was used to illustrate hope in life amidst adversity.

“Anyone who is among the living has hope- even a live dog is better off than a dead lion.” (NIV, Eccl.9:4)

3. The lion was used to illustrate an absurd excuse of the sluggard.

“The sluggard says, ‘There is a lion outside!’ or ‘I will be murdered in the street!’” (Prov.22:13)

4. The lion was used in a riddle by Samson that eventually led to Delilah and his doom (Judges 14:8-14).

Samson's 1st riddle: “Out of the eater came something to eat, and out of the strong came something sweet.” (14:14)

Samson's 2nd riddle: “What is sweeter than honey? What is stronger than a lion?” (Judges 14:18)

5. The lion was used to illustrate the faith cycle by the young shepherd David to King Saul (1 Sam.17:32-37; 2 Tim.4:7).

“Your servant has killed both the lion and the bear; this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, because he has defiled the armies of the living God. The Lord who delivered me from the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine.” (17:36-37)

6. The lion was used to illustrate divine judgment upon foreigner settlers in Samaria (2 Kings 17:3-8, 24-28).

“So they spoke to the king of Assyria, saying, ‘The nations whom you have carried away into exile in the cities of Samaria do not know the custom of the god of the land; so he has sent lions among them, and behold, they kill them because they do not know the custom of the god of the land. Then the king of Assyria commanded, saying, ‘take there one of the priests whom you carried away into exile, and let him go and live there; and let him teach them the custom of the god of the land.’ (17:26-27)

7. The lion was used to illustrate God’s faithfulness to spiritual mature believers in the story of Daniel (Dan.6:16-24).

Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to rescue you from the lions?” (6:20)

“Yet, with respect to the promise of God, he did not waver in unbelief, but grew strong in faith, giving glory to God, and being fully assured that what He promised, He was able to perform.” (Rom.4:20-21)

“My God sent His angel and shut the lion’s mouth, and they have not harmed me, inasmuch as I was found innocent before Him; and also towards you, O king, I have committed no crime.” (6:22)

“Who through faith conquered kingdoms, administered justice, and gained what was promised; who shut the mouths of lions.” (Heb.11:33)