



# Chapter 7

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*Theme: Daniel's vision of the four beasts; the visions of the Son of Man coming in clouds of heaven; the definition of the four beasts; the explanation of the fourth beast<sup>1</sup>*

The most comprehensive and detailed prophecy of future events to be found anywhere in the Old Testament (Cf. Dan 2, Rev 13, 17).<sup>2</sup>

**McGee Introduction:** Chapter 7 opens a new and different section of the Book of Daniel. The first six chapters contained the historic night with prophetic light; the last six chapters are prophetic light in the historic night. Whereas in the first section of the book the emphasis was upon the historical, the emphasis will now be on the prophetic, yet still with an historical background.

God gives to Daniel several visions of four beasts which are quite remarkable. Daniel had these visions at different periods. The vision of chapter 7 was in the first year of King Belshazzar. In chapter 8 the vision was seen in the third year of the reign of Belshazzar. In chapter 9 it was in the first year of Darius; in chapter 10 it was the third year of Cyrus; and in chapters 11 and 12 the vision was seen in the first year of Darius. Daniel did not record these visions in the historical section but gathered these prophetic visions together in this second section of his book.

Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon was a very brilliant man who found himself suddenly elevated to the position of the first great world ruler. He had territory on three continents. He had taken Egypt in North Africa, and he also had territory in Europe. He had a tremendous empire, greater than any the world had ever known. But Nebuchadnezzar wondered about the future: What would happen to him and to his empire? He dreamed a dream about a multimetallic image, and through Daniel God gave the interpretation of the dream (see Dan. 2).

There were *four* different kinds of metals in Nebuchadnezzar's image—not five, but four metals. Now Daniel's vision of the beasts is of *four* beasts—the lion, the bear, the panther (or leopard), and a composite beast which has been called a nondescript beast. The last was a wild-looking animal which has never been seen on land or sea or in the air—it simply does not exist as a real beast. Well, after he had had visions and dreams like that, I don't think Daniel slept much that night. He probably got a better night's sleep in the den of lions than he did the night he had this dream!

I imagine that, after God gave him Nebuchadnezzar's image dream and its interpretation, Daniel was quite puzzled. As a good student and follower of the Old Testament, Daniel knew of the covenant which God had made with David—that One was coming in his line who would be a world ruler. Now with the four world kingdoms of Nebuchadnezzar's dream before him, he wondered how God's plan and program of raising up a world ruler from David would fit into all this. The rest of the Book of Daniel is going to answer that question. It will give us world history prewritten, history that has been followed right down to the minutest detail for twenty-five hundred years since the time it was written.

God speaks to Daniel through his vision of the four beasts to satisfy his heart and to give him the explanation he needed. In Daniel's vision of the multimetallic image the

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<sup>1</sup>McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (3:567). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

<sup>2</sup> Chuck Missler, Notes on Daniel Commentary, Khouse.org

outward splendor and glory of the kingdoms was demonstrated—that was what God knew would attract Nebuchadnezzar’s attention. But in the vision He gives to Daniel, God lets him in on the inward character and the true nature of these kingdoms. What are these kingdoms? These are like wild beasts, carnivorous in nature, and destructive killers every one of them.

The four beasts of Daniel’s vision of course correspond to the four metals in the image of Nebuchadnezzar’s vision. In *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, the historian Edward Gibbon, who was not a Christian, said, “The four empires are clearly delineated; and the invincible armies of the Romans are described with as much clearness in the prophecies of Daniel, as in the histories of Justin and Diodorus.” The following chart summarizes the correspondence between the two visions and the four kingdoms they represent:<sup>3</sup>

<b>MULTI-METALLIC IMAGE</b>	<b>FOUR BEASTS</b>	<b>NATIONS DESIGNATED</b>
(Chapter 2)	(Chapter 7)	
Head of Gold	Lion	Babylon
Arms of Silver	Bear	Media-Persia
Sides of Brass	Panther (leopard)	Graeco-Macedonia
Legs of Iron; Feet of Iron and Clay	Composite beast	Rome




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<sup>3</sup>McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (3:568). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

Three important changes begin in this chapter. Up to chapter 7 the material is mainly historical. Henceforth it is mainly predictive. Heretofore Daniel has been God's agent in revelation, interpreting others' dreams. Hereafter, an angel interprets Daniel's own dreams and visions (7:16; 8:15-17; 9:20-23; 10:10-14). Heretofore the author has reported in the third person; hereafter he writes in the first, giving a much more intimate report of his experiences.

A transition from prophecy centered in Gentile nations to Jewish-centered prophecy takes place with the entrance of the "holy people" (rendered "saints" vv. 18, 22, 25). The Jews are the center of interest to the book's end.

The same succession of kingdoms that was found in chapter 2 appears here—four Gentile empires, then the kingdom of Messiah. The view that chapter 7 describes only events in the Mediterranean area at the close of this present age is ably set forth by G. H. Lang (*The Histories and Prophecies of Daniel*) in premillennial perspective. The view that the four kingdoms are (1) Babylon, (2) Medo-Persia, (3) Greece, and (4) the Greek successors of Alexander, and that the fifth is Messiah's kingdom is defended in reverent but non-millennial perspective by Moses Stuart (*Commentary on Daniel*) and in reverent amillennial perspective by the Roman Catholic work of C. Lattey (*The Book of Daniel*). After the usual historical setting (v. 1), there follow details of a series of visions (vv. 2-14, 21, 22), the new method of interpreting dreams and visions (vv. 15, 16), the interpretation (vv. 17-20, 23-27), and a concluding personal statement (v. 28).<sup>4</sup>

### **Interpretive Guidelines**

Interpretations of Daniel's prophecies differ widely. Liberals reject all prophecies, because they require a sovereign God and a miraculous revelation of future events. While conservative, evangelical scholars believe the prophecies in Daniel are true, their interpretations differ greatly. Whether liberal or conservative, our conclusions grow out of the premises and presuppositions governing the process and the product of our interpretation. For this reason, I wish to clearly state the foundational presuppositions and principles on which this exposition of Daniel is based.

**(1) The Book of Daniel is a part of the Holy Scriptures, and thus inspired, accurate, and trustworthy.**

**(2) The prophecies of Daniel must be understood in relationship to and in light of the other prophecies of Daniel.**

**(3) These prophecies must be understood in light of their historical background as provided in Daniel, in the inspired revelation provided by other portions of Scripture, and the cautious use of supplementary information by reliable historical documents or study.** Other biblical prophecies bear on the prophecies of Daniel, particularly preceding or contemporary prophecies.

**(4) Prophecies not completely fulfilled cannot be fully understood until after their fulfillment.** At least the final portion of chapter 7 has not been fulfilled. Even those portions which we believe have been fulfilled, students of prophecy differ about the way of their fulfillment.

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<sup>4</sup>Pfeiffer, C. F. (1962). *The Wycliffe Bible commentary : Old Testament* (Da 7:1). Chicago: Moody Press.

**(5) Above all, the prophecy in this chapter means precisely what God says it means in this text, nothing more and nothing less.** How easily we turn from what is revealed to speculate about what has been concealed (see Deuteronomy 29:29). We should not spend a disproportionate amount of time and energy trying to fill in the blanks God has left. Our attention should be given to what is clearly and emphatically said. In our passage, Daniel asks for and receives an explanation. What God determined to reveal to Daniel should be enough for us.<sup>5</sup>

### The Four Kingdoms

CHAPTER TWO	CHAPTER SEVEN
Head of gold	The winged lion
Breast & arms of silver	The devouring bear
Belly & thighs of bronze	The winged leopard
Legs & feet of iron & clay	The indescribable beast

### Similarities

A four-part statue	Four beasts
Statue represents kingdoms	Beasts represent kingdoms
Deterioration: Gold to iron mixed with clay	Deterioration: Nearly human to blaspheming beast
Statue destroyed	Beasts destroyed
Eternal Kingdom is established	Eternal kingdom is established

### Contrasts

Nebuchadnezzar's Vision	Daniel's Vision
Daniel's interpretation	Angel's interpretation
Glorious statue	Horrible beasts
Human statue in four parts	Four (inhumane) beasts
Destroyed mysteriously by a stone	Destroyed in judgment by God

<sup>5</sup> Robert Deffinbaugh, deffinbaugh@bible.org, Biblical Studies Press, 1995

**Van Impe:** Chapter two depicted Nebuchadnezzar's dream concerning the great statue with a head of gold down to its feet and toes of iron mixed with clay—a prediction of how the Babylonian empire would be destroyed by Medo-Persia, followed by the conquering superpowers of Greece and Rome. Chapter seven refers to these identical empires in the form of beasts, indicating that within the final revived Roman Empire there will be many problems during the course of its restoration. In fact, one major challenge after another can already be observed within the framework of the European Union presently taking shape.

To the extent we saw unity in chapter two, we see diversity in chapter seven. But regardless of the message, the single most exciting thing that you are now reading is the fulfillment of Daniel 12:4, which says,

*"But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased."*

The Book of Daniel was designed to be a mysterious, closed, sealed book until the time of the end, but at the time of the end the Holy Spirit would enlighten people to expound this great portion of God's Word. This is now our assignment, and you are privileged to have a ringside seat as we begin to unravel the mysteries so long alien to anyone's understanding.<sup>6</sup>

	The Great Image	Daniel 2	Daniel 7
Babylon	585 to 562 B.C. Nebuchadnezzar's Reign	Gold Head	Lion
Persia	538 B.C. Fall of Babylon Under Cyrus	Silver Arms & Chest	Bear
Greece	330 B.C. Alexander The Great	Bronze Thighs	Leopard with 4 heads and wings
Rome	146 B.C. The Conquest Under Pompey	Iron Legs  Iron & Clay feet	Beast with brass claws and iron teeth

<sup>6</sup> A Message of Hope from Dr. Jack Van Impe, Commentary on The Book of Daniel, Van Impe

## **Daniel 7:1**

**In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon Daniel had a dream and visions of his head upon his bed: then he wrote the dream, *and* told the sum of the matters.**

Nabonidus made Belshazzar his co-regent in his 3rd year: 553 B.C. Daniel was about 67 years old. Nebuchadnezzar had died nine years earlier (Daniel 5 occurs 14 years later).

**In the first year of Belshazzar**—This is the same Belshazzar who was slain at the taking of Babylon, as we have seen at the conclusion of chap. 5. That chapter should have followed both this and the succeeding. The reason why the fifth chapter was put in an improper place was, that all the historic parts might be together, and the prophetic be by themselves; and, accordingly, the former end with the preceding chapter, and the latter with this. The division therefore is not chronological but merely artificial.<sup>7</sup>

**[In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon Daniel had a dream]** Two visions of Daniel were seen in the reign of Belshazzar (Daniel 7 and Daniel 8). Two dreams were seen by Nebuchadnezzar (Daniel 2 and Daniel 4). This vision was seen about three years before events of Daniel 6 (cp. Daniel 6:1 with Daniel 8:1). This chapter, which was in Aramaic, completes the whole Aramaic section of Daniel (Daniel 2:4-7:28). Because of the difference in the Aramaic and Hebrew sections of the book, some have sought to make one section concern Israel and the other refer to the Gentiles. There is no ground for such a theory. The whole of the visions of Daniel concerns both Jews and Gentiles in the latter days, as we have seen in Daniel 2, and will yet see in the following studies.<sup>8</sup>

**[sum]** essential summary (this the first vision given directly to Daniel). Because of the great significance of Daniel's dream, he immediately *wrote down* a summary of it.

**Told the sum of the matters**—That he might not forget this extraordinary dream, he wrote down the leading particulars when he arose.

Daniel had a vision of four great beasts, each representing a world empire. This was similar to Nebuchadnezzar's dream in chapter two. Nebuchadnezzar's dream covered the political aspects of the empires; Daniel's dream depicted their moral characteristics. These nations, which would reign over Israel, were evil and cruel; but Daniel also saw God's everlasting, indestructible kingdom arrive and conquer them all.

**McGee:** The time of this vision is pinpointed historically for us in the first year of Belshazzar; that is, toward the end of the time that the head of gold, or Babylon, was ruling in the world. Belshazzar was reigning in Babylon the night Gobryas came with his army under the city wall where the canal had once flowed and took the city.

“Visions” suggests that the first three beasts are given in the first vision, the second vision concerned the fourth beast only, and the third vision is a scene in heaven. Therefore, there are actually three visions which are recorded here.

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<sup>7</sup> Adam Clarke's Commentary

<sup>8</sup> Dake's Study Notes, Dake's Study Bible

“He wrote the dream.” Daniel was in obscurity in Babylon at this time, and I think he had more opportunity to give attention to the Word of God and to writing. Perhaps it was in this period that he recorded the first part of the Book of Daniel.<sup>9</sup>

## **Daniel 7:2**

**Daniel spake and said, I saw in my vision by night, and, behold, the four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea.**

[I saw] used 9 times in this chapter

[behold] *was beholding* In the 1st six chapters, Daniel wrote in the 3rd person; in the last six chapters he wrote in the 1<sup>st</sup> person.

[the great sea] churned by the action of *four winds*: The word translated “winds,” *ruach*, may also be rendered “spirits,” Elsewhere in Scripture this word is used to refer to God’s providential actions in the affairs of men through angels (Jer 23:19; 49:36; 51:1; Zech 6:1-6; 7:14; Rev 7:1-3). Throughout the OT the Mediterranean Sea is referred to as the Great Sea (Num 34:6-7; Josh 1:4; 9:1; 15:12, 47; 23:4; Ezek 47:10, 15, 20; 48:28). This vision related specifically to the Mediterranean world. Symbolic? Isa 8:7-8; 17:12-13; 27:1; 57:20; Jer 6:23; 46:7-9; 47:2; Rev 13:1; 17:1, 15.

All the empires that arise in these prophecies are on the Mediterranean Sea.

Seas in symbolic passages may represent peoples (Daniel 7:17; Rev. 13:1; Rev. 17:1,15). In this passage you can see this either way!

**Chuck Smith:** The "sea" usually refers to the nations (Revelation 17:15).<sup>10</sup>

[four] Here we have the beginning of the vision in symbols. The interpretation is given in Daniel 7:17-27. The vision concerns the same kingdoms as symbolized by the great image in Daniel 2, with some additional facts. In Daniel 2 Nebuchadnezzar is shown the Gentile world kingdoms from his day to the second coming of Christ. They are pictured there, from man's standpoint, as a great and beautiful metallic image. In Daniel 7 God shows Daniel the same kingdoms from God's standpoint as ferocious wild wild beasts (Daniel 7:17).

[winds] Winds in symbolic passages denote wars, strife, and judgments from God (Daniel 7:1-3; Daniel 8:7-13 with Jeremiah 25:32-33; Rev. 7:1-3).

**The four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea**—The idea of strife is taken here from the effects that must be produced, were the east, the west, the north, and the south winds to rise tempestuously, and meet on the surface of the sea. By the great sea, the Mediterranean is meant; and is so called to distinguish it from those lakes called seas by the Hebrews; such as the Sea of Galilee, Dead Sea, Sea of Tiberias, etc.; but even that

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<sup>9</sup>McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (3:568). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

<sup>10</sup> Chuck Smith, Sermon Notes, Calvary Chapel, Costa Mesa CA



may refer to Asia, the scene of all these contentions. This dream is the same in meaning, under different emblems, as that of Nebuchadnezzar's metallic image; but in Daniel's dream several circumstances are added. It is supposed that Daniel had this dream about forty-eight years after Nebuchadnezzar had the vision of the great image.<sup>11</sup>

**McGee:** The four winds broke violently “upon the *great sea*,” that is, upon the Mediterranean Sea, for that is the word given to it. The “winds” speak of agitation, propaganda, public opinion, and disturbance. The “sea” suggests the masses, the mob, and the peoples of the Gentiles (see Matt. 13:47; Rev. 13:1; Isa. 57:20). In Revelation we read: “And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters . . . . And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues” (Rev. 17:1, 15). The sea, therefore, is this conglomerate population of Gentiles throughout the world.

Customarily the wind blows from only one direction at a time, but here it is a tornado of great violence with the wind coming from all directions. It refers not only to the disturbed conditions out of which these four nations arose, but particularly to the last stage of the fourth kingdom (vv. 11, 12, 17) in which certain ideologies shall strive to capture the thinking of the disturbed masses of all nations and tribes. We are in that last stage of the fourth kingdom today. We are very close, apparently, to the time when the Roman Empire will be brought back together again. It still exists—it lives in Italy, France, Germany, Spain, and all the nations in Europe which were in the Roman Empire. All it needs is someone who will put it back together. We apparently are near that time—how near I do not think we even ought to speculate.

All these nations are to be brought back together with their different ideologies, forms of government, and viewpoints. At this point we should call attention to the deadly parallel between the circumstances herein described and our own modern world situation. This is the reason I say we are evidently drawing toward the end of the age. Entire continents are awakening today, and all are demanding a place in the sun. People who have had a primitive civilization for centuries have suddenly been catapulted into the jet age. Radios and missiles have changed the thinking of the masses. New ideologies have captured their minds, and our disturbed world is desperately trying to avoid World War III.

I wonder if you have noticed as you listen to radio and look at television today that we are being brainwashed? All kinds of propaganda are being given to us. The disturbed masses are being fed propaganda. I do not mind confessing that I am interested in giving out propaganda also—the propaganda of the Word of God. I wish that I could brainwash everyone who reads this book and make him a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ.

It is the “little horn” of this chapter who will succeed in capturing the minds of the masses. He is described as having “a mouth speaking great things” (v. 8). He is going to sell himself to the world when he appears. He will be Satan's man. The Lord Jesus said, “I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive” (John 5:43).

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<sup>11</sup> Adam Clarke's Commentary

Humanism today is glorifying mankind everywhere. They are glorifying public officials, and they are glorifying stage and screen actors (who also glorify one another). These are the people who are in control of the various media today. They have made the theater respectable, whereas it was clearly the theater which corrupted the morals of the Greeks and which is corrupting our morals today.

I hear young people talking about their “freedom,” but they use the same line of talk and wear the same clothes that can be found everywhere across the country. They really have no freedom at all. People are being brainwashed today. We would all be better off if we would get brainwashed with the Word of God.

This is a frightful picture and a disturbed scene that Daniel is presenting to us. Don't misunderstand me—I am not saying that what we see today is a fulfillment of prophecy. I am simply saying that the winds are beginning to blow; it may be a pretty long storm.<sup>12</sup>

Times of the Gentiles started with Nebuchadnezzar.

**Van Impe:** The Jewish people controlled Jerusalem until 586 B.C. Then, according to Daniel 1:1, Nebuchadnezzar and his troops marched into the Holy City and took its inhabitants back as captives to Babylon. It is important to remember that this single historical event marked the beginning of what is known as "the times of the Gentiles." An important caveat was spoken by Jesus in Luke 21:24 when He said,

*"And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled."*

Jesus was saying that Jerusalem would remain under Gentile control until the time of the end. Isn't it fascinating that from June 5 through June 10, 1967—as a result of the Six-Day War—the Jews took back Jerusalem and have been in control of the Holy City ever since? Even though we are still in the era called "the times of the Gentiles," this remarkable historical reality reminds us how close we are to the time of the end. How can we say this with such certainty? In Zechariah 14:2-4 God states:

*For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city. Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle. And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south.*

This entire scenario began with Nebuchadnezzar in 586 B.C. and ends when Jesus Christ returns to take Jerusalem back from the Gentiles. We are extremely close to that time when such an event takes place. Here's why. The Gentiles could not take Jerusalem from the Jews until the Jews controlled the city—which happened in 1967 after 2,553 years of

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<sup>12</sup>McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (3:568). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

Gentile dominion. According to Jesus, the generation who lives to see this event will be alive for the battle to recapture Jerusalem by the Gentiles plus observe Christ's return.<sup>13</sup>

### **Daniel 7:3**

**And four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another.**

[beasts] Beasts in symbolic passages represent kingdoms (Daniel 7:17,23-24; Daniel 8:20-23; Rev. 17:8-11) and their rulers (Rev. 11:7; Rev. 13:18; Rev. 17:8).

**Four great beasts came up from the sea**—The term sea, in Hebrew *yam*, from *hamah*, to be tumultuous, agitated, etc., seems to be used here to point out the then known terraqueous (made up of land and water) globe, because of its generally agitated state; and the four winds striving, point out those predatory wars that prevailed almost universally among men, from the days of Nimrod, the founder of the Assyrian or Babylonish monarchy, down to that time, and in the end gave birth to the four great monarchies which are the subject of this vision.

**Diverse one from another**—The people were different; the laws and customs different; and the administration of each differently executed.

**McGee:** The four beasts are different kinds of beasts: the lion, the bear, the panther, and the beast with ten horns. I have never seen a beast with ten horns except in this book. These beasts represent kingdoms formed out of many peoples, tongues, tribes, and nations.<sup>14</sup>

**Chuck Smith:** The dream of Nebuchadnezzar was also about world governments, but Nebuchadnezzar's dream was from man's perspective. Daniel's dream was from the heavenly perspective (Revelation 13:1).

### **Daniel 7:4**

**The first was like a lion, and had eagle's wings: I beheld till the wings thereof were plucked, and it was lifted up from the earth, and made stand upon the feet as a man, and a man's heart was given to it.**

#### **Beast No. 1**

The four beasts represented four kingdoms (v. 17).

[lion and had eagle's wings] Winged lion on gates of **Babylon** (British Museum); Jer 4:7; 48:40; 49:19-22; 50:17, 43-44; Lam :19; Ezek 17:3,12; Hab 1:8.

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<sup>13</sup> A Message of Hope from Dr. Jack Van Impe, Commentary on The Book of Daniel, Van Impe

<sup>14</sup>McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (3:569). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

[A new heart was given him?]

**[lion]** The theory that Babylon is not symbolized by the lion because Daniel saw the four beasts rise out of the sea, showing they were all future kingdoms after his day, is not proved by the mere fact that Daniel saw them rise out of the sea. The image of Daniel 2 was also seen during the time after Babylon had already risen, yet Daniel said to Nebuchadnezzar, "Thou art this head of gold. And after thee shall arise another kingdom," etc. (Daniel 2:38-39). If Babylon could be symbolized by a head of gold after it had already risen, then the same kingdom could be symbolized by a lion after it had risen. The king of Babylon is compared to a lion (Isaiah 5:29; Jeremiah 4:7; Jeremiah 50:17,44-46). The eagle's wings identify Babylon, for the kingdom is compared to an eagle (Jeremiah 48:40; Ezekiel 17; Habakkuk 1:6-8). The wings denote the swiftness of the conquests of Nebuchadnezzar. In just a few years he made a vast empire. The wings being plucked and the lion standing upon its feet as a man with a man's heart being given to it symbolize the conquests of Nebuchadnezzar coming to an abrupt end by his insanity and his becoming sane again—as a man (Daniel 4:33,36).<sup>15</sup>



**The first was like a lion, and had eagle's wings**—Bp. Newton well remarks, that these great beasts, as explained by the angel, verse 17, are kingdoms. They arise out of a stormy and tempestuous sea; that is, out of the wars and commotions of the world; and they are called great in comparison of other states and kingdoms, and are denominated beasts for their tyrannical and cruel oppression.

These four beasts are indeed monstrous productions; a lion with eagle's wings; a bear with three ribs in its mouth; a leopard with four wings, and four heads;

and a beast with ten horns. But such emblems and hieroglyphics were usual among the eastern nations, as may be seen in the monuments of antiquity. A winged lion, and such like fictitious animals, may be seen in many parts of the ruins of Persepolis. Horns are attributed to beasts which naturally have none, being used in hieroglyphic writings for symbols of strength and power. And such figures are supposed to be the symbols of different nations; and are not more strange than many that are still used in heraldry. I believe the science of heraldry arose out of the knowledge gained from the symbols used in the Sacred Writings, and the little acquaintance anciently obtained of the meaning of

<sup>15</sup> Dake's Study Notes, Dake's Study Bible

some of the Egyptian hieroglyphics. Hence our wiverons, griffins, unicorns, with a congeries of natural and unnatural things, split eagles, two-headed swans, etc., etc., etc.

The beast like a lion is the kingdom of the Babylonians; and the king of Babylon is compared to a lion, Jeremiah 4:7; Isaiah 5:29; and is said to fly as an eagle, Jeremiah 48:40; Ezekiel 17:3, 7. The lion is considered the king of the beasts, and the eagle the king of the birds; and therefore the kingdom of Babylon, which was signified by the golden head of the great image, was the first and noblest of all the kingdoms; and was the greatest then in being. The wings of the eagle denote the rapidity with which the lion—Nebuchadnezzar, made his conquests; for in a few years, by his own arms, he brought his empire to such an extent, and raised it to such a degree of eminence, as was truly surprising; and all tended to show with what propriety this eagle-winged lion is here made his emblem.<sup>16</sup>

**The wings thereof were plucked**—Lydia, Media, and Persia, which had been provinces of the Babylonish empire, cast off the yoke, and put themselves under kings of their own. Besides, the rapidity of its conquests was stopped by its wars with the Medes and Persians; by whom it was at last conquered, and divided between Darius the Mede and Cyrus the Persian.

**And it was lifted up from the earth**—That is, the wings were plucked, rendered unfit for farther flight, by which it had before been lifted up from the earth; making its conquests almost with the rapidity of an eagle's flight. In what a short time did Nebuchadnezzar, who is here chiefly intended, conquer Syria, Phoenicia, Judea, Egypt, Arabia, etc.! But on his death the wings were plucked; and no farther extension of the empire took place under Evil-merodach or Belshazzar, till it was lost by the latter, and became divided as we have seen above.

**And made stand upon the feet as a man**—This I think refers to the taming of Nebuchadnezzar's pride. He had acted like a fierce and ravaging lion. God struck him with insanity; he then lived the life of a beast, and had a beast's heart-disposition, and habits. At last God restored him.

**And a man's heart was given to it**—He became humane, humble, and pious; and in this state he appears to have died.

**McGee:** The lion with eagle's wings represents Babylon in particular. King Nebuchadnezzar is intended also, as verse 17 declares that the four beasts represent four kings.

This lion had eagle's wings, and that makes it an unusual lion. These eagle's wings denote the ability that Babylon had of moving an army speedily, which has been the secret of any great world power down through history. It was a Tennessean named Gen. Nathan Bedford Forrest who, when he was asked how to win battles, said, The one that gets there "the first with the most" is the one that is going to win. Nebuchadnezzar had the ability to move an army speedily, and that was the thing which brought him to world

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<sup>16</sup> Adam Clarke's Commentary

power. Such was the secret of Alexander the Great, the Roman caesars, and of course Napoleon. The coming in of the airplane was significant in World War I, and then World War II was won largely by air power. The one who can move the quickest with the greatest power will be the world ruler. This was true of Babylon in the past, and it will probably be the determining factor in the future.

“The wings thereof were plucked” evidently refers to the humbling of Nebuchadnezzar in his mental lapse and loss of identity.

“And made stand upon the feet as a man”—denotes Nebuchadnezzar’s restoration. He became like a beast and acted like one, but his mind was restored, and he was brought back to sanity.

“A man’s heart was given to it.” I believe this refers to Nebuchadnezzar’s conversion. I think he came to know the living and true God.

The lion corresponds to the head of gold, Babylon. Today she is a heap of ruins; but, as predicted by Jeremiah, those very ruins bear eloquent testimony to the outward glory that was hers. Among those ruins one can see a proud lion standing on a pedestal; it was the thing which represented that great empire. Excavation of the city of Babylon reveals the glory that was once there. The hanging gardens of Babylon were one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. Nebuchadnezzar had married a girl from the hill country, but since Babylon was built down on a plain—just like west Texas—he built the hanging gardens for her so that she wouldn’t be homesick. It was a thing of great beauty. There was also a great ziggurat evidently patterned after the Tower of Babel. It was made of brick, and around it like a corkscrew ran a runway that went to the top. There at the top were altars on which were offered human sacrifices. The Babylonians had a postal system second to none. They had interior bathtubs with brass plumbing. They were a literate people with a tremendous library there in the city. Around the city was a three hundred foot high wall, wide enough that four chariots could ride abreast upon it, and which well protected the entire city.

While the head of gold on the multimetallic image represents the outward glory of this advanced civilization, the cruel nature of the lion describes the brutal paganism of this kingdom which is clearly illustrated in chapters 2 and 3 of the Book of Daniel.<sup>17</sup>

## **Daniel 7:5**

**And behold another beast, a second, like to a bear, and it raised up itself on one side, and it had three ribs in the mouth of it between the teeth of it: and they said thus unto it, Arise, devour much flesh.**

### **Beast No. 2**

[bear] less regal; ponderous; of formidable strength (Xerxes: 2.5 million men!).

[bear] This is a fitting symbol of Medo-Persia because of their cruelty, thirst after blood, robberies, and love of spoil (Isaiah 13:16-18; Jeremiah 51:48-56). A large species of bear is found in the mountains of Media.

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<sup>17</sup>McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (3:569). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

[three ribs] Babylon, Egypt, Lydia defeated (Isa 13:17,18).

[three ribs in the mouth of it between the teeth of it] This symbolizes the conquest of Babylon, Lydia, and Egypt by the Medes and Persians. The bear devoured "much flesh."

[one side] This symbolizes the strength of the Persians compared to the Medes. It is the same thought as the higher horn of the ram in Daniel 8:3—Cyrus the Persian who was greater than Darius the Mede (Daniel 5:31) and who came up last (2 Chron. 36:20-23; Ezra 1:1-8; Ezra 3:7; Ezra 4:5; Isaiah 44:28; Isaiah 45:1). This kingdom is mentioned in Daniel 5:24-31; in Daniel 6:1-28; in Daniel 7:5,17; in Daniel 8:1-4,20; in Daniel 10:1-20; in Daniel 11:1-2; Isaiah 13:17-22; Isaiah 21:2; 2 Kings 17:6; 2 Kings 18:11; Esther 1:1-9:3.

Unbalanced: Cf. Dan 8:3, two horns. One-sided union; Media already swallowed up by Persia by 550 B.C.

**Another beast—like to a bear**—This was the Medo-Persian empire, represented here under the symbol of the bear, as the largest species of these animals was found in Media,



a mountainous, cold, and rough country, covered with woods. The Medes and Persians are compared to a bear on account of their cruelty and thirst after blood, a bear being a most voracious and cruel animal; the bear is termed by Aristotle an all-devouring animal; and the Medo-Persians are known to have been great robbers and spoilers. See Jeremiah 51:48-56. The Persians were notorious for the cruelty of their punishments. See Calmet.<sup>18</sup>

The second beast is like a bear and represents Medo-Persia. That the beast rises on one side reflects the superiority of Persian influence in the Medo-Persian Empire. The three ribs which have been dispatched and are in the mouth of the beast probably represent the conquered kingdoms of Egypt, Syria, and Babylon.<sup>19</sup>

**McGee:** The bear, representing the kingdom of Media-Persia, corresponds to the arms of silver of Nebuchadnezzar's image. As the bear raised itself up on one side, the image was ambidextrous. First he struck with the strong left hand of Medes, conquering Babylon; then he followed through with the right uppercut of the Persians who took over Egypt and the rest of the world which had been ruled by Babylon.

"Three ribs in the mouth" are the three kingdoms that constituted this empire: Babylon, Lydia, and Egypt.

There are no wings on this bear, but it was told, "Arise, devour much flesh." The army of the Media-Persians moved like a great, lumbering, and rumbling bear—they even took their families along with them. It was Xerxes who led about 300,000 men and

<sup>18</sup> Adam Clarke's Commentary

<sup>19</sup> Believer's Study Bible

three hundred ships against Greece at Thermopylae and was defeated. His fleet was destroyed by a storm because God did not intend the East to control the West at that particular time.<sup>20</sup>

### **Daniel 7:6**

**After this I beheld, and lo another, like a leopard, which had upon the back of it four wings of a fowl; the beast had also four heads; and dominion was given to it.**

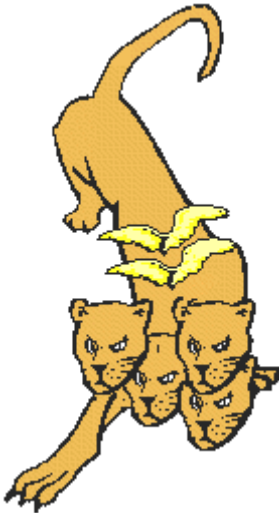
#### **Beast No. 3**

The lion devours; the bear crushes; the leopard springs upon its prey.

**[four heads]** 1) Cassander: Greece & Macedonia; 2) Lysimachus: Thrace & Bithynia (Asia Minor); 3) Seleucus: Syria, Babylonia (>India); 4) Ptolemy: Egypt, Palestine, Arabia Petrea (cf. Dan. 8:8, 22).

**The beast had also four heads**—Signifying the empire after the death of Alexander, divided between his four generals. Cassander reigning over Macedon and Greece; Lysimachus, over Thrace and Bithynia; Ptolemy, over Egypt; and Seleucus, over Syria.

Composite of three animals: Hos 13:5-8; Rev 13:2; 1 Sam 17:34-36; Prov 28:15; Jer 5:6; Amos 5:9.



**the three great empires that the Persians defeated[leopard]** A leopard is a fit symbol of the Grecian Empire founded by Alexander the Great. The leopard is known for its swiftness. This, together with the four wings of a fowl, symbolizes the swiftness of Alexander's conquests. Previously, the two wings of the lion symbolized swiftness, but here the four wings symbolize double swiftness of Alexander over Nebuchadnezzar's conquests. None of the conquests of other beasts equaled those of Alexander. The four heads symbolize the four divisions of the Grecian Empire after the death of Alexander, as do the four horns of Daniel 8:8,22-23 (see notes). Heads always symbolize kingdoms (Daniel 8:20-23; Rev. 17:9-11). This kingdom is mentioned in Daniel 2:32,35,39,45; Daniel 7:6,17; Daniel 8:5-25; Daniel 10:20; Daniel 11:3-45; Zech. 8:13.<sup>21</sup>

**Another like a leopard—four wings—four heads**—This was the Macedonian or Greek empire; and Alexander the Great its king. Alexander and his subjects are fitly compared to a leopard.

<sup>20</sup> McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (3:570). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

<sup>21</sup> Dake's Study Notes, Dake's Study Bible



1. The leopard is remarkable for its swiftness. Alexander and the Macedonians were very rapid in their conquests.
2. The leopard is a spotted animal; a proper emblem of the various nations, with their various customs and languages, which constituted the Macedonian empire. It may refer to the character of Alexander himself, sometimes mild, at others cruel; sober and drunken; continent and lecherous; having a great power of self-government, and at other times being a slave to his passions.
3. The leopard, though small, is not afraid to attack the lion.<sup>22</sup>

**Four wings of a fowl**—The Babylonian empire was represented with two wings; and they sufficiently marked the rapidity of Nebuchadnezzar’s conquests; but the Macedonian has here four wings; for nothing, in the history of the world, was equal to the conquests of Alexander, who ran through all the countries from Illyricum and the Adriatic Sea to the Indian Ocean and the River Ganges; and in twelve years subdued part of Europe, and all Asia.

**Dominion was given to it**—It was not owing to the skill, courage, or valor of Alexander and his troops, that he made those wondrous conquests; the nations were given to him. For, as Bishop Newton says, had he not been assisted by the mighty power of God, how could he, with only thirty thousand men, have overcome Darius with six hundred thousand; and in so short a time have brought the countries from Greece as far as India into subjection?

**McGee:** “Leopard” would perhaps be better translated “panther.” A panther, which leaps with suddenness upon its helpless prey, represents the Graeco-Macedonian empire of Alexander the Great.

“Four wings” further accentuates the ability of Alexander to move his army with rapidity and to strike suddenly. In comparison it would have made Nebuchadnezzar’s army look like it was on a slow train through Arkansas. Strong nations which have gained world dominion have developed the ability to move and strike with great speed. Today, in the cold war, we are witnessing a missiles race as a further refinement of the process of adding more “wings” to a nation.

The “four heads” depict the division of Alexander’s empire at the time of his death in his early thirties. Babylon went down on a drunken orgy and so did Alexander—they both went the same way. Our nation is going down the same path today. We are living in a day when the social drink is accepted. Our people don’t want their young people on drugs, but they don’t mind if they go out drinking. Following the death of Alexander, four of his generals divided the world empire which he had carved out, because each of them knew they could not control the whole. Cassander took Macedonia; Lysimachus took Asia Minor; Seleucus took Syria, out of which came the “little horn” of Daniel 8, Antiochus Epiphanes, who wrought such havoc with the temple in Jerusalem; and finally, Ptolemy took Egypt, and of course, Cleopatra came along later in that line.

Scripture does not give us an historical record of the Graeco-Macedonian kingdom. It falls chronologically between the Old and New Testaments—the period known as the

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<sup>22</sup> Adam Clarke’s Commentary

intertestament period. It was, however, the time when the remnant in Palestine endured the greatest suffering at the hands of Egypt and Syria.<sup>23</sup>

### **Daniel 7:7**

**After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it: and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns.**

#### **Beast No. 4**

No animal comparison: diverse from all the preceding; note the “iron” reference (Cf. Dan 2). Trampling all under foot: Cf. v.19. 10 horns = 10 kings (v.24).

**Rome:** Occupation of Sicily in 241 B.C., victory in the first Punic conflict. Mediterranean becomes a Roman lake by the beginning of second century B.C. Spain conquered first; then Carthage at the battle of Zama in N. Africa, 202 B.C.; subjugates are north of Italy; they then moved east, conquering Macedonia, Greece, and Asia Minor. Pompey swept into Jerusalem in 63 B.C. after destroying remnants of the Seleucid Empire (Syria).

Following decades: Empire controls southern Britain, France, Belgium, Switzerland, and Germany west of the Rhine River. Grew for four centuries, peaking in A.D. 117. Declined slowly, beginning in the third century; left Britain in A.D.407; Rome sacked by the Visigoths in 410. It was not until 1453 that the last Roman or Byzantine ruler was killed in battle and Mohammed II conquered Constantinople (Cf. v. 24; Rev 17:12). Remains until replaced by Kingdom of Heaven: vv26, 27.

10 nations: Compare Dan 2:31-35; 40-45; 7:7-8; 19-24; Rev 13:1-2; 17:3,7,12-18.

**[After this]** The phrase "after this" indicates that the fourth kingdom would follow the preceding one—Greece (Daniel 7:6,7).

**[fourth beast]** The fourth beast is a symbol the old Roman Empire, the fourth of four kingdoms in succession. It is mentioned by name only in the N.T. (John 11:48; Acts 2:10; Acts 16:21; etc.). This is a nondescript beast for there is nothing on



of

<sup>23</sup>McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (3:570). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

earth to compare it with. It is a dreadful, terrible, strong beast with great iron teeth symbolizing the same as the iron on the image of Daniel 2:40-43. In fulfillment it devoured the other beasts and stamped upon them with its feet, meaning it conquered all the territories of the first beasts—Babylon, Medo-Persia, and Greece. It was different from all beasts before it, not only in a republican form of government, but also in power, greatness, extent of dominion, and length of duration. The ten horns symbolize ten kingdoms in the latter days, the last form of the old Roman Empire (Daniel 7:7-8,23-24; Rev. 13; Rev. 17:8-17). Horns always symbolize kings (Daniel 7:7-8,23-24; Daniel 8:8-9,20-23; Rev. 17:8-17).<sup>24</sup>

**I saw—a fourth beast—it had great iron teeth**—This is allowed, on all hands, to be the Roman empire. It was dreadful, terrible, and exceeding strong: it devoured, and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue, that is, the remains of the former kingdoms, with its feet. It reduced Macedon into a Roman province about one hundred and sixty-eight years before Christ; the kingdom of Pergamos about one hundred and thirty-three years; Syria about sixty-five; and Egypt about thirty years before Christ. And, besides the remains of the Macedonian empire, it subdued many other provinces and kingdoms; so that it might, by a very usual figure, be said to devour the whole earth, to tread it down, and break it to pieces; and became in effect, what the Roman writers delight to call it, the empire of the whole world.<sup>25</sup>

**It (the fourth beast) was diverse from all the beasts that were before it**—Not only in its republican form of government, but also in power and greatness, extent of dominion, and length of duration.

The final and most terrible of the beasts is not compared to any animal in the biological kingdom. His great iron teeth suggest an immediate correlation between this beast and the iron legs of Nebuchadnezzar's image in ch. 2. The ten horns of the beast also correspond to the ten toes of Nebuchadnezzar's image and point to the final expression of the Roman Empire, which this beast prefigures. The little horn (v. 8) which springs up, displacing three of the horns, is to be understood as the "man of sin" (cf. 2 Thess 2:3-8, note), the "king" (cf. Dan 11:36-45), the "beast" (cf. Rev 13:4-10), or the Antichrist. This horn, which is a symbol of strength and sovereignty, is said to have eyes, an observation intended to identify the horn as intelligent and human. Verse 25 further defines the focus of the little horn's attack. The assault is waged against the Most High God, even to the changing of times and laws. Further, the saints of God become the object of intense persecution and oppression, so that they are "worn out."<sup>26</sup>

**McGee:** This nondescript beast with ten horns represents the Roman Empire, just as the legs of iron of Nebuchadnezzar's image did. We will find this interpreted in detail in verses 19–28. We want to get the explanation that the Spirit of God has given to us, and that will deliver us from any speculation.

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<sup>24</sup> Dake's Study Notes, Dake's Study Bible

<sup>25</sup> Adam Clarke's Commentary

<sup>26</sup> Believer's Study Bible

More attention is given to the fourth beast than to all of the other three put together. This section is very important to us because we are living in the time of the fourth beast—the time when the ten toes and horns are beginning to manifest themselves.

The fourth beast is altogether different from the others, and he is given in a separate vision. All the other beasts have counterparts in the jungles and zoos today. We all have seen a lion, or a bear, or a panther, but we have never seen a beast like this on land or sea or in the air. This is really an unusual beast. After you have had a night of dreaming about beasts like this, I don't think an aspirin tablet or a sleeping pill would do you any good at all! I think you would be awake the rest of the night.

The beast is described as “dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly.” This beast which represents the Roman Empire is characterized by strength. It incited dread and terror, and it bore no resemblance to any beast that preceded it.

“It had great iron teeth,” and this identifies it with the legs of iron of the image vision—which is the Roman Empire. The iron heel of Rome was on the neck of this world for one millennium. A great deal has been said about the Roman Empire, and even to this day it amazes historians. Gibbon has said of it: “The empire of the Romans filled the world, and when the empire fell into the hands of a single person, the world became a safe and dreary prison for his enemies. To resist was fatal and it was impossible to fly.”

Another writer, Dr. Robert D. Culver, who has a very fine book on Daniel entitled *Daniel: Decoder of Dreams*, has made this statement: “Two millennia ago, Rome gave the world the ecumenical unity which the League of Nations and the United Nations organizations have sought to give in our time. The modern attempts are not original at all (as many of our contemporaries suppose), but are revivals of the ancient Roman ideal which never since the time of Augustus Caesar has been wholly lost.”

The Roman Empire simply fell apart; it lives on in many nations of Europe, in those nations which border the Mediterranean and in North Africa—all those which were a part of the Roman Empire. No one overcame Rome, but it fell apart into these different nations.

This unusual beast had ten horns which obviously correspond to the feet of the image with ten toes. The emphasis here is not upon the *origin* of this empire, but rather upon the *end time*—the period of the ten horns.

The vision of this fourth beast is made further important to us because it is yet unfulfilled. Apparently we are living in some period toward the end time. The visions of the three beasts have been fulfilled, which means that three-fourths of this prophecy has already been literally fulfilled; there remains for the future only the time of the “horns.” The fourth kingdom of Rome has already appeared. Although it fell apart, it will come back together in ten kingdoms. It will be put together by the one whom the Word of God has labeled the Antichrist.<sup>27</sup>

**Chuck Smith:** The Roman empire was awesome and powerful. The ten horns of this beast are the counterparts of the ten toes of the feet of iron and clay in Nebuchadnezzar's dream. The last world government will be a partial revival of the ancient Roman empire (Matthew 24:29-34, Jeremiah 24, Hosea 9:10).

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<sup>27</sup> McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (3:570). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

## **The Four Beasts (Van Impe)**

Daniel dreams about four winds and four beasts-all which represent the same four powers we read about in Nebuchadnezzar's dream in chapter two: Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome, along with the ten toes of iron mixed with clay-a description of the revived Roman Empire, a regrouping of nations I believe to be the European Union. The fourth beast has ten horns, similar to the ten toes on Nebuchadnezzar's image: again, symbolic of the restored Roman Empire.

The four winds blowing upon the sea indicate trouble-and all these nations near the Sea of Galilee, the Dead Sea, and the Mediterranean have indeed experienced troublesome times throughout history. However, only when the European Union ultimately produces the Antichrist will the world truly know what real trouble is. It will be nothing like the nuisance these nations have been prior to this time in history. Isaiah 57:20 states,

*"But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt."*

Now let's look at the four beasts and indicate what each represents. Beast number one-a lion with the wings of eagles-is the same power that was described in Nebuchadnezzar's dream as the "head of gold"-the Babylonian empire. The wings of the lion suggest that it is a swift beast, with the ability to conquer great nations with its mighty armies. But as its wings are "plucked," the kingdom begins to deteriorate, even though there remains a hint of Nebuchadnezzar's humanitarianism. Since verse 4 makes reference to this first beast "being given a man's heart," you'll recall that this is the manner in which Nebuchadnezzar closed out his days after his conversion experience-compassionate, docile, and caring for his subjects.

Beast number two is a bear that raises itself up on one side, holding three ribs in its teeth-conceivably representing Lydia, Babylon, and Egypt-a hungry beast, and capable of gorging itself. Following the pattern of Nebuchadnezzar's image, this second beast is a symbol of the Medes and the Persians, with Darius ruler of the Medes and Cyrus the Persians. Ultimately, however, the Persians demonstrated greater strength because of their massive armies, and, as a result, the bear "lifted itself up on one side," indicating Persian political and military superiority, all borne out by historical fact.

Beast number three is Greece, a leopard with four wings and four heads. The wings picture the speed of Alexander the Great and his enormous armies, reckoned to be the swiftest in the known world. Alexander conquered one and one-half million square miles of the globe, stretching for more than eleven thousand miles from Greece in the west to India in the east, a man who, even after his many conquests, is said to have wept because he felt he had no more worlds to conquer.

Beast number four is Rome-a terrible beast with enormous power to maim, crush, and kill. So violent is this beast that no animal on earth can represent it. Its iron teeth are similar to the toes on the image composed of iron mixed with clay as observed in Daniel chapter two. Its ten horns are a graphic description of the final revived Roman Empire-fulfilled in 1981 when Greece became the tenth nation to join the European Union.

Some people ask me, How can these things be? How can you be so certain that your interpretation of Daniel's dream is correct?

First of all, the nations are mentioned by name in Daniel 1:1, 8:20, 8:21, and Romans 1:7. These empires cover a period of 676 years. Adding scholarship to the truth of God's Word, a prophet by the name of Esdras wrote in 90 A.D. that there was little doubt that

the fourth beast was Rome. Add to these the research insights of Drs. Gabelein, Scofield, Bultima, Ironside, Barnhouse, DeHaan and other evangelical scholars, and the evidence mounts that the only possible meaning of the symbolic fourth beast is Rome itself. Specifically, Dr. Harry Ironside, pastor of Moody Memorial Church, said there will arise a great confederacy of nations springing forth from an old Roman Empire that will become the devil's last trump card.

### **The Plot Thickens - and Will Get Thicker**

Yet, it is only within the last century that God has been unsealing the mysteries of this book and Daniel's dream. While the significance of the first three beasts is relatively easy to interpret because of its solid basis in historical fact, the ten toes (Daniel 2:41-42, 44) and the ten horns (Daniel 7:7, 20, 24 and Revelation 12:3; 13:1; 17:3, 7, 12, 16) must now be addressed in some detail.

To do this, we need to go back to the year 1947 when Benelux came into power: Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg-the first three horns on the terrible fourth beast, and the first three nations of what presently comprises the European Union. In 1957, France, Italy, and Germany joined the confederation, making it six, with the Treaty of Rome ratifying this amalgamation. In 1973, Britain, Ireland, and Denmark joined for a total of nine. Then, on January 1, 1981, Greece joined the group to make it ten in number. At this point many evangelicals were elated, making the assumption that all the members of the group had finally been assembled. However in Daniel 7:8, 20, and 24 we read that the confederation will grow to thirteen. This has already taken place: Numbers eleven and twelve who joined the EU were Spain and Portugal, coming into the confederation in 1986. Then with the arrival of Austria into the movement in 1996, the EU grew to thirteen.

But this is only the beginning. Eventually the fourth beast becomes a world empire-the New World Order, something we are already beginning to witness. Daniel 7:23 states that he shall devour (or engulf) the whole world. Revelation 13:7 adds:

*"Power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations."*

No longer is this fulfillment of prophecy something you and I read about in the Book of Daniel alone, but it is also the subject matter for the correspondents and editors of the pages of your daily newspaper: Prophecy is being fulfilled in black and white each day for those who have eyes to see and ears to hear.<sup>28</sup>

### **Daniel 7:8**

**I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things.**

#### **Horn No. 11: The "Little Horn"**

**[little horn]** *an 11th horn.* First mention in Daniel.

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<sup>28</sup>A Message of Hope from Dr. Jack Van Impe, Commentary on The Book of Daniel, Van Impe

[before whom] *behehewn*, between whom.

[plucked up by the roots] *agar*, uprooted gradually.

“Eyes, mouth” = an individual.

This “little horn” had an insignificant beginning but in its growth it was able to *uproot three of the existing horns*. (See vv. 19-26 for the identity of this fourth beast and its 11th horn.)

[I considered the horns] The horns were the last parts of the beast seen by Daniel, and are therefore considered last here (Daniel 7:8,23-24; Rev. 17:12-17).

[there came up among them another little horn] The little horn came up last after the ten horns were fully grown. It plucked up three of the ten by the roots, symbolizing the Antichrist coming in the days of the formation of Rome into ten kingdoms. He will overthrow three of them and the others will submit to him without further war (Daniel 7:8,23-24; Rev. 17:11-17).



[in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things] This little horn is a man who speaks blasphemies against God (Daniel 7:8,25; Daniel 11:36; Rev. 13:1,5; Rev. 17:3).

**And a mouth speaking great things**—Full of boasting; pretending to unlimited jurisdiction; binding and loosing at pleasure; promising to absolve from all sins, present, past, and future; and threatening to send to everlasting destruction all kings, kingdoms, and individuals, who would dare to dispute his power and authority.

**7:4-8** The lion with an eagle’s wings represents Babylon with her swift conquests (statues of winged lions have been recovered from Babylon’s ruins). The bear that ravaged the lion is Medo-Persia. The three ribs in its mouth represent the conquests of three major enemies. The leopard is Greece. Its wings show the swiftness of Alexander the Great’s campaign as he conquered much of the civilized world in four years (334-330 B.C.). The leopard’s four heads are the four divisions of the Greek empire after Alexander’s death.

The fourth beast points to both Rome and the end times. Many Bible scholars believe that the horns correspond to ten kings who will reign shortly before God sets up his everlasting kingdom. These ten kings had still not come to power at the time of John’s vision recorded in the book of Revelation (Rev. 17:12). The little horn is a future human ruler or the antichrist (see also 2 Thes. 2:3-4). God is illustrating the final end of all worldly kingdoms in contrast to his eternal kingdom.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Life Application Notes

**McGee:** Our attention is now directed to the ten horns. Notice that they do not represent a fifth kingdom: they grow out of the head of the fourth beast and are the last development of the fourth beast. In the toes of the first vision, the vision of the image, they are iron and clay. Iron is still there—Rome is still there, but the clay, the weakness, is there also. I think the iron represents the autocratic rule of one man, and the clay represents the crowd, a democracy.

Very candidly, we see that type of weakness in democracy today. We are proud of the freedom we have—I thank God we have it—but it is almost a joke to talk about how important John Q. Public is. You and I are not very important, to tell the truth. Oh, every now and then when it's time for elections, the politicians tell us how important and wonderful and educated we are. However, we have very little to do with the control of our government or with the choice of our president. The lobbyists and the politicians are making the choices. I thank God for the liberty we have, but we have been brainwashed to think as they think.

God's ideal government is not a democracy—it is a real dictatorship. When Jesus Christ rules on this earth, He is not going to ask anyone what he wants done. He is going to make the choices, and this earth is going to be run the way He wants to run it. That is the reason it would be best if you and I would become conformed to His image; otherwise we will be very uncomfortable under His dictatorship. Actually, He will put out of His kingdom anything that offends, anyone who is in rebellion against Him. We are to bow to Him and to His absolute rule.

Rome fell apart because of internal corruption and rottenness and drunkenness. All four of these empires went down with drunkenness. In our own country we say drugs are a problem, but liquor is legal. Who are we kidding? My friend, there are millions of alcoholics trying to hold down jobs today. That is only part of the problem, because that does not include the number of housewives and even children who are alcoholics but are not represented in the statistics. No one knows about them until they commit suicide or need to be put into a mental institution. That is the picture of America in the dark hour in which we live.

Rome is going to be put together again, and it is interesting that men are looking for someone who will be able to do it. The German historian Hoffman has said this: "When Germans and Slavs advanced partly into Roman ground, anyhow into the historical position of the Roman Empire, their princes intermarried with Roman families. Charlemagne was descended from a Roman house; almost at the same time the German Emperor Otho II and the Russian Grand-Prince Vladimir intermarried with daughters of the East-Roman Emperor. This was characteristic for the relation of the immigrating nations to Rome; *they did not found a new kingdom, but continued the Roman*. And so it continues to the end of all earthly power, until its final ramification into ten kingdoms. To attempt now to mark out these would be as misplaced as to fix the Coming of Christ (with which they stand connected) tomorrow or the next day."

"Another little horn" becomes the key to the entire situation. He uproots three of the ten horns and establishes himself over all. I do not know who the ten kingdoms are, but they come from the disintegration of the Roman Empire.

"In this horn were eyes," denoting human intelligence and genius.



“A mouth speaking great things” denotes the blasphemy of this man.<sup>30</sup>

### **The Little Horn (Van Impe)**

Now let's look at the "little horn" of Daniel 7:8. Who and what is it? What is its influence? Martin Luther said that this little horn is the New Testament Antichrist of the future, and I agree. This little horn's appearance was not for an earlier period in history, but for the end time of Daniel 12:4. Why? Because this little horn-the Antichrist-arises at the last day out of this grouping of ten nations. Since the European Union is now in place, there is little question that the Antichrist can-and will-arise soon.<sup>31</sup>

## **THE VISIONS OF THE SON OF MAN COMING IN CLOUDS OF HEAVEN**

### **Daniel 7:9**

**I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire.**

[**The Ancient of Days**] Mentioned three times in this chapter.

*Rema*, located, placed (not “cast”). [Thrones, plural. Where are the 24 elders? (*Church hidden* in OT; Mt 13:34,35; Eph 3:5,9.)]

“Fire”: Ex 3:2; 19:18; Consuming fire: Deut 4:24 (Heb 12:29); 9:3. Jesus: 2 Thess 1:8; Ps 18:8; 104:4; 50:3; Ezek 1:4; 13:21; Rev 4:5 (note 15:2). Sodom and Gomorrah, Gen 19:24; Nahab and Abihu, Lev 10:2; Isa 66:15-16. Fiery Stream: Ez 1, 10:1.

[**till the thrones were cast down**] From the time of Babylon until the judgment of Daniel 7:9-10, the defeat of Antichrist and the second coming of Christ of Daniel 7:11-14.

[**cast down**] Thrones of judgment were set or placed. This refers to the judgment of the nations (Daniel 7:26; Matthew 25:31-46).

[**Ancient of days**] This is God the Father, not Christ who is seen as a separate Person from the Ancient of days in Daniel 7:13-14. Both are seen as separate Persons by the same prophet and at the same place, so there must be at least two Persons in the Godhead. The fact is, there are three.

These atrocities are brought to their culmination at the judgment seat of God. The description found in vv. 9, 10 is the same given by John from Patmos in Rev 1:12-15 and 20:11-15. The “Ancient of Days” is the eternal God. The white garment indicates His purity and holiness, the hair like wool His eternal nature. The throne itself was aflame

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<sup>30</sup>McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (3:571). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

<sup>31</sup>A Message of Hope from Dr. Jack Van Impe, Commentary on The Book of Daniel, Van Impe

with judgment and justice. Books which apparently contained the accounts of the deeds of men were opened by the thousands of attendants. The last beast was destroyed and consigned to the burning flame (v. 11).<sup>32</sup>

**McGee:** The scene shifts to heaven, and the throne of God is revealed. This is the same scene described in chapters 4 and 5 of the Book of Revelation. It is the preparation for the judgment of the Great Tribulation and the second coming of Christ to the earth.

“I beheld till the thrones were cast down [placed]” corresponds to Revelation 4:4. While in Revelation John gives the number of the elders and other details, Daniel is not concerned with such since his subject does not include the church and its future.

“The Ancient of days” is the eternal God.

“Whose garment was white as snow” refers to His attributes of holiness and righteousness.

“The hair of his head like the pure wool” speaks of His infinite wisdom.

“His throne was like the fiery flame” speaks of judgment (see Rev. 4:5).

“His wheels as burning fire” speaks of the resistless energy and restless power of God (cf. Ezek. 1:13–21).<sup>33</sup>

## **Daniel 7:10**

**A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened.**

In v.26, God the Judge takes His seat, the court convenes, and the books are opened. God, who assigns power to kingdoms, will judge those kingdoms. (Cf. Rev20:12).

[books] Ex 32:32; Isa 65:6 (evil deeds); Mal 3:16, (Book of Remembrance); Dan 12:1; Lk 10:20. [Note: Rev 20:10, 12-15 *after* millennium? Rev 10:20? Dan 7:10!]

Daniel saw God judging millions of people as they stood before him. We all must stand before almighty God and give an account of our lives. If your life were judged by God today, what would he say about it? How would he measure it against his will for us? We should live each day with the full awareness that we must appear before God to give account for how we used our lives. How will your life measure up?<sup>34</sup>

This is not the Great White Throne judgment which occurs after the Millennium, but is the setting for the judgment of the Great Tribulation and the return of Christ to establish His millennial kingdom here upon earth (see Rev. 5:11–14).

**Chuck Smith:** This isn't the Great White Throne Judgment; it's the judgment by Jesus of the people who have survived the Great Tribulation (Matthew 25:31-46, 24:29-30).

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<sup>32</sup> Believer's Study Bible

<sup>33</sup> McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (3:572). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

<sup>34</sup> Life Application Notes

## **Daniel 7:11**

**I beheld then because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake: I beheld even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame.**

As Daniel was watching the little horn because of its boasting (cf. v. 8) he saw that the fourth beast was slain and consigned to blazing fire. This event will terminate “the times of the Gentiles” (Lk 21:24, 27). Cf. Rev 19:19-21. Time of the Gentiles started with Nebuchadnezzar.

**McGee:** While God is setting the judgment scene in heaven to determine who will enter the kingdom, on earth “the little horn” is blaspheming and boasting the loudest (see Rev. 13:5–6). However, his judgment is fixed and his kingdom is doomed.

The emphasis with this kingdom, represented by the last beast, is not on its beginning but on its end. The appearance of “the little horn” is shortly before Christ comes to judge living nations and individuals. This period equates the Great Tribulation Period.<sup>35</sup>

### **The Beast Speaks**

Verse 11 says the little horn, or beast, speaks, and his words are great. This event takes place during the Tribulation hour when the little horn, the infamous Antichrist, finally arises and comes to power. Revelation 13:5 and 6 add,

*"And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months. And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven."*

The Antichrist blasphemes God almighty and eventually calls himself God, but at a great cost to this "beast" because Jesus Christ will destroy him with the brightness of His coming (2 Thessalonians 2:8). However, there is even more devastation ahead as the beast and the false prophet are cast into the lake of fire burning with fire and brimstone (Revelation 19:20). Furthermore, when Satan is cast into the lake of fire one thousand years later, the beast and the false prophet are still in existence-proving that the fires of hell do not annihilate anyone, as some cults teach (Revelation 20:10).

And what about the other beasts in Daniel's dream? When do they have their dominion taken from them? This is a fascinating question, and an important one. The Medes and the Persians destroyed Babylon; Greece destroyed the Medes and the Persians, and Rome destroyed Greece. Their kingdoms and powers were taken away. Yet, the passage tells us that they still exist because all their customs and cultures were passed on to each nation that conquered them, meaning they are all still with us in some way. Remember that the old Persian Empire is today's Iran and Iraq. Would you not agree these two nations are still with us, continuing to create havoc in the area and around the world with their commitment to regional conflict and international terrorism?<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (3:572). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

<sup>36</sup> A Message of Hope from Dr. Jack Van Impe, Commentary on The Book of Daniel, Van Impe

## **Daniel 7:12**

**As concerning the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away: yet their lives were prolonged for a season and time.**

The kingdoms represented by the three preceding beasts had already been stripped of their power by military conquest. But the fourth beast will be relieved of its power not by being conquered militarily, but by divine judgment (cf. Dan 9:27; Rev 11:15; 19:15). *Each of the three, however, had been allowed to live for a short time.* Joel 3:1-2; Mt 25:31-46; Rev 1:13; Mk 14:61.

[prolonged for a season] survive in another form in the kingdom that replaces them.

### **Rome on the Rise**

- Cassander's kingdom 146 B.C.
- Lysimachus' kingdom 133 B.C.
- Seleucus' kingdom 64 B.C.
- Ptolemy's kingdom 31 B.C.

**[rest of the beasts]** The beasts or kingdoms preceding the little horn will each reign for a season and a time, then pass away, allowing a succeeding one to come, until the little horn comes whose kingdom is the eighth and last kingdom before the second coming of Christ and the establishment of the kingdom of heaven on earth forever (Daniel 7:12-14,18,27; Daniel 8:20-25; Daniel 9:27; Daniel 11:35-45; Daniel 12; Zech. 14; Matthew 24:15-31; Matthew 25:31-46; 2 Thes. 1:7-10; 2 Thes. 2:8-12; Jude 1:14; Rev. 13; Rev. 17:8-17; Rev. 19:11-21).

Although the first three beasts were destroyed, the ideology and philosophy of the kingdoms they represent apparently live on and will be manifested in the Great Tribulation Period.

## **Daniel 7:13**

**I saw in the night visions, and, behold, *one* like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him.**

**[clouds]** OT: Ex 13:21; 19:9; 24:16; 34:5; Lev 16:2; 1 Kgs 8:10-11; Ps 18:11,12; 78:14; 97:2-4; Isa 9:1; Jer 4:13; Ezek 10:4; Nah 1:3. NT: Mt 17:5; 24:30; Lk 21:27; Acts 1:9,11; Mk 14:61,62; Mt 26:64; 1 Thess 4:17; Rev 1:7; 14:14.

**[one like the Son of man]** This "one" is the Son of Man, the Lord Jesus Christ. He is not the Ancient of days of Daniel 7:9-10, but another one, separate and distinct from Him came with the clouds of heaven (Daniel 7:13). This is definitely the second coming of Christ pictured here (Isaiah 63:1-6; Zech. 14:1-5; Matthew 24:29-31; Matthew 25:31-46; Matthew 26:64; 2 Thes. 1:7-10; 2 Thes. 2:8; Jude 1:14; Rev. 1:7; Rev. 11:15; Rev. 19:11-21).

**[came to the Ancient of days]** If He comes to the Ancient of days, then He is not the Ancient of days. If they bring Him (the Son of man) near before Him (the Ancient of days), then it is confirmed twice in one scripture that these are two separate Persons, each having His own personal body, soul, and spirit.

**One like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven**—This most certainly points out the Lord Jesus, **בֶּר אֱנוֹשׁ** *bar enosh*, the Son of miserable man; who took our nature upon him that he might redeem us unto himself. To prove himself to be the Messiah he applies, before the high priests, these words of the Prophet Daniel to himself Matthew 24:30.<sup>37</sup>

**Near before him**—The Ancient of days.

**McGee:** The Son of God in heaven is here invested with the authority to take the kingdoms of this world from the Gentiles and establish His kingdom. Jesus referred to this passage when He was put on oath at His trial before the Sanhedrin: "... Again the high priest asked him, and said unto him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed? And Jesus said, I am: and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven" (Mark 14:61–62). The angel prophesied at the time of His birth: "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David" (Luke 1:32).

Therefore what we have here is a very clear-cut statement that the Lord Jesus is that "stone cut out without hands" which smites the image—He will establish His kingdom here upon earth. In the second Psalm we read: "I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee" (Ps. 2:7). He was begotten from the dead—this refers to His resurrection, not to His birth in Bethlehem. The apostle Paul gives us this interpretation in Acts 13:33. The psalmist goes on to say: "Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession" (Ps. 2:8). Jesus Christ is going to take over the kingdom. How will He do it?—"Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel" (Ps. 2:9). When He comes to the earth, the Millennium will not be there waiting for Him. *He* will put out all rebellion, and those who are obedient will enter into the kingdom.<sup>38</sup>

### **Daniel 7:14**

**And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom *that* which shall not be destroyed.**

Third major portion of this vision: the Son of Man approaching the Ancient of Days. *Jesus Christ, taking the title "Son of Man" from this prophecy, frequently used it to refer*

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<sup>37</sup> Adam Clarke's Commentary

<sup>38</sup> McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (3:573). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

*to Himself* (as recorded in the Gospels; cf. Mk 8:31; Jn 1:51). Son receives the Father's gift (Ps 2:6-9); will rule over all nations (Ps 72:11; Rev 19:15-16; cf. 7:9-12; Rev 4,5; Isa 6:1-3; Ezek 1:4-28; 10:1-14). Cf. the Father's promise to the Son in Ps 2:6-9; will be fulfilled at Christ's Second Advent (Mt 24:30; 25:31; Rev 11:15). The Son of Man will establish an everlasting dominion or kingdom (cf. Dan 4:34; 7:27). That kingdom will *never be* conquered by another (cf. 6:26). His reign will be established on earth (Rev 20:1-6).

**[kingdom]** Dan 2:44,45; Isa 9:6; 11:3-5; Mic 4:1-7; 5:2-5; Zech 14:9,16,17; Mt 24,25; Mk 14:61,62; Lk 1:32,33; 2 Thess 2:6-10; Rev 19, 20:1-4. God's purpose: Eph 1:10; Phil 2:10,11; 1 Cor 15:27-28.

The Son of man receives dominion, glory, and a kingdom composed of natural peoples of all races that they may be His subjects eternally. His kingdom is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away, and His kingdom shall not be destroyed.

Daniel's next vision was as encouraging as the first vision was terrifying. The description is that of the inauguration of the Son of Man, the glorified Lord, before the Ancient of Days. In these verses, "the Ancient of Days" is surely a divine designation. The title "Son of Man" was a favorite title of Christ for Himself (Matt 8:20; 9:6; 10:23; 11:19; 16:27, 28; 19:28; 24:30; 25:31). Rather than being "like a lion" (v. 4), "like a bear" (v. 5), "like a leopard" (v. 6), or incomparably horrible (v. 7), the divine King will at the same time be a human King. His deity is indicated by His coming "on the clouds of heaven" (cf. Matt 24:30; 26:64; Mark 13:26; Rev 1:7), by the worship that He receives (v. 14), and by the eternity of His kingdom (v. 14; cf. Ps 2:6-9). The vision depicts the kingdom era or the Millennium (cf. Rev 21:1-6, note). The entire vision is explained to Daniel so that he can know the course of world history, culminating in the ultimate triumph of God's kingdom on earth. Note Daniel's particular curiosity concerning the fourth awesome beast with the ten horns and finally the little horn (v. 19). The assurance is that this last terrible and oppressive world system will be subdued by the Most High. In place of unjust earthly kingdoms, the Lord's theocratic kingdom, an everlasting kingdom, will be established (v. 27).<sup>39</sup>

**McGee:** This prepares the way for the coming of Christ and the smashing of the image by the "stone cut out without hands" (see Rev. 19:11-16).

"An everlasting dominion" seems to contradict the idea of a millennial kingdom of one thousand years. However, at the end of the thousand years, which is a test period with Christ ruling, there will be a brief moment of rebellion against Him when Satan is released for a brief season, and then the kingdom will go right on into eternity.

Revelation 20:6 says, "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years." The thousand-year kingdom is but a phase of the everlasting kingdom. The steps are outlined clearly in Revelation 20: Christ reigns a thousand years on the earth under heavenly conditions. After this period, Satan is

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<sup>39</sup> Believer's Study Bible

released. The unregenerate human heart, still in rebellion against God, rallies to Satan's leadership, and he assembles them to make war against Christ. Satan and the rebellious betrayers are cast into the lake of fire. The lost dead are raised for judgment before the Great White Throne. After this, the eternal aspect of the kingdom comes into purview (see v. 27).

The Word of God makes it very clear that the location of this kingdom is on the earth. In Micah 4:2 we read: "And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem."<sup>40</sup>

**Chuck Smith:** In his dream, Nebuchadnezzar saw a stone that broke the image and then filled the earth. Daniel could see more clearly that the Son would destroy the world government and would be given an unending world dominion (Daniel 2:35, 44).

### **The Son of Man and the Ancient of Days (Van Impe)**

In his dream, Daniel had a vision of one like the Son of Man coming with the clouds of heaven. This is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ. This prophecy is about to happen because the term *Son of Man* is definitely the Messiah and the Savior. Let's investigate further. The term *Son of Man* is the precise one Jesus used repeatedly to describe Himself. Matthew 8:20 says,

*"And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head."*

Matthew 24:30 tells us,

*"And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory."*

Now the Ancient of Days-Yahweh-presents the kingdom to His Son, Jesus Christ. This is the moment when the stone cut out without hands smashes the feet of the image in Daniel 2:45. This announces the return of Christ because He is the stone or rock (1 Corinthians 10:4). Then comes the tremendous battle we read about in Revelation 19 when Christ comes on a white horse (v. 11) and the armies of heaven follow Him (v. 14). Verse 19 says,

*"And I saw the beast [the Antichrist, the little horn], and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him [Jesus] that sat on the horse, and against his army."*

But they do not prevail. This is the time when the prophecy of the stone smashing the feet of the image is fulfilled. It's all over for the world powers at this point because Jesus Christ has arrived to set up His Kingdom. However, as the Lord appears, the armies of the revived Roman Empire attempt to stop the King of Kings and Lord of Lords (Revelation 19:19-21). Psalm 2:1-6 pictures this final battle:

*Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands*

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<sup>40</sup>McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (3:573). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

*asunder, and cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the LORD shall have them in derision. Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure. Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion.*

This will be the great climax, that moment in history when Gentile dominion ends, and when Jesus Christ is seated on the throne of David. Luke 1:32-33 says, "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end." After the thousand-year reign of Christ, the earth is purged and Christ is recommissioned and rules eternally upon earth (1 Corinthians 15:24-28). That's why Ephesians 3:21 adds, "*Unto Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.*"<sup>41</sup>

## THE DEFINITION OF THE FOUR BEASTS

### **Daniel 7:15**

**I Daniel was grieved in my spirit in the midst of *my* body, and the visions of my head troubled me.**

**[body]** Chaldee *nidneh*, sheath.

**[troubled]** *behal*, alarmed. Like Nebuchadnezzar before him (cf. 2:1; 4:4-5), Daniel was disturbed by his dream (cf. 7:28). Though he had demonstrated the ability to interpret dreams on previous occasions (Ch. 2; 4), he could not interpret this one or his next one (8:15).

**[spirit in the midst of my body]** This shows that the spirit of man and his body are two distinct things (Matthew 10:28); that the spirit exists separate from the body (Luke 16:19-31; 2 Cor. 5:8; Phil. 1:21-24; Hebrews 12:23; James 2:26; Rev. 6:9-11), and that the spirit is immortal.

**I Daniel was grieved, etc.**—The words in the original are uncommonly emphatic. My spirit was grieved, or sickened, **בְּגוֹ נִדְנָה** *bego nidneh*, within its sheath or scabbard.

Which I think proves,

1. That the human spirit is different from the body.
2. That it has a proper subsistence independently of the body, which is only its sheath for a certain time.
3. That the spirit may exist independently of its body, as the sword does independently of its sheath.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> A Message of Hope from Dr. Jack Van Impe, Commentary on The Book of Daniel, Van Impe

<sup>42</sup> Adam Clarke's Commentary



### **Daniel 7:16**

**I came near unto one of them that stood by, and asked him the truth of all this. So he told me, and made me know the interpretation of the things.**

[one of them that stood by] I went up to one (of the many thousands) standing before the judgment thrones (Daniel 7:10) and he made known to me the interpretation (Daniel 7:16-27). This was perhaps Gabriel, Daniel's helper in other visions (Daniel 8:16; Daniel 9:21).

As the dream of the image troubled Nebuchadnezzar, this vision disturbs Daniel. He approaches one of the heavenly creatures for an explanation.

### **Daniel 7:17**

**These great beasts, which are four, are four kings, which shall arise out of the earth.**

These four beasts are not only kingdoms but kings. Nebuchadnezzar, together with his kingdom of Babylon, was represented by the head of gold and the two-winged lion. Alexander the Great, synonymous with the Graeco-Macedonian empire, is depicted by both the sides of brass and a panther. These wild beasts of prey, with their carnivorous and voracious natures, are representative of the character of both the king and the kingdom.

### **Daniel 7:18**

**But the saints of the most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever.**

[saints] *qaddishin*, "Holy Ones" (7X). OT: Mt 27:52,53; Ex 19:6. NT: 1 Cor 1:2; Eph 1:1; Phil 1:1, etc. Tribulation: Rev 13:7; see v. 21. The "saints" refer to the believing Jews (cf. v. 25), not to believers of the Church Age. The existence of the church in the present Age was nowhere revealed in the Old Testament. The nation Israel has been set aside by divine discipline in the present "times of the Gentiles," which began with Nebuchadnezzar. During the "times of the Gentiles" four empires, Daniel was told, would rise and rule over the land and people of Israel. Yet God's covenant to David (2 Sam 7:16; Ps 89:14) stands and will ultimately be fulfilled.

Daniel seems to have had no difficulty in interpreting the significance of the first three beasts. It was the fourth beast that caused him consternation, and he asked the angel (probably Gabriel; cf. 8:16; 9:21) to interpret the meaning of the beast and its 10 horns and the other horn that came up among the 10 and was so imposing. For from this point on to the end of the prophecy, Daniel concerned himself with the revelation about the person and work of the individual represented by this little horn.

**McGee:** The identity of "the saints" is the important factor of this statement. There are five verses in this chapter which mention them (see also vv. 21–22, 25, 27). Reference to them occurs again in Daniel 8:24. Immediately one school of prophetic interpretation

assumes they are New Testament saints. A great many people think even narrower than that; they feel that their denomination or their little group are the only saints there are. My friend, God has a pretty big family. In the Old Testament He had Old Testament saints. The nation Israel were called saints; the Gentiles who came in as proselytes were called saints of God. That's a different company from New Testament saints today who are in the church. Don't get the idea that your little group is the only group that will be saved or even the idea that believers in this dispensation of grace are the only ones to be saved. God saved people before the Day of Pentecost, and He is going to be saving people after the Rapture. God is in the saving business; maybe the church is failing to reach people with the gospel as it should be, but God is not failing at all.

Daniel 8:24 says, "His power shall be mighty, but not by force of arms; in astonishing ways he shall bring ruin. He shall succeed in what he undertakes. He shall destroy mighty opponents; also the holy people." The "holy people" are the saints. Exodus 19:6 identifies Israel as the holy nation or saints: "And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation ..."

The Greek word for "saints" is *hagios*, and it occurs two hundred times in the New Testament. Ninety-two times *hagios* is translated "holy" in combination with "spirit," for the Holy Spirit. It is also used to speak of believers in the church who are called "saints" or "holy ones." In the New Testament, "saints" are the sinners who have been declared righteous because of their faith in Christ (see Rom. 1:7). *Hagios* is used likewise for Old Testament believers (see Matt. 27:52-53) and for tribulation saints (see Rev. 13:7). In the Book of Daniel, therefore, "the saints" refer to people of Israel—not to all Israel but to the believing remnant only. That the church saints are not in view here is evident since Daniel does not refer to the church in any sense.<sup>43</sup>

When we pray "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven," we're praying for this kingdom (Colossians 3:4, Revelation 1:6, 5:10, Psalm 2:9, Isaiah 9:7).

## THE EXPLANATION OF THE FOURTH BEAST

### **Daniel 7:19**

**Then I would know the truth of the fourth beast, which was diverse from all the others, exceeding dreadful, whose teeth were of iron, and his nails of brass; which devoured, brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with his feet;**

**[teeth were of iron]** The teeth of iron picture the Roman Empire element as revealed in the legs of iron and the feet, part of clay and iron, of Daniel 2:40-43.

**[his nails of brass]** This is something added by the one giving the interpretation, and not mentioned in the description of the beast in Daniel 7:7-8. They symbolize the Grecian

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<sup>43</sup>McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (3:574). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

Empire element of the image of Daniel 2:39,45. There would no doubt be ten claws corresponding to the ten toes of Daniel 2:40-43 and the ten horns of Daniel 7:7-8,23-24; Rev. 17:8-17.

### **Daniel 7:20**

**And of the ten horns that *were* in his head, and of the other which came up, and before whom three fell; even of that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spake very great things, whose look *was* more stout than his fellows.**

That “mouth” again...Several facts about this little horn had already been revealed to Daniel (v. 8): **1)** It came after the 10 horns (kings; cf. v. 24) were in existence and then was contemporaneous with them; **2)** It uprooted 3 of the 10 horns (kings); **3)** It was intelligent (it had the eyes of a man); **4)** It was arrogant and boastful (cf. v. 11).

**McGee:** Everything here speaks of power and fierceness. The ferocity of the beast, with its iron teeth and brass nails, is noted again. Rome was hated by her captive nations. Hannibal vowed vengeance against her cruel power and lived to execute it; yet he was finally subdued by Rome. Rome rejected the Son of God, the Savior, through her puppet Pilate, who asked the cynical and contemptuous question of Jesus, “What is truth?” Rome crucified Jesus and persecuted the church.

The ten horns grow out of the beast, denoting a later development, not a separate kingdom. Note that the horns do not grow out of a dead beast. Rome *lives* in the fragmentation of the empire in the many existing nations of Europe and North Africa, including perhaps some of Asia. However, I do not think we can specifically identify the nations. At the time of the end, three of the horns will fall before “the little horn” who is dominant in personality, ability, propaganda, and public appeal. “The little horn” is Antichrist, the Man of Sin (2 Thess. 2:3–4), and the first Beast (Rev. 13:3–6).<sup>44</sup>

**Chuck Smith:** We usually describe this person as Antichrist, though the Bible calls him the beast and the son of perdition. As Jesus is the Son of God and does the will of the Father, the Antichrist will be like the son of Satan. He'll seem to have the answers for the world's problems, and he'll do miracles that will convince people to trust him (Revelations 13:2-8, 17:8). The "saints" in these verses are the Jews who have turned their hearts to God in the troubled times for Israel.

Many members of our government are members of the Trilateral Commission. Their ultimate goal is for one-world government. They'll send a copy of their goals and membership to those who write and ask for this information: The Trilateral Commission of North America, 345 East 46th Street, New York, NY 10017.

### **Daniel 7:21**

**I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them;**

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<sup>44</sup>McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (3:574). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

Now additional facts are given: **5**) He will *prevail against the saints of the Most High*; He will overcome them (Cf. Rev 13:7). [This would appear to contradict Jesus' promise to the Church (Mt 16:18): they are not the church, but the remnant of Israel (Rev 12:13-17). 2/3 fall: Zech 13:8,9. Jerusalem falls: Zech 14:1,2. Prevail, overcome? (Cf. Rev 13:7; 11:3; 12:6; 13:5) vs. Mt 16:18; Rev 2, 3 (1 Jn 5:5!).

**McGee:** It should be noted that Rome will again be a world power under Antichrist. We are told in Revelation 13:7—“And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.” This will be a brief period in the last part of the Great Tribulation (see Rev. 11:3; 12:6; 13:5). The church will be removed before the Tribulation begins.

The Romans have been a warlike people. Our ancestors in Europe have been warlike people for fifteen hundred years, and we still are. You cannot go into any city or small town in this country today without seeing a monument to our war dead. G.K. Chesterton said, “One of the paradoxes of this age is that it is the age of pacifism, but not the age of peace.” Oh, people carry placards about peace, but we are not a peaceful people. The Bible says, “For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape” (1 Thess. 5:3). War is in our hearts. In recorded history man has engaged in fifteen thousand wars and has signed some eight thousand peace treaties; yet in all that time, he has enjoyed only two to three hundred years of true peace. Man is a warlike creature.

The Roman Empire is to be put together again, and the Antichrist will be the one to do it. He will march to world power and will become the world ruler. We are told he will blaspheme the God of heaven: “And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven” (Rev. 13:6).

What is the picture in Europe today? Early in the 1950s a University of Oklahoma professor traveled through Europe, and although it was less than a decade since the close of World War II with all of its death and destruction, he reported that there was ample evidence the people were looking for a strong man, a leader like Hitler or Napoleon, who would restore their nations to the grandeur and glory and prosperity they once knew.

Even a man like Bishop Fulton J. Sheen made this statement: “The Antichrist will come disguised as the great humanitarian. He will talk peace, prosperity, and plenty, not as a means to lead us to God but as ends in themselves. He will explain guilt away psychologically and make men shrink in shame if their fellowmen say they are not broadminded and liberal. He will spread the lie that men will never be better until they make society better.”

My friend, the world is moving toward the time when Europe will come together. I don't know how far away it is. The Common Market is evidence that Europe is moving in that direction; yet it does not mean that we have come to the end.

Another thing has happened in Europe that provides the psychological basis for its coming together. Some young people of Italy, France, and Germany, for instance, do not want to be called Italians, French, and Germans. They like to be called *Europeans*. What a preparation for the coming of Antichrist! Europe today is like ripe fruit hanging on a

tree—all the Antichrist needs to do is come and pick it. However, he is not going to come until the Lord removes the church from the world as we read in 1 and 2 Thessalonians.<sup>45</sup>

### **Daniel 7:22**

**Until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom.**

He will be judged by God (cf. Rev 19:19-20), and Israel, no longer under the rule of the little horn, will enter into her covenanted blessings in the kingdom (cf. Dan 7:18).

“The Ancient of days” is Christ; He is the only One Who is going to be able to put down Antichrist.

“The saints.” Again, we are not talking about New Testament saints—this is the Old Testament. Let the Bible say what it wants to say and don’t try to make it fit *your* little jigsaw puzzle of doctrine.<sup>46</sup>

### **Daniel 7:23**

**Thus he said, The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces.**

The fourth beast is identified here as a *kingdom* and in verse 17 as a *king*. It is impossible to separate the king from his kingdom; both belong together like two sides of a door.

### **Daniel 7:24**

**And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise: and another shall rise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings.**

The sphere of this coming ruler in the 4th kingdom will be worldwide. Daniel was told that this empire will devour the whole earth (cf. Rev 13:7). And it will be a ferocious conquest, in which that kingdom will trample and crush those who oppose it; a coming one-world government under a worldwide dictator.

[out of] this kingdom: Arise (“1 hour”: Rev 17:12);

[another] (11th) after them...diverse from the others...

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<sup>45</sup>McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (3:575). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

<sup>46</sup>McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (3:575). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

**[ten horns]** The ten horns symbolize ten kings who will rule ten kingdoms that are yet to be formed inside the old Roman Empire.

The final form of the Roman world power will be a confederation of 10 nations who will arise simultaneously in the tribulation days.

**McGee:** There are ten horns that come out of this fourth beast, and they denote the final form of the fourth kingdom. Each of these kings represents a kingdom. An eleventh king, “the little horn,” will arise. He is going to be diverse from the others and will move to world power by subduing three of the kings. He will actually become the dictator of the entire world. This is the picture that is given to us in Revelation 13:7—“And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.” He is the Man of Sin, the Antichrist, and he is going to rule the world during the Great Tribulation Period, which is a period of seven years.<sup>47</sup>

### **Daniel 7:25**

**And he shall speak *great* words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time.**

Mouth again...

**[against]** *le’tsad*, “at the side of”: (2 Thess 2:4).

The “Roman” Empire will cease to exist when the Little Horn is judged.

Three additional facts are now revealed: **1)** He will oppose God’s authority. *He will speak against the Most High* (cf. Rev 13:6). **2)** He will *oppress His saints* (i.e., Israel; cf. comments on 7:21). **3)** He will introduce an entirely new era in which he will abandon all previous laws and institute his own system.

[Change the Law (singular) Gen 1:4; 17:21; 18:14.] As in 9:27a, he will appear as Israel’s friend, but will become Israel’s persecutor (the saints will be handed over to him) and he will occupy Jerusalem as a (“tabernacle”) of his empire (11:45) for three and one-half years (Rev 12:6; 13:5).

**[Time, times, and half a time]** (cf. Dan 12:7; Rev 12:14) refers to the three and one-half years of the Great Tribulation, with “a time” meaning one year, “times” two years, and “half a time” six months. This equals the 1,260 days in Revelation 12:6 and the 42 months in Revelation 11:2; 13:5.

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<sup>47</sup> McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (3:576). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

**“Time, Times, and ½ Time”**

- “Times” = dual, later lost in Aramaic:  $1 + 2 + \frac{1}{2} = 3 \frac{1}{2}$  Dan 7:25, Dan 12:7; Rev 12:14
- $3\frac{1}{2}$  years Dan 9:27; 12:7
- 42 months Rev 11:2; 13:5
- 1260 days Rev 11:3; Dan 12:6
- $\frac{1}{2}$  “week” Dan 9:27

**[think to change]** Aramaic: *cebar* (H5452), purpose, hope. He will change times and laws and they will be given into his hands for three and a half years (Daniel 12:7; Rev. 13:5).

**And think to change times and laws**—Appointing fasts and feasts; canonizing persons whom he chooses to call saints; granting pardons and indulgences for sins; instituting new modes of worship utterly unknown to the Christian Church; new articles of faith; new rules of practice; and reversing, with pleasure, the laws both of God and man.—Dodd.<sup>48</sup>

**McGee:** The little horn is a blasphemer. “And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months. And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven” (Rev. 13:5–6).

One of the characteristics of Antichrist is that he is against God and *against Christ*. That is one of the meanings of “antichrist”; the other meaning is to *imitate Christ*. I believe that the two beasts of Revelation 13 represent these two aspects of Antichrist: (1) that he is against Christ and a blasphemer; and (2) that he is a false prophet and attempts to imitate Christ; although he acts like a lamb, he really is a wolf in sheep’s clothing.

We are also told that he “shall wear out the saints of the most High.” That doesn’t mean like some of us preachers wear out the saints on Sunday mornings! It means literally to afflict and persecute the saints (see Rev. 12:13–17).

“And think to change times and laws”—the little horn will change customs and laws.

The period of the little horn’s reign is of short duration: “they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time.”

“Time”	1 year
“Times”	2 years
“Dividing of time”	<u>1/2 year</u>
	3 1/2 years

It is during the last three and one-half years of the Great Tribulation that he will reign over the earth (see Rev. 11:2–3; 12:6; 13:5).<sup>49</sup>

<sup>48</sup> Adam Clarke’s Commentary

<sup>49</sup> McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (3:576). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

## **Daniel 7:26**

**But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy *it* unto the end.**

**[they shall take away his dominion]** Like all other ambitious world conquerors he will come short of conquest of the whole world (Daniel 8:24-25; Daniel 11:40-45; Rev. 19:11-21).

**[unto the end]** To reveal the events that will end this age of grace is the primary purpose of this vision (Daniel 7:26-27; Daniel 8:24-26; Daniel 9:27; Daniel 11:40-45; Rev. 4:1-19:21).

**McGee:** “The judgment shall sit” reminds us of the scene in heaven in Revelation 4 and 5 where thrones are depicted. It is determined by the One on the central throne and by the Lamb who is the executor of the judgment, and it is the agreement of all God’s created and redeemed intelligences of heaven that the beast must be put down. His dominion must be ended and he himself judged. “The judgment shall sit”—this cannot be changed. This judgment continues through the Great Tribulation and is consummated by the return of Christ to the earth to establish His kingdom (see Rev. 19:11–21). Thus will end “the times of the Gentiles” which began with Nebuchadnezzar and will continue until the return of Christ.<sup>50</sup>

## **Daniel 7:27**

**And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.**

When the Judge, God the Father, convenes the court (cf. v. 10), that is, when He judges the little horn, his power will be removed and he will be destroyed (cf. v. 11; 2 Thess 2:8; Rev 19:20). This will occur at the Second Advent of Christ. At the beginning of the Millennium the Son of Man will be given authority to rule (cf. Dan 7:14). This kingdom will not be overthrown and superseded by another. It will continue in the Millennium and on forever (cf. Dan 4:34; 6:26; 7:14).

**[everlasting kingdom]** Deut 28:1-44; Isa 65:17-25; 2 Tim 2:12; Rev 5:10; 20:6.

**[the whole heaven]** This is to be taken literally, not figuratively, as in the references to the extent of the world empires of Daniel 2:38,39,40; Daniel 7:23; Rev. 13:8,16. There is no limitation to the extent of the coming kingdom of God, as with the human kingdoms in the times of the Gentiles.

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<sup>50</sup>McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (3:576). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.



**[to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom]** Three times in this chapter it is stated that the saints of God will take over the kingdoms of the world following the kingdom of Antichrist (Daniel 7:18,22,27). Also, three times it is stated that the kingdom will be eternal (Daniel 7:13-14,18,27).

**[all dominions shall serve and obey him]** All earthly kingdoms will eventually be under God as before rebellion started by Lucifer and later by Adam (1 Cor. 15:24-28; Ephes. 1:10; Rev. 21-22).

Antichrist will march to power by subduing three of the 10 nations (v. 24), will blaspheme God (v. 25), will try in some way to change times and laws in order to promote his anti-Christian program (v. 25), and will persecute God's saints (v. 25) for the last 3 1/2 years of the Tribulation.<sup>51</sup>

**McGee:** This is a reference to the eternal kingdom which appears first in its millennial aspect (see Rev. 20) and then opens up into eternity. Those who find fault with the premillennial position say that the Millennium is not an accurate interpretation but that the kingdom is an *eternal* kingdom. However, the Millennium is simply a thousand-year period of testing such as we are in today, and it leads and eventuates into the eternal kingdom.

This is the statement of Irenaeus, one of the early church fathers: "But when this Antichrist shall have devastated all things in this world, he will reign for three years and six months, and sit in the temple at Jerusalem; and then the Lord will come from heaven in the clouds, in the glory of the Father, sending this man and those who follow him into the lake of fire; but bringing in for the righteous the times of the kingdom, that is, the rest, the hallowed seventh day; and restoring to Abraham the promised inheritance in which kingdom the Lord declared that 'Many coming from the east and from the west should sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob ...'" It is wearisome to hear men try to dissipate and dissolve the Millennium and God's dispensational program for this world by saying that the early church fathers were not premillennial.

Note also this statement by the historian, Philip Schaff. "The most striking point in the eschatology of the ante-Nicene age is the prominent chiliasm, or millenarianism, that is the belief of a visible reign of Christ in glory on earth with the risen saints for a thousand years, before the general resurrection and judgment. It was indeed not the doctrine of the church embodied in any creed or form of devotion, but a widely current opinion of distinguished teachers." May I say to you, you are in good company today if you believe we are going to have a Millennium here on earth.<sup>52</sup>

### **Daniel Is Confused (Van Impe)**

Daniel had no one to help him understand what he had been dreaming, so God provided a messenger to interpret the dream on His behalf-the angel Gabriel. The message of chapter two, Nebuchadnezzar's dream, had been so clear and unified, whereas now his own dream was filled with diversity, the edges of his understanding ragged, all because he was

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<sup>51</sup> Ryrie Study Bible

<sup>52</sup> McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (3:576). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

dealing with four terrible, vile beasts-not an immense one-piece image of gold, silver, and bronze-but a diversity of four beasts acting out their beastly nature in fits of anger, violence, and conquest.

Then, suddenly, something exciting happens in verse 18 where the saints of the most High take the Kingdom. This is when Jesus Christ returns, and, as we have already stated, the stone smites the feet of the image, placing Christ and His saints in control. They are the ones who return with Jesus-individuals who missed the terrible seven-year period of Tribulation because they were called up in Revelation 4:1.

In Revelation 19:11-14, when Christ returns on that white horse, we discover that the armies in heaven follow Him-a picture of the Church returning to earth. Jude verse 14b says, "Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints." They had no way of saying millions, billions, or trillions in the first century, so they used the term *tens of thousands*. But there is also the group of saints-the 144,000 Jewish messengers (Revelation 7:4-8)-who preached the gospel of the Kingdom (Matthew 24:14). You see, not only will many Jews be converted through mass, worldwide efforts of evangelism, but multitudes-yes, millions-of Gentiles will also be saved, many of whom are put to death for loving the Word of God. Revelation 20:4-5 speak of this treachery:

*And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.*

The saints are coming from heaven. Those who have died during the tribulation are then raised from the dead (Revelation 20:4). The Jews in Daniel 12:2 who "*slept in the dust of the earth*" also awaken, while Gentiles who died for their testimony also arise. Now we have saints from heaven, tribulation saints who were brought back from the dead, Jewish saints who also were resurrected, and saints who are still alive on earth at Christ's return who somehow escaped the death penalty for rejecting the "mark of the beast" (Matthew 25:31-46; Revelation 13:15-18). They will all rule and reign with Jesus Christ, giving further credence to the passage, "*If we suffer, we shall also reign with him*" (2 Timothy 2:12a).

### **The European Community-Antichrist-and 666**

While general concern may have reigned in Daniel's mind regarding much of the dream, there seemed to be a special confusion regarding the fourth beast. Daniel had a reasonably adequate understanding of Babylon, the Medes and the Persians, and Greece, largely since they already existed within his own time frame. But this next beast-Rome-and the revived Roman Empire-would come centuries later, and he could not, in his day, know anything about this mystery without the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit concerning end-time events. This was the empire with the two legs and ten toes, and the animal with ten horns that was a composite of all the others.

Ten toes and ten horns. Try though he might, Daniel could not grasp their meaning. Yet now, twenty-five hundred years later, you and I are on the edge of watching such mysteries unfold as the European Union flexes its international muscles, preparing the world community for the advent of the Antichrist. During the terrible Tribulation hour,

the Jewish people are primarily the saints against whom the Antichrist prevails. Jeremiah 30:7 says, "*Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble.*"

Jacob is another name for Israel (2 Kings 17:34). We find that when Satan is cast to earth he becomes extremely angry when he realizes his time is exceedingly short (Revelation 12:12). For this reason, he makes every attempt to obliterate the Jewish race (Revelation 12:13). He persecutes the woman who brought forth the man-child-that woman is the Jewish virgin, Mary. The Son that came from her is that man-child, and this Antichrist is trying to get rid of all those who came forth from her, as well as millions of Gentiles. Both groups find salvation during the Tribulation hour (Revelation 7:14). These are the ones who have come out of the Great Tribulation and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the lamb.

At this point of time the Antichrist will call himself God, and the false prophet sets up an image of him to worship. The Bible says in Revelation 13:15, "*And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.*"

He says, "Bow down and worship this image of me and take my mark '666' or you will lose your head" (see Revelation 13:15-18; 20:4). This is that period of time when the Antichrist will prevail over the saints. But to reiterate the good news, the Lord Jesus Christ ultimately returns as King of Kings and Lord of Lords (Revelation 19:16) and defeats the Antichrist and his hoards (Revelation 19:19-21; Psalm 2:1-6).

Good news indeed! At that crucial moment in history, almighty God says, "How dare you think you can stand against me and my Son as I present Him to the world as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. You lose.., because I now set up my King upon the holy hill of Jerusalem!"

We will continue our study in Daniel in our next newsletter.

### **The Reign of the Antichrist**

Before we close this chapter, it's important to review the activity of the Antichrist for the eighty-four months that he appears on earth. His reign begins when he makes a peace contract with Israel and the nations. Daniel 9:27 says, "And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease." The Hebrew word for *week* in the above passage is *shabua*, a time period of seven years, or eighty-four months.

In the midst of the week or *shabua*-after forty-two months-he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease. His first item of business is to make peace with Israel, an agreement he honors for three and one-half years. At that point, however, Russia begins its march southward to Israel to break the peace contract that the Antichrist originally made with Israel. Then Gog and Magog (Russia) go up against the land of unwalled villages when Israel is at rest (Ezekiel 38:11).

We know that since she became a nation in 1948, Israel has neither been at rest nor at peace. Soon a peace program of seven years duration will be contracted. But it will be short-lived. Russia ruins it. During this battle the Antichrist comes to his end (Daniel 11:45). Yes, he actually dies, but Revelation 13:3 says, "his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered [marveled] after the beast." In other words, the Antichrist is resurrected. He comes back to life. That's why everyone marvels at him, literally standing

in awe of his great political prowess and enormous ability to move the minds and hearts of people globally.

To the world, he appears to be like Jesus, returning to life. It's at this point he magnifies himself above every God (Daniel 11:36) and exalts himself above all gods to a deluded and deceived world (2 Thessalonians 2:4). He literally says, "I am God." Today, as you watch an acceleration of the New Age movement and its "I am God" philosophy, crystals, shamans, chants, and channeled messages that permeate every segment of our society-even entering the church of Jesus Christ-be aware that this global satanic activity has already proved instrumental in preparing the way for this great deceiver to set himself up for worship (Revelation 13:15), a time when he literally "wears out the saints" (Daniel 7:25). This activity takes place through to the end of the seven years when Jesus Christ ultimately returns and destroys the evil one with the brightness of His glory, casting him into the lake of fire where he remains forever and ever (Revelation 19:20).

Daniel's Reaction

*28. Hitherto is the end of the matter. As for me Daniel, my cogitations much troubled me, and my countenance changed in me: but I kept the matter in my heart.*

When his dream had been explained by the angel Gabriel, Daniel felt a sorrow of heart, for he now began to understand what would one day happen to his people, the Jews. His dream had helped him catch a glimpse of the terrible times of persecution that would fall upon them. He was rightly disturbed and confused because he was not totally privy to understanding the great blessings-the rest of the story-that would ultimately come to his people-blessings we will discover as we continue to unwrap the sealed mysteries of the time of the end, even as we see Daniel's humanity surface when he is physically and psychologically devastated by the vision he sees in chapter eight.

We have come to the close of the section that addresses God's rule over the Gentiles. To help you understand where Daniel is emotionally at this point, I'd like you to put yourself in his position for a moment. You have just dreamed something tantamount to a nightmare in chapter seven that has unnerved you. You fainted; you became anxious-so fearful that you needed help to interpret what you experienced. Now, you are taking your agitation and dismay to the next practical level by asking yourself:

*If three more Gentile kingdoms, as suggested by the dream, are supposed to arrive on the scene to dominate the world after Babylon, what will be the fate of my people, the Jews, during that period of time? How long will their trials last? What will be the end result?*

These vexing questions are coursing through Daniel's mind, but still, he has no answers. But God never leaves His people in a state of confusion. For that reason, God begins to provide Daniel with specific revelations that relate to the future history of His people. With that brief background, we now spend the remainder of the book reviewing these revelations, giving special emphasis to interpreting the prophecies that address "the time of the end"-predictions that not only relate to Israel during the latter days, but also speak to you and me-Jew or Gentile-today.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> A Message of Hope from Dr. Jack Van Impe, Commentary on The Book of Daniel, Van Impe

## **Daniel 7:28**

**Hitherto is the end of the matter. As for me Daniel, my cogitations much troubled me, and my countenance changed in me: but I kept the matter in my heart.**

(The angel finishes the sentence that began in v. 23.)

Daniel: “Color me shocked.” This prophetic panorama of the times of the Gentiles was so awesome to Daniel that he was deeply moved.

[Text now changes from Aramaic back to Hebrew. Distinguishes the two major programs of God in the Old Testament.]

**[cogitations]** Aramaic, *ra’yown* (H7476), thought, mental conception.

**[troubled me]** Baffled me, indicating that Daniel did not fully comprehend the extent of his vision.

**McGee:** Daniel did not divulge to his contemporaries the visions and their contents since they belonged to the end time. They were disturbing to Daniel, however, and made such an impression upon him as to alter his entire outlook. This was something brand new to him.

The study of prophecy in this day is not for the selfish gratification of idle curiosity or vain knowledge. Rather, the careful, prayerful study of prophetic Scripture has a transforming effect upon the life of a believer.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>54</sup>McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (3:577). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.



**Think to change times and laws.** There has only been one organization that has really claimed the power or authority to change times and laws. Even our calendar comes from Pope Gregory XIII. Recognized world wide, the Roman Catholic Church is the only organization, civil or religious, that has had such influence over the law as to declare a day holy or change the law of God. The Law of all laws is the ten commandments, and the Holiest of all times is the Sabbath of the ten commandments. It changed the ten commandments by deleting the second and splitting the tenth and it changed the 4th commandment to the 1st day of the week.



The Christian Sabbath, 2nd ed. (Baltimore: The Catholic Mirror (1893), pg. 29-31. "the Catholic Church for over one thousand years before the existence of a Protestant, by virtue of her Divine mission, changed the day from Saturday to Sunday... The protestant says: How can I receive the teachings of an apostate Church? How, we ask, have you managed to receive her teaching all your life in direct opposition to your recognized teacher, the Bible, on the SABBATH QUESTION?"

Johann Eck said to Luther "Scripture teaches: 'Remember to hallow the Sabbath day; six days shall you labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath day of the Lord your God,... Yet, the church has changed the Sabbath into Sunday on its own authority, on which you have no Scripture.'" John Eck, Enchiridion of Commonplaces of John Eck against Luther and other Enemies of the Church, trans. F.L. Battles, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, Mich.:Calvin Theological Seminary, 1978), 8th vol, pg. 13 quoted in God Cares pg. 142.

Also in Mansi, Sacrorum Conciliorum, 33:529, 530.

"The authority of the church is illustrated most clearly by the Scriptures; for while on the one hand she recommends them , declares them to be divine, offers them to us to be read,... on the other hand, the legal precepts in the Scriptures taught by the Lord have ceased by virtue of the same authority. The Sabbath, the most glorious day in the law, has been changed into the Lord's day... These and other similar matters have not ceased by virtue of Christ's teaching (for He says He has come to fulfill the law, not to destroy it), but they have been changed by the authority of the church." Council of Trent (1545-1563) Jan 18, 1562 Gaspare de Posso, archbishop of Reggio quoted in God Cares pg. 142/128.

"They allege the change of the Sabbath into the Lord's day, contrary, as it seemeth to the Decalogue; and they have no example more in their mouths than the change of the Sabbath. They will needs have the Church's power to be very great, because it hath dispensed with a precept of the Decalogue." Creeds of Christendom, Vol 3 pg. 64 quoted in Unfolding Daniel's Prophecies by Roy Allen Anderson pg. 93.

Philip Melanchthon, Martin Luther's sidekick, said "He changeth the tymes and lawes that any of the sixe work dayes when he lysted, or of their own holy dayes abolished make work dayes again, or when they changed ye Saturday into Sondag." Exposition of Daniel the Prophete (gathered out of Philip Melanchthon by George Joye, 1545) quoted in Unfolding Daniel's Prophecies by Roy Allen Anderson pg. 93. They have also established "Holy"days like St Hallows Eve, also known as Halloween.