

# THE PROPHECIES OF DANIEL

In the Light of  
PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE EVENTS

by

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## CHAPTER SEVEN

### DANIEL'S VISION OF THE FOUR BEASTS

Foreshadowing God's View of “**the Times of the Gentiles**”

CHAPTERS two and seven of the Book of Daniel present the same general prophecy, but from different points of view.

Both outline the entire period of “**the times of the Gentiles,**” which began with Nebuchadnezzar and will end with the return of Christ in glory.

In chapter two Nebuchadnezzar, “**the natural man,**” saw Gentile world dominion from the standpoint of the godless world; whereas Daniel, “**the spiritual man,**” saw it from God's viewpoint.

Consequently, Nebuchadnezzar's vision presented the image of man, noble, stately, and magnificent; Daniel's vision set forth four powerful, Gentile world empires, represented by four ravenous, monstrous beasts, depicting the moral character of the nations.

The image which Babylon's king saw filled him with pride, and later he set up a golden image, demanding worship of himself; the vision which Daniel saw presented Gentile world power in God's unsullied light, revealing the brutality, the fierceness, and the greed of these Christ-rejecting kingdoms of men.

A glance at our chart will remind us that the theme of Daniel's prophecy is: The commencement, character, course, and consummation of “**the times of the Gentiles.**”

A comparison of the pictures on the chart, illustrating chapters two and seven, will show how these two chapters set forth the same prophetic period of time.

Let us outline here this twofold picture of the one long period:

## “THE TIMES OF THE GENTILES”

<i>Gentile World- Empires</i>	<i>As Viewed by Man (Daniel 2)</i>	<i>As Viewed by God (Daniel 7)</i>
Babylon	The head of gold	The lion with eagle's wings.
Medo-Persia	The arms and breast of silver	The bear with three ribs between his teeth.
Greece	The belly and thighs of brass	The beast like a leopard.
Rome	The legs of iron	The nameless beast with iron teeth.
(A long parenthesis)	The Church age which God did not reveal to Daniel.	
The revived Roman Empire	The feet and ten toes of iron and clay	The ten horns of the fourth beast, and “the little horn,” who is the Antichrist.
Gentile dominion will end with the return of Christ	The smiting Stone	The coming of the Son of Man in glory

As we get this outline picture in our minds, let us remember that God did not reveal to Daniel this church age. We have already seen that “**in other ages**” the church “**was not made known unto the sons of men,**” but that it was given to Paul by special revelation (Ephesians 3:1-12).

We have seen that the church began on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2); and that in this age of grace God is calling out “**a people for his name**” (Acts 15:14)—both Jew and Gentile, to be the bride of Christ. After the church is complete, the Lord Jesus will call His bride Home to heaven. Then the events of “the latter time” will begin to run their course.

Briefly, these are:

- The manifestation of the Antichrist;
- his rule of seven years over the revived Roman Empire;
- “**The Great Tribulation**” upon Daniel's people, Israel;
- The return of Christ in glory to set up His millennial kingdom on earth.

Therefore, just as the prophecy given to Nebuchadnezzar in the form of the image has already been fulfilled except for the feet and toes of iron mixed with clay, so also Daniel's vision has been fulfilled except for the arising of the ten horns and “**another little horn**” of the fourth monstrous beast.

When the church has been translated, the toes of the image will come into prominence, which is another way of saying that the ten kings, represented by the “**ten horns**” will arise, dominated by “**the little horn,**” who is the Antichrist yet to be revealed. Thus the revived Roman Empire will run its course in a brief but powerful dominion. It will come to its end when the “**stone cut out without hands,**” even the Lord Jesus, smites the image upon the toes, and the whole is scattered like chaff before the wind.

The parallel to this scene, as described in chapter seven, is found in the coming of the Son of Man in power and great glory to slay the fourth, nameless beast, and to establish His millennial kingdom upon earth.

Once we get this outline picture of the two chapters, it is a simple matter to go back to fill in the details.

We do want to go back to get these details, lest someone say that all of this interpretation is fanciful and imaginary. Not at all! God gives us the interpretation of chapter seven, even as He did of chapter two. How minutely He has done it—presenting in chapter two the unsaved man's view of “**the times of the Gentiles,**” as well as His own divine view in chapter seven! Here we have but another illustration of the eternal truth, spoken by Samuel, the prophet (16:7), centuries before Daniel's day,

**Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart.**

What a sad picture He must see today as He looks past the great civilizations, illuminated by the wonders of man's genius, into the very heart of the nations themselves! Nor is this all, my friend. He searches out the hearts of individual men and women. Nothing is hid from His all-seeing eye.

As He turns the searchlight of His Holy Spirit upon your heart and life, what does He see hidden therein? Your friends may commend; the world may applaud, as it recounts your noble deeds; but God's Word says, “**The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?**” (Jeremiah 17:9).

If you want to stand before God unafraid and unashamed for all eternity, then let Him clothe you in His own righteousness, washing your sins as white as snow. This is the only way of salvation.

By the time Daniel saw the vision of the four beasts, some years had elapsed since God had given Nebuchadnezzar the vision of the image of a man, outlining Gentile world dominion from beginning to end.

We learn this from the opening words (vv. 1-3) of chapter seven:

**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. Daniel spake and said, I saw in my vision by night, and, behold, the four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea. And four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another.**

## **“THE FOUR WINDS” AND “THE GREAT SEA”**

“**The four winds**” represent the providences of God; “**the great sea**” has both a literal and a figurative application, for it represents the Mediterranean Sea, as well as the great mass of humanity. If you will turn to a map of ancient Europe, you will see that the Mediterranean was called “**The Great Sea.**” Perhaps you have such a map in the back of your Bible. But according to the imagery of the Word of God, “**the sea**” is also a figure of “**peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues**” (Revelation 17:15).

Jeremiah tells us that “**the nations are like the troubled sea.**”

It is a fact of history that the four, great Gentile world Empires, arising successively out of the sea of nations, bordered upon the Mediterranean; hence this twofold application of “**the great sea**” which Daniel saw.

He got a foreview of the troubled nations that border or surround the Mediterranean Sea.

Now Daniel beheld as “**the four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea.**” We said a moment ago that “**the four winds**” represent the providences of God, as they move among the nations. Daniel's God is still working; He is still on the throne! Although He permits the devil to deceive the Christ-rejecting nations during Gentile dominion, because those nations turn their backs upon Him, yet Satan will meet his eternal doom in the lake of fire. We cannot always understand the providences of God, but we can always trust His wisdom and His love!

“**The wind**” in Scripture is a figure of the Holy Spirit, as we read in John 3:8. Even as the wind blows where it will; even as we cannot see “**whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.**”

As Daniel saw “**the four winds of the heaven**” as they “**strove upon the great sea,**” he seems to have witnessed a storm or conflict among the nations (vv. 3, 4), out of which the four beasts arose.

### **THE LION WITH EAGLE'S WINGS—REPRESENTING BABYLON**

**And four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another. 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 [two feet] as a man, and a man's heart was given to it.**

It is significant that the Holy Spirit devotes only two verses of this chapter to the interpretation of the vision of the first three beasts (vv. 12, 17), whereas most of the chapter has to do with the fourth beast and the interpretation thereof. The emphasis is laid upon the last form of the fourth kingdom—the revived Roman Empire under the dominion of the Antichrist; his doom; and the return of Christ in glory to put an end to Gentile misrule and to set up His own glorious kingdom on earth.

One of the two verses which the Holy Spirit devotes to the explanation of the first three beasts, including also the fourth, is verse 17:

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

As he heard this explanation, Daniel must have remembered Nebuchadnezzar's forgotten dream, which God gave to him, picturing these “**four kings,**” or “**kingdoms**” (v. 23). It was not God's will to dwell long upon the first three kingdoms in the beast vision which He gave to Daniel. All three of these empires were to cover only a few centuries, whereas the fourth has already covered more than two thousand years. No wonder the Holy Spirit gave most of the interpretation to the fourth beast!

Moreover, the first Gentile empire; that of Babylon, was rapidly drawing to a close when God gave to Daniel this beast vision; and the second and third beasts, or empires, are described fully in the eighth chapter of this prophecy. Therefore, it was not necessary that further details be added here.

But there is an even more important reason why most of chapter seven is devoted to the “**fourth beast**” and the events that will take place at the end of the age. God wanted Daniel—and us—to look down the centuries to the close of Gentile misrule, and on to the righteous dominion of the “**Prince of Peace.**”

Therefore, in much of Daniel and Revelation, to say nothing of other prophetic portions of the Word of God, He tells us about the last form of the kingdom represented by the fourth beast of Daniel's vision, the certain defeat of this masterpiece of Satan, and Christ's triumph over the devil and all his cohorts.

Living in this present age, we can look back over history, to see the exact, literal fulfillment of the minute details of Daniel's vision of the first three beasts. We can see the exact fulfillment of the first form of the fourth beast, in the history of ancient Rome. Nor is it mere speculation to say that “**the signs of the times**” seem to point to the nearness of the last form of the fourth beast of Daniel's vision—the revived Roman Empire. Prophecy is rapidly becoming history before our very eyes!

Now from what God has already told us about Babylon in Nebuchadnezzar's image, as well as in succeeding chapters, it is very easy for us to fill in the details concerning this first beast, even if we did not have secular history to verify the record.

Daniel saw that the first beast was “**like a lion, and had eagle's wings.**” From man's point of view, Babylon appeared in its greatness as fine gold, but God permitted Daniel to see its real moral character, which was that of a ravenous lion.

As the lion is the king of the forest, so Nebuchadnezzar's monarchy was more absolute than any of those which succeeded it. The lion, a “*symbol of strength and courage,*” typified Babylon, “**the head of gold.**” The eagle's wings speak to us of the swiftness of conquest and of the wide-

spread power of Babylon's great king.

In the British Museum today one can see the winged lions, carved in stone that once symbolically guarded Babylon. Again, the lion is ferocious, as well as majestic; and Nebuchadnezzar had the power of life and death—a power which he evidently exercised; for **“whom he would he slew.”**

Daniel beheld until the wings of the lion were plucked—a picture of the decline of Babylon's power, especially of Nebuchadnezzar's seven years of insanity. But you will remember that when Nebuchadnezzar glorified the God of heaven, his reason was restored; hence the description of the lion that follows: “. . . **and it was lifted up from the earth, and made stand upon the feet [two feet] as a man, and a man's heart was given to it.**”

As we think back over the inspired record of Babylon's rule, we can see why God viewed that empire as a wild, ravenous beast; for the opening chapters of Daniel's prophecy tell of Babylon's heathen gods, of Nebuchadnezzar's golden image, of the **“burning fiery furnace,”** of Nebuchadnezzar's pride and madness, and of Belshazzar's defiant insult to Daniel's God. As a beast knows nothing of God; lives without consciousness of His love and power, so ancient Babylon came to her doom because she ignored the God of heaven.

#### **THE BEAR WITH THREE RIBS BETWEEN HIS TEETH— REPRESENTING MEDO-PERSIA**

**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.**

To Nebuchadnezzar the breast and arms of silver looked resplendent—that part of the image which represented Medo-Persia; but to Daniel, the servant of the Lord, it appeared in its beast-like character, pictured by the bear (v. 5). The words, **“it raised up itself on one side,”** and is commented on in the margins of some, *“it raised up one dominion.”*

As the name indicates, Medo-Persia was composed of two kingdoms, and was dominated by Persia, the stronger of the two. The **“three ribs”** refer to the devouring of the Babylonian lion by the second beast. As the bear is an *“all-devouring”* creature, so Medo-Persia was cruel and rapacious.

It is said that the Persian army killed its prisoners of war—it was so cruel!

#### **THE BEAST LIKE A LEOPARD—REPRESENTING GREECE**

**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.**

Alexander the Great, heir to Philip of Macedon, conquered Medo-Persia and extended the Grecian Empire into yet wider borders.

So swiftly did he subdue these kingdoms that he is said to have “wept because there were no more worlds to conquer.”

He died at the age of twenty-eight, having lived a dissipated life. Thus the swiftly-moving leopard aptly depicts his rapid conquests (v. 6).

Nebuchadnezzar saw the Grecian Empire as the brass of the image; but Daniel saw it as a cruel, wild leopard, stealthy and quick to leap upon its prey. The lion had been swift, with two wings of an eagle; but the leopard was even more swift, with “**four wings of a fowl.**”

**“The beast had also four heads.”**

Alexander died childless; and having no heir to the throne, he was succeeded by four of his generals, who divided the empire among themselves.

- Cassander took Macedon and Greece;
- Lysimachus, Thrace and Bithynia;
- Ptolemy, Egypt;
- Seleucus, Syria.

That is why the beast that Daniel saw had four heads; it was God's prophecy of this division of Alexander's empire among his four generals.

**“And dominion was given unto it.”**

Alexander the Great is known as one of the world's mightiest conquerors. We are told that with 30,000 soldiers he overthrew “**several hundreds of thousands**” of Persians.

It has been suggested that the leopard's spots may well represent the many nations and tongues that fell under his sway; or, perhaps, “Alexander's own variations in character, at one time mild, at another cruel; now temperate, and now drunken and licentious.” These are only suggestions; but they are based upon actual facts of history.

Before we consider the fourth beast which Daniel saw, let us note the only other reference in the chapter to the first three of these terrible creatures. It is in verse 12, and follows the vision of the return of Christ in glory and the doom of the fourth beast, whose body Daniel saw “**given to the burning flame**” (v. 11).

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

How marvelously this prophecy has been fulfilled; for though “**their dominion**” has been “**taken away,**” yet countries still exist bearing the names of Persia and Greece; and in the territory occupied by these first three empires there are people living today!

## THE BEAST WITH TEN HORNS—REPRESENTING ROME

**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. 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** (vv. 7, 8).

This fourth beast, “**dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly**” (vv. 7, 8), was a nondescript. There was no animal ferocious or powerful enough to describe this fourth Gentile world power.

“**It was diverse from all the beasts that were before it,**” yet it incorporated all the bestial characteristics of the others. The great “**iron teeth**” connect it unmistakably with the “**iron legs**” of Nebuchadnezzar's image vision; and the “**ten horns,**” which represent “**ten kings that shall arise**” (v. 24), are parallel with the “**ten toes**” of the image of chapter two. “**It devoured and brake in pieces,**” even as “The Iron Legions” of Rome were ruthless conquerors.

Daniel's vision began with a portrayal of the first great Gentile power as a lion, the king of the beasts; but it ended, as far as the nations are concerned, with this fourth beast for which no name could be found.

What deterioration!

The same was noted in Nebuchadnezzar's image vision. The head was of fine gold, but the other metals were of an increasingly inferior character, until at last the ten toes were of iron mixed with potter's clay! From gold to clay! From a lion to a nondescript! This is the history of Gentile world dominion as God sees it.

Outwardly it may seem to flourish, to make great advancement in civilization, science, and inventions; but morally the nations have become ever-increasingly beast-like in character.

We boast of our World's Fairs and of our Napoleons. We make great statues of men who sometimes have been exceedingly wicked and cruel. But every page of human history has been stained with the blood of human suffering. And it requires no strain on the imagination for us to understand why God, looking down the centuries, compared Gentile world power to wild beasts.

As we think of Hitler and his Gestapo; as we think of Stalin and Mussolini; as we think of the hundreds of cruel monsters who did their bidding—dropping bombs on little children and the aged and infirm, machine-gunning helpless refugees, robbing the poor of their very bread and meat, murdering in wholesale fashion the countless thousands—as we think of these things, we can see something of what our just God must behold as He looks down upon such misery and bloodshed and carnage as the mind of man can hardly comprehend.

It was this fourth, nameless beast that cast the early Christians to the lions in the amusement arena; yea, it was this beast that crucified our Lord upon a Roman cross, permitting Israel also to thrust her Messiah out of the world which He had created.

It was this fourth beast that extended her borders farther than had any of the first three, literally surrounding the Mediterranean Sea. This beast was known as imperial Rome and conqueror of the world.

But this fourth beast has not yet been “**slain**” (v. 11); and from verses 7 and 8, which we have just read, we note that there is a still future fulfillment of the God-given prophecy concerning Rome. The “**ten horns**” represent ten kings of the revived Roman Empire. Evidently these kings will not be equal in power, even as the toes of Nebuchadnezzar's image were not all the same size. There are the great toes, and there are the little toes on a man's feet. Therefore, if we are, indeed, nearing the time when the church will be translated, when the revived Roman Empire will come into full power, would it be too much to suppose that possibly England and Italy may be the two great toes, as it were, of that confederacy? I think not, though this is not to be taken dogmatically.

As a dictator over these ten kings, “**the little horn**” will rule, even the Antichrist, who will be revealed after the church has been translated. A “**little horn**” at first, he will later conquer three of the ten kings; for Daniel saw “**three of the first horns plucked up by the roots . . . and he shall subdue three kings**” (vv. 8, 24). With “**eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great things,**” he will blaspheme the God of heaven, posing as very God, sitting in the temple, “**shewing himself that he is God**” (II Thessalonians 2:4).

### **THE JUDGMENT OF THE FOURTH BEAST BY “THE ANCIENT OF DAYS”**

Daniel beheld the terrible fourth beast until he was judged, “**slain,**” by “**the Ancient of days.**”

It was while this beast was still in power that Daniel saw him meet his doom; and it will be while the Antichrist is exercising great authority that the Lord Jesus will come in glory to cast him who is called “**the beast**” “**into the lake of fire**” (Revelation 19:20).

It was while the ten toes of Nebuchadnezzar's image, which represent ten kings of the revived Roman Empire, were still standing that the smiting Stone fell upon the image. And thus the prophetic Scriptures dovetail even to the minute particulars, concerning this coming “**man of sin.**”

He is described by Daniel, by the Lord Jesus, by Paul, and by John in the last book of the Bible.

How Christians can close their eyes to these definite prophecies, even opposing any teaching concerning them is a mystery hard to explain. Unwittingly perhaps, yet without excuse, they let Satan lull them to sleep in a false sense of security; but the Word of God standeth sure. And these things are bound to come to pass, even as He said.

As Daniel beheld the vision, he saw that it was “the Ancient of days” who executed judgment upon the fourth beast. Let us read the description of this yet future scene, in verses 9-11:

**I beheld till the thrones (i.e., the human 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.** (Oriental thrones were often rolled on wheels.) **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. 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.**

This is a judgment scene, and it marks the end of Gentile world dominion.

What a sad ending! Nations flourishing today, boasting of national achievements, progress, and advancement, are to have a final chapter written to their history; and that chapter will be one of terrible judgment. Man refuses to see such an ending, and prefers to believe that all things will continue as they are now; but God's infallible Word tells of certain judgment to come upon the world of the ungodly.

And how plainly, how repeatedly the Holy Spirit has warned us of the righteous judgment of God! Daniel wrote of it in the verses we have just read. He saw in the vision that all the earthly thrones were cast down, and that the throne of “**the Ancient of days**” was set up.

This One is described here in language very similar to that of Revelation 1:13-18, telling of the glorified Son of Man. There we read of Him in His eternal power and glory. “**His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow**”—the eternal “**Ancient of days.**” John saw a “**sharp two-edged sword**” proceed out of His mouth; and we know that “**the sword of the Spirit . . . is the word of God**” (Ephesians 6:17).

By the Holy Scriptures, which godless men have spurned, our Lord will one day judge the nations and the individuals who have rejected this life-giving message concerning the living Word, even Jesus, of whom the written Word speaks.

As Daniel looked upon this wonderful scene, he saw “**thousands of thousands**” ministering unto Him. We shall not be lonely in heaven, my Christian friend! “**Ten thousand times ten thousand**” will be there to behold the glory of our crucified and risen Lord, to serve Him, and to enjoy His presence for-evermore!

Daniel looked and saw that “**the judgment was set, and the books were opened.**”

This Scripture is parallel with that of Matthew 25:31-46, where our Lord Himself described the judgment of the nations in that coming day. It is not to be confused with the judgment of “**the great white throne,**” of which we read in Revelation 20:11-15; of that we shall have more to say a little later.

But **“when the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: and before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats”** (Matthew 25:31, 32).

In these words our Lord spoke of the same judgment which Daniel saw, when **“all nations”**—not individuals, but Gentile nations—will be gathered before Him. The question of entrance into **“the kingdom”** (Matthew 25:34) will depend upon how those nations shall have treated His **“brethren,”** the faithful Jewish remnant, during the tribulation period.

Those nations which receive these witnesses of the coming King will be rewarded by entrance into the millennial **“kingdom”** as nations; whereas those nations which persecute Israel in that awful **“time of Jacob’s trouble”** will be cast out **“into everlasting punishment.”**

Thus the “sheep nations” and the “goat nations” will be divided. And you will note that all this will take place before the millennial kingdom of Christ—a marvelous correlation of all prophetic Scripture, such as that recorded by Daniel. This judgment will take place **“when the Son of man shall come in his glory”**; the beast will be **“slain,”** or as John describes the same incident, he will be **“cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone”** (Revelation 19:20). Likewise, Daniel adds that **“his body”** will be **“destroyed, and given to the burning flame.”**

Now I know that those who are post-millennial in their interpretation of prophecy teach that there will be just one great “judgment day,” and that the words of our Lord which we have just read from Matthew refer to individuals to be judged in that coming time. But these words speak plainly of **“nations”** that will be judged before the millennium. And a careful reading of the twentieth chapter of Revelation will show that between the judgment of the nations at the return of Christ in glory and the judgment of the wicked dead before **“the great white throne,”** a thousand years must elapse, the millennial reign of Christ.

Moreover, all the prophetic Scriptures dovetail with this twentieth chapter of Revelation; the teaching is as clear as a bell. Our Lord will return as the smiting Stone of Nebuchadnezzar's vision, the Son of Man whom Daniel's vision also portrayed. He will judge the nations, some of which will enter, as nations, into His glorious kingdom. The beast and the false prophet will be cast into the lake of fire at the time of our Lord's return to purify the world of sin and blasphemy. Satan will be bound for a thousand years, and our Lord Jesus will rule **“from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth”** (Psalm 72:8). And after the thousand years have expired, then the wicked dead will be raised, judged at **“the great white throne,”** and cast into the lake of fire.

Of course, the righteous dead shall have been translated with the church before **“the man of sin”** is revealed, before the seventieth week of Daniel's prophecy runs its course, before the judgment of the beast, and before our Lord's millennial reign on earth.

And the martyrs of the tribulation period, who will die after the translation of the church, will have a part in that **“first resurrection,”** before the rule of Christ begins.

The details of this we are not told; but their resurrection will be a kind of ingathering, possibly at the time of their death. And God's promise in Revelation 20:6, 14; 21:8 is reassuring:

**Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power . . . the second death is the lake of fire.**

My unsaved friend, if you do not accept the Lord Jesus Christ now as your Saviour, you will meet Him as your Judge when you stand before Him at **“the great white throne.”**

Let Him write your name in **“the Lamb's book of life,”** or you will hear the solemn words in that coming day, **“Whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire”** (Revelation 20:15).

Meet Him today as your gracious, loving Saviour; meet Him you must. His grace will save you, and His Word of promise in John 5:24 is sure:

**Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.**

Thank God! The sins of all who believe on His Son have been nailed to His cross. **“The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all”** (Isaiah 53:6).

We have taken time to go into these judgments in some detail here because of the confusion that exists in professing Christendom today concerning them. If it is still not perfectly clear to you, my Christian friend, read and re-read carefully and prayerfully the Scriptures we have quoted. Ask the Holy Spirit to enlighten your eyes. And He will not fail to teach you these truths.

#### **“THE COMING OF THE SON OF MAN” AND HIS “EVERLASTING KINGDOM”**

There can be no mistake about the One described in verses 13 and 14 of this seventh chapter of Daniel; for He is none other than the smiting Stone of Nebuchadnezzar's vision, even our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. And His coming back to earth in great glory will be for the purpose of ushering in His reign of peace and righteousness. Let us read together these wonderful words:

**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. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, and 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.**

Again, there are many other similar passages of Scripture which tell us that the Son of Man shall come with the clouds of heaven, in power and great glory.

Here are just a few of them: Matthew 24:30; 25:31; Acts 1:10, 11; Revelation 1:7.

The Father will give to the Son in that day “**the throne of his father David**” (Luke 1:32), even as He promised many centuries ago, saying, “**Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion**” (Psalm 2:6). And again, “**The Lord [God the Father] said unto my Lord [God the Son], Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool**” (Psalm 110:1). When the smiting Stone falls upon the last form of Gentile dominion, then that Stone will become “**a great mountain,**” and will fill the whole earth, even the glorious kingdom of our risen Lord.

Until He comes, this old world will never be free from blood and tears; pestilence and famine; “**wars and rumours of wars.**” But when He comes, whose right it is to reign, He will solve all the world's problems—no other can! Oh, how we long for that wonderful day! And the last prayer of the Bible is our daily petition, “**Even so, come, Lord Jesus**” (Revelation 22:20).

Sometimes people ask me why we pray for the return of Christ, when it will mean that the age of grace, this church age, will be over. But surely you can see, my Christian friend, why we pray this prayer. The world has had the gospel for nearly two thousand years—I mean the gospel of the Christ of history. Of course, all the Old Testament saints were born again by the same Lord and Saviour, but they were looking forward to the Christ of prophecy.

It has been almost two thousand years since He died and rose again; and yet there are more heathen on earth today than there were when He walked in Galilee. God did not plan that the church should “**bring in the kingdom.**” His Son will do that when He returns in glory! He alone can convert the world.

But some will ask, “Then why preach the gospel? Is the church not a failure if she does not convert the world?” Not at all! That was never God's plan for the church. In this present age He is calling out the church, which is the bride of Christ, composed of both Jew and Gentile, to be “**a people for his name**” (Acts 15:14).

He Himself will one day take the church to heaven; then He will make a speedy end of sin on the earth, bringing in His own righteous kingdom. While we shrink from the awful thought of “**the Great Tribulation**” and the terrible judgments that must come upon this old world, we know that these things must come. Our holy God must judge sin!

Therefore, we pray, “**Even so, come, Lord Jesus.**” His return alone will put an end to human misery and blasphemy against His holy name.

Some time ago I went to the penitentiary at San Quentin, California, with special permission from the governor of the state to talk to a condemned man. I wanted to present to him the things of Christ. As I saw the man there in death row; as I saw hundreds of others incarcerated within those prison walls, I said in my heart, “**Even so, come, Lord Jesus.**” All this will be made right when Jesus reigns!

As we think of the thousands of our youth behind prison bars today; as we think of the inmates of asylums; as we think of the broken hearts and broken homes and broken bodies of suffering humanity, we pray again, “**Even so, come, Lord Jesus!**”

## THE FOURTH BEAST DESCRIBED IN DETAIL

Daniel was grieved in spirit and troubled by the beast visions. He went near to the heavenly messenger and asked him the truth of all this. Then Daniel was made to know **“the interpretation of the things”** (vv. 15, 16).

Much of this interpretation we have already considered in our present study. But let us note again that it was **“the fourth beast”** which troubled Daniel most. Therefore, verses 19-28 have to do with the interpretation of yet other details concerning this Antichrist, foreshadowed by the fourth beast. Then the closing verses of the chapter take us on, even unto the consummation of all these things, when **“the saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever”** (v. 18).

**“The saints”** will share in the Lord's glorious kingdom!

While it is true that the church will rule with Christ as His bride, yet the **“saints”** here refer to Daniel's people, Israel, who will have come through **“the Great Tribulation,”** and will inherit an earthly kingdom.

Let us remember that Daniel was especially concerned about the fourth beast because his kingdom is to be in existence when the Son of Man returns in glory. The ten kings will be in power, but dominated by the **“man of sin.”** Concerning **“the fourth beast”** and the **“ten horns”**

Daniel said in verses 19-22:

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

We have already considered in some detail the content of the next two verses, which tell of the revived Roman Empire under ten kings, over whom the Antichrist is to rule. We have seen that he will subdue three of these kings, and that he will be a world dictator. But let us look at verse 25, where four additional thoughts are added concerning this terrible creature:

*1. “And He Shall Speak Great Words against the Most High.”*

That is, he will be a blasphemer of the God of heaven. This is what the Holy Spirit meant in verse 8, when He said that this fourth beast spoke **“great things”**—setting himself up against the God of Daniel.

My friends, we are living in a blasphemous age. Never were blasphemers as universal as they are today, not since the beginning of the Christian era. The present dictators are shadows or forerunners of the most arrogant infidel the world has ever seen. He will be given his throne and his authority by Satan. He will be the greatest diplomat, the shrewdest statesman, the most brilliant general that the mind of man can conceive. He will be a Napoleon, a Stalin, a Hitler, and a Mussolini rolled into one. Moreover, he will come with religious pretensions, deceiving the godless millions. Already in this series of studies we have often quoted what Paul said of him when he was writing to the Thessalonian Christians, that this “**son of perdition**” will sit in the temple of God, “**shewing himself that he is God.**”

That “**man of sin**” will not be made manifest until the church is translated; and of that day and hour God has not seen fit to tell us. Some believe that a dictator in Rome will prove to be the Antichrist.

The Fascist Creed reads as follows:

“I believe in:

- (1) Rome Eternal, the Mother of my fatherland;
- (2) and in Italy, her first born;
- (3) who was born of her virgin womb by the grace of God;
- (4) who suffered under the barbarian invader, was crucified, slain, and buried;
- (5) who descended into the sepulchre, and rose from the dead in the nineteenth century;
- (6) who ascended to heaven in her glory in 1918 and 1922 (by the march on Rome);
- (7) who is seated at the right hand of Mother Rome;
- (8) who will come thence to judge the quick and the dead;
- (9) I believe in the genius of Mussolini;
- (10) in our Holy Father, Fascism, and in the communion of its martyrs;
- (11) in the conversion of the Italians;
- (12) in the resurrection of the Empire! Amen.”

This gross blasphemy, a wicked parody of the Apostles' Creed, gives us some idea of the extent to which man can go in his defiance of God. We must not try to apply the prophetic Scriptures to any man today. Mussolini possessed many of the characteristics of those God-defying kings who are to rule during “**the seventieth week**” of Daniel, but he has been destroyed. We shall not be here to find out just who “**the beast**” or “**the prince of Rosh**” or the “**ten kings**” who shall hold sway “**in the latter time**” will be; for the true church will be with the Lord before these men are manifested to the world.

I remember that, when I was a pastor in Oak Park, Illinois, I had the late William Jennings Bryan speak to my congregation. Afterwards I asked him why he did not teach the doctrine of the second coming of Christ, to which he replied that he had been prejudiced against it when he was a young man. The people of his community had set dates for Christ's return, and had held all kinds of fanciful and fanatical interpretations of prophecy. What he said should be a warning to us, lest we, by our foolish speculations, not only disobey our Lord's express command, but also prejudice the untaught against the doctrine of the “**blessed hope**” of His return.

2. *“He Shall . . . Wear Out the Saints of the Most High.”*

This is the next thing we are told about the Antichrist in verse 25.

In verse 21 we read that this fourth beast **“made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; until the Ancient of days came.”** These saints refer, as we have seen, to the faithful Jewish remnant of **“the Great Tribulation”** period. **“For the elect's sake,”** the Lord Jesus, their Messiah, will shorten those days (Matthew 24:22); and He Himself will deliver His own!

We must ever remember that the saints of the church age were not even revealed to Daniel. I think we have made this clear from the Scriptures, and need not repeat further just at this point.

3. *“He Shall . . . Think to Change Times and Laws.”*

These words mean that he will break the covenant that he will make with Israel, and will set himself up to be worshipped, changing Israel's ancient **“laws,”** as well as his own false promises with God's people.

**Let us pause here to state definitely that these words do not refer to the pope of Rome, as a certain cult teaches. For example, the Seventh-day Adventists hold that the pope changed the Jewish Sabbath to the first day of the week; and they call this the changing of “times and laws.”**

**This is absolutely false!**

**In the first place, the pope had nothing to do with placing the Christian Lord's Day on the first day of the week. God did that!**

**In the second place, the Jewish Sabbath and the Lord's Day are two entirely separate days, with different purposes for their use intended by God.**

We cannot go into this subject fully here, but a good footnote concerning it is found in connection with Matthew 12:1 in the *Scofield Reference Bible*. Suffice it to say just here that the Jewish Sabbath commemorated God's creation rest; whereas our Lord's Day commemorates Christ's resurrection from the dead. The one was not changed to the other; they are two separate days. (See also I Corinthians 16:2).

4. *“And They (Israel) Shall Be Given into His Hand until a Time and Times and the Dividing of Time.”*

A “time” is one year; “times” are two years; “the dividing of time” is one-half year—in all, three and one-half years are given in these words. And again, this passage is an exact parallel of other portions of the prophetic Scriptures which tell of the latter three and one-half years of the tribulation period, **“the time of Jacob's trouble.”**

When we come to the study of the ninth chapter of this book, we shall go more into detail about this period; but let us keep in mind that the Antichrist's entire rule will be only seven years; and that even this period will **“be shortened . . . for the elect's sake.”**

During the first part of his rule he will make the covenant with Israel, restore their temple worship, and promise them a national home in Palestine. Then **“in the midst of the week** [literally, 'seven'] **he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease”** (Daniel 9:27). He will set up his own image in the holy place to be worshipped, demanding that Israel honor him as God or be persecuted to death. This will be **“the abomination of desolation,”** to which our Lord referred in Matthew 24:15.

This same Antichrist will also turn upon false, professing Christendom, even **“the scarlet woman”** of Revelation 17:1— 18:24. Thus he will seek to wipe out every trace of anything or anybody that reminds him of the Lord God (Daniel 7:26).

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

This we have read earlier in this chapter—that Christ will come to judge the **“man of sin,”** and to execute His righteous sway over the whole world (v. 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.**

After Daniel had seen the vision, he concluded his record (v. 28) of what he had beheld and heard when he said:

**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.**

Daniel was deeply **“troubled”** about the sins, as well as the sufferings of his people, Israel.

He loved his nation and his land.

Are you concerned, my friend, about the things that are to come upon the earth? Are you seeking to lead never-dying souls to Christ, so that they will be among those to be translated with His bride before these terrible judgments are meted out upon a godless world?

Are you sure your own sins are washed in the blood of the Lord Jesus, that you may be among that number when He comes for His own?

Daniel cared a great deal about the things that concerned God's people; and he **“kept the matter”** in his **“heart.”**

That is the place to keep the Word of God, even as the Psalmist said centuries ago, “**Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee**” (Psalm 119:11).

Let us be among those who keep these matters which God has made known to us in our hearts, as we “**wait for his Son from heaven**” (I Thessalonians 1:10).

~ end of chapter 7 ~

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