

(To be revised)

A DANIEL 7 REVIEW AND PREVIEW

(A Daniel 7 Study – Part 1)

Daniel 7 unites that whole book from a Babylonian court scene (chapters 1–6) to eschatological visions (chapters 8–12). Many call chapter 7 the most important chapter – the very heart of Daniel. It is a transitional chapter where the prophet even changes his writing style from third to first person (after 7:2, except for 10:1).

Daniel 2 deals with a special dream God gave to Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar of a metal image. The metals represented successive world powers, ending with God's kingdom beginning as a stone, then filling the earth (2:34-35, 44-45). Daniel's help in its interpretation linked God's interest in world affairs with this ruling monarch.

Daniel 7 came as a divine revelation to the prophet alone. It affected him personally and so deeply that he said: *"I Daniel was grieved in my spirit in the midst of my body, and the visions of my head troubled me.... 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 7:15, 28).

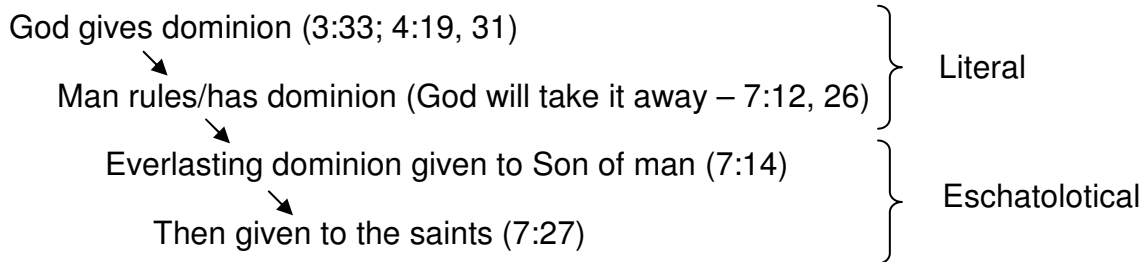
The horrible imagery of those four kingdoms, as God revealed them, is opened to our view. The kingdoms are seen as beastly and fearsome, warring against God, especially through oppression of the saints. Thus – the message and imagery are directed especially to God's people. In this chapter a clearer representation of a personal Messiah and His kingdom is presented. God the Father, the "Ancient of Days," and the "one like the Son of man" (7:13), the Messiah, come to view in beautiful divine kingdom imagery that includes incredible language of hope. That kingdom eventually becomes a possession of the saints (7:22, 27), which will never be destroyed (7:14).

This is the first time in the Bible that the Messiah is portrayed as such a personal God. He is human because He is the Son of "man." Yet He is King and associated with the God of the universe. His description relates to other fascinating keys of a coming deliverer elsewhere, such as, "He comes in clouds" (Isaiah 19:1; Ezekiel 1:4; Psalms 97:2, 104:3). That is a **sign** of the second advent that Jesus specifically elucidated for the disciples: *"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"* (Matthew 24:30).

Though now oppressed, the saints will be judged in God's favor (7:22) and the kingdoms of earth (symbolized by those four beasts) will precede and be inferior to that final dominion.

The vision outlined in 7:3-14, and then explained in verses 15-18, sweeps salvation's history from the first advent to the second. It is the span of history related specifically to the work of the "Son of man!" Though during that era the **literal** four beasts will vanish into history, a key that links their **metaphorical presence into the future** is presented in verse 12: *"As concerning the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away: **yet [and here is vital information] their lives were prolonged** for a season and time"* (7:12).

This unequivocally presents a fresh and elevated end-time application that emerges with force in chapter 8. Thus, the beasts have a minor literal application and a major apocalyptic meaning.



Hosea 13:7-8 identifies the lion, bear and leopard. Thus, links elsewhere in the Old Testament draw together messages that look forward to earth’s final period.

“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 7:1).

“In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon” (vs 1)

Uncertainty surrounds the exact time for Belshazzar’s “first” year. Most identify 553 B.C. as the most plausible time. This orients us to the fact that the fall of the Babylonian Empire would yet be years away. There would be 16-17 years of the seventy-year captivity left until the end. Nabonidus, Belshazzar’s father, was the true king. But he went to the city of Tema to live and worship the god “Sin.” The Empire’s rule was turned over to Belshazzar. This vision occurs during his first regnal year (recorded as Tishri to Tishri). Daniel was 67 years old at this time.¹

“Daniel had a dream and visions of his head upon his bed: then he wrote the dream, and told the sum of the matters” (vs 1)

This contains direct evidence that Daniel had the dream and is author of what followed. The literary style is similar to that of the previous chapter, helping most scholars conclude that he is the author of the book.²

The Aramaic expression above, “sum of the matters,” is of interest. Many have assumed that the Daniel 7 record represents only “key observations” from that vision. If so, this is of intrigue because it would suggest that Daniel actually omits issues likely of lesser importance.³ But in verse 28a a similar expression means “Here is the end of the account.” Thus, Hartman and Di Lella conclude that the “sum” might mean “here is the beginning of the matters.”⁴

¹ Miller, Stephen R.; *The New American Commentary*, vol. 18 (Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1994), p. 194.

² Steinmann, Andrew E.; *Daniel* (Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis), p. 570.

³ Keil, C. F. and Delitzsch, F.; *Commentary on the Old Testament* (Henderson Publishers, Massachusetts), vol. 9, p. 637.

⁴ Hartman, Louis F. and Di Lella, Alexander A.; *The Book of Daniel* (Doubleday, New York, 1977), p. 205.

The “writing” of this prophetic message reveals that it is the “Word of God” that needed to be preserved so it could continue to speak, especially to those living at the time of its fulfillment!⁵

“Daniel spake and said, I saw in my vision by night, and, behold, the four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea” (Daniel 7:2).

“Daniel spake and said, I saw in my vision by night,” (vs 2)

Why this came at night is unclear except that it would be an undisturbed time to present this complicated message.

“and, behold, the four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea” (vs 2)

The great sea literally refers to the Mediterranean Sea elsewhere (Joshua 1:4; 9:1; 15:12, 47; Ezekiel 47:10, 15, 19-20; 48:28). Prophetically, a deeper meaning is invited. Waters refer to “peoples, and multitudes, and nations and tongues” (Revelation 17:15). When “sea” is used, a broader metaphor is presented. “*But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt*” (Isaiah 57:20; cf. 17:12-13; Revelation 13:1, 11). A great “sea of humanity” is seen in a state of unrest, chaos and turmoil (Jeremiah 17:12, 46:7).⁶

The “four winds of heaven” that are churning up the sea represents a time of political turmoil on the earth. Something significant is disturbing mankind, creating chaos and unrest throughout the whole world. The number “four” relates to the four compass directions and reveals universal havoc or complete suppressive power.

“And four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another” (Daniel 7:3).

During a time of world turmoil, four “great” beasts [*hewan* (H) – animals in general] arise from the area where earth’s inhabitants are centered. Since they are numbered, they come on the visionary scene in a sequence.

These beasts symbolize kingdoms or nations (7:17) which represent powers **that rule the whole world**. The meaning of the turmoil isn’t totally clear, except that their debut into history apparently comes through war and bloodshed, making all other empires subservient.

The most consistent view accepts these four kingdoms as Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome. Intriguingly, each beast is successively more cruel than the previous one. The number “four” suggests **totality** of God’s prophetic symbols.⁷ The “totality” of the kingdoms is chosen by God to represent a unique sequential drama between God’s people and earthly power. Its symbols are, first, literal, then given in an end-time metaphor.

Intriguingly, the beasts that are listed in Hosea 13:7-8 are used there by God to chastise His people for apostasy. Here, the imagery portrays what God thinks about the powers represented by these creatures.

Now let’s look at the characteristics of the first beast:

⁵ Goldingay, John E.; Daniel – *Word Biblical Commentary*, vol. 30 (Word Books – Dallas, TX), p. 160.

⁶ Miller, *op. cit.*, p. 195.

⁷ Goldingay, *op. cit.*, p. 160.

“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” (Daniel 7:4).

“The first was like a lion, and had eagle’s wings:” (vs 4)

Nebuchadnezzar is compared to a lion in Jeremiah 4:7-8, 50:17 and an eagle in Ezekiel 17:3 and Habakkuk 1:8. These prophetic references echo his experiences in Daniel 4:16 and 33.

What gold is to the other metals and the head to the members of the body of Nebuchadnezzar’s image (Daniel 2), the lion is to the other beasts and the eagle among the birds.⁸ The gate of Ishtar, key entrance to the city of Babylon, was adorned on either side with a long procession of yellow lions on blue-glazed brick, in stunning relief. Thus, symbolically and literally, the lion represents Babylon.

Prophetically, the lion is a metaphor for supreme power and kingship. Its wings symbolize swiftness (Habakkuk 1:8, Lamentations 4:19) with the ability to attack like a bird of prey.⁹ They are seen together as a description of Nebuchadnezzar’s power and rule (Jeremiah 49:19, 22). The Babylonian kingdom was the first worldwide empire known to Daniel. It is God’s choice to begin a series of four great kingdoms.

The imagery of a lion was first introduced prophetically when Jacob was blessing his twelve sons. He called Judah a *“lion’s cub”* and promised that the scepter would not depart from him *“until Shiloh come”* (Genesis 49:9-10). In Isaiah the prophecy is given: *“And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots”* (Isaiah 11:1). One of the 24 elders announces that a worthy Being has been found to open the seven seals of the judicial scroll. He is the *“Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David”* (Revelation 5:5).

“I beheld till the wings thereof were plucked,” (vs 4)

Many commentators see this as representing what happened to Nebuchadnezzar in Daniel 4:31-33.

- “The kingdom is departed from thee” (4:31).
- “Thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field” (4:32).
- “Until thou know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men” (4:32).

The king symbolized the power and influence of that kingdom. His humiliating dementia – a divine curse – removed the haughty power of the Empire. This scholarly view of the wings being “plucked by another power” is Biblically descriptive.

“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” (vs 4)

These three expressions portray a sequence of restoration.

1. And it was lifted up from the earth

⁸ Keil and Delitzsch, *op. cit.*, vol. 9, p. 638.

⁹ Steinmann, *op. cit.*, p. 343.

2. And made stand upon the feet as a man
3. And a man's heart was given it

From a conquering, proud emperor to one spiritually elevated, able to think and be gracious and relate positively to others, Nebuchadnezzar turned from **his** kingdom to **God's** kingdom (Daniel 4:34-37).

- It was lifted up from the earth:
 - “lifted up mine eyes to heaven” (4:34)
 - “blessed the most High; and I praised and honored him that liveth forever” (4:34)
 - “Praise and extol and honor the king of heaven” (4:37)
- Made me to stand upon the feet as a man:
 - “Mine understanding returned to me” (4:34)
 - “At the same time my reason returned unto me” (4:36)
- Man's heart was given it:
 - “My honor and brightness returned” (4:36)
 - “My counselors and my lords sought me” (4:36)
 - “I was established in my kingdom” (4:36)

Because of how this nation finally ended in great apostasy under Belshazzar, it later became an apocalyptic metaphor for a power hating God. But here – while Daniel is prime minister of Babylon, its glory is elevated as a direct result of its recognition of God.

Daniel

Babylon – gold – those elevating God

Revelation

Babylon tarnished – fallen – those apostatizing against God

“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” (Daniel 7:5).

“And behold another beast, a second, like to a bear,” (vs 5)

Another nation or kingdom now follows. The word “second” affirms that sequence. Bears are often seen in the Old Testament as fierce and dangerous (I Samuel 17:34-37, Hosea 13:8, Amos 5:19, Proverbs 28:15, Lamentations 3:10). In II Kings 2:24 they are even depicted as carnivorous. The imagery presents an aggressive power on a war-like mission to conquer!

“and it raised up itself on one side,” (vs 5)

The word “side” denotes a lateral area – either left or right – that was higher. The Hophal perfect verb tense for “raised up” suggests that someone was the cause of this elevated side.

Thus – the bear has two distinct parts, fitting the Daniel 2 sequence for Medo-Persia. God granted special dominion power to the Persians under Cyrus. This would refute the conclusions of many expositors (beginning with Maccabees) that Media and Persia were two separate beasts with Rome being eliminated. It was one beast, a bear, with two parts. This is *affirmed* in the next chapter where the ram (8:3) represents Medo-Persia (8:20).¹⁰

In chapter 8 that ram is an end-time picture of Christ in earth's final conflict between Him and Satan! That, historically, draws on conquering Cyrus, who was given a divine title in the prophecies of Isaiah 44-45 long before he was born!

“and it had three ribs in the mouth of it between the teeth of it:” (vs 5)

Since the beast represents a nation or empire, the ribs appear to be from other “beasts” that the Medo-Persian Empire subdued. Most expositors conclude that they represent Babylon (539 B.C.), Lydia in Asia Minor under King Croesus (546 B.C.), and Egypt under Psamtik III (526 B.C.).

“and they said thus unto it, Arise, devour much flesh” (vs 5)

This is best interpreted as “thus they were saying to it.” “Biblical Aramaic frequently uses plural forms that are impersonal (with no stated subject) but that imply God as the ultimate cause of the action. Usually they are best translated as passives, hence ‘this is what *was being said* to it.’”¹¹ This would be an afterthought as to why the bear had three ribs in its mouth. Authority was given to the Medo-Persian Empire for its military conquests. It became the greatest and largest empire known to history.¹² That power base helped in the preparation to free God's people from bondage and provide safe resettlement. It gave a vast protective net for the re-establishment of the Jewish theocracy.

“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 (Daniel 7:6).

“After this I beheld, and lo” (vs 6)

The bear symbol is completed when the next beast symbol comes into view. The first person Danelic expression “*I beheld*” draws our attention to what he saw – “*and lo.*”

“another, like a leopard,” (vs 6)

This represents the literal Grecian Empire which followed Medo-Persia. In an end-time symbol, John the Revelator noted a beast rise out of the sea “like unto a leopard” (Revelation 13:1-2).

¹⁰ Steinmann, *op. cit.*, p. 344.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 338.

¹² David Sacks, Oswyn Murray, Lisa R. Brody (2005). *Encyclopedia of the ancient Greek world.*

Infobase Publishing. pp. 256.

http://books.google.com/books?id=yyrao0dadqAC&pg=PA256&dq=perseus+father+of+persian&hl=en&ei=AQSyTYKdBIP98AbihayNCQ&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=1&ved=0CCMQ6AEwA#v=onepage&q=perseus%20father%20of%20persian&f=false.

Here in Daniel the first, or literal, rise is noted. There in the Apocalypse the final work of Satan and his minions are metaphorically represented in an eschatological setting.

The Old Testament not uncommonly views leopards as terrifying (Jeremiah 5:6, Hosea 13:7, Habakkuk 1:8).¹³ That understanding is affirmed by the imagery of the Grecian Empire in Daniel 8:21. The he-goat/rough goat represents Satan (8:5-8, 21) in a ferocious attempt to harm Christ and His people. That goat is depicted as the Grecian Empire also.

The word “like” is used many times in this chapter, pointing to the symbolic nature of the vision.¹⁴

“which had upon the back of it four wings of a fowl;” (vs 6)

The wings of the lion were specifically of an “eagle” (7:4). Here it is general – the leopard has “bird wings.” The number four in prophecy again represents an issue or event totally under God’s universal order or control. Examples for this:

- Four men in the fiery furnace (Daniel 3:25)
- Four pots of water poured on the Mt. Carmel altar (I Kings 18:33)
- Judah as the fourth son (Messianic progenitor) (Genesis 29:35)
- Lazarus being dead four days (John 11:17)
- Peter’s four-cornered sheet of unclean animals (Acts 10:11)
- The four winds (Revelation 7:1) – universal activity (Ezekiel 1:5-6)

The four wings suggest amazing swiftness (already on a swift beast) – but these are specifically under the hand of God! Authority to rule is given Greece, but now we know that God still has restraining charge. This is not unique in apocalyptic prophecy. Examples:

- “And unto them was given power” (Revelation 9:3)
- “Power was given unto him” (Revelation 13:5)
- “It was given unto him” (Revelation 13:7)

Greece came to power with lightning speed by Alexander the Great with his invasion of Asia Minor (334 B.C.). In ten years he subdued the Medo-Persian Empire and pushed eastward to India. That success was possible through four key generals under his leadership.

“the beast had also four heads;” (vs 6)

“Heads” represent rulers or governments (Daniel 2:38, Isaiah 7:8-9, Revelation 13:3, 12). Thus, one empire would involve four leaders. In Revelation 17 we are given permission to see the seven heads as sequential leaders (Revelation 17:10-11) (that beast was the same as that in Revelation 13). Here, there are four heads simultaneously (not sequenced). This suggests the four commanders/leaders who assumed control of the Grecian Empire at Alexander’s death, who are:

1. Cassander (Antigonos) – Greece and Macedonia
2. Lysimachus – Asia Minor and Thrace

¹³ Whitcomb, John C.; *Daniel* (Moody Press; Chicago, IL – 1985), p. 95.

¹⁴ Miller, *op. cit.*, p. 199.

3. Seleucus I Nicator – Syria and Babylon
4. Ptolemy I Soter – Egypt and Palestine

Out of these divisions would come special support in God's work. Later still, they would become important end-time metaphors. The Ptolemies, as an example, were sympathetic to the Jewish people. They, in turn, gave support to Joseph and Mary when they fled to Egypt.

In the end-time metaphors of chapter 8, the he-goat's horn was broken (like the death of Alexander the Great). Satan's key player, the papacy, in the Dark Ages was "broken" in 1798 and 1870. Fast-forwarding to the end, there will arise four key powers depicted in Daniel 8 as horns which support Satan's work – the false trinity and Islam. One of those four becomes the second rise of the papacy!

"and dominion was given to it." (vs 6)

The "giver" is not mentioned, but the expression, as noted above, is divine permission to act. The beast "*receives its dominion from God.*" Though many assume that this is contrary to His character, there are major periods of time in history when Satan is permitted to act to reveal what he really is like. This is one of God's methods of unmasking his deception! God's ultimate objective is to reveal His character fully and permit events for Satan to expose fully who he is.

Later, we will see the "Ancient of Days" giving dominion to the "Son of man" (7:14). The context for this leopard suggests also that it is the Ancient of Days who permits freedom of this power.¹⁵ "All human sovereignty is held by permission of God."¹⁶

Universal rule or dominion was predicted earlier for this kingdom (2:39) – just as prophecy portrays Satan right at the end.

"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" (Daniel 7:7).

"After this I saw in the night visions," (vs 7)

Daniel previously noted that these visions were given at night (7:2) when he was lying on his bed (7:1). He may have had a timing break between the third and fourth beast visions because of the repeating of this message.

"and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly;" (vs 7)

There is no animal-like association given to this creature. The seer's first description relates to his own emotional reaction to what he saw. "Dreadful" and "terrible" relate to its horrible appearance. His description of its strength is difficult to evaluate. Did he perceive that it could overpower him or was there something observed that suggested massive strength? We aren't told. But – a most fascinating observation comes in Nebuchadnezzar's image of the fourth kingdom of iron described as (Daniel 2:40):

¹⁵ Steinmann, *op. cit.*, p. 347.

¹⁶ Lucas, Ernest C.; *Daniel* (Intervarsity Press, Downers Grove, IL; 2002), p. 180.

- Strong as iron
- Like iron breaks things in pieces and subdues all things
- It shall break and bruise (the three words for “break” in verse 40 refer to crushing (twice) and shattering (once)).¹⁷

Thus, Daniel’s choice of words (in Aramaic) reveals destructive power tied to an “iron” metaphor! The next two phrases suggest its power and hatred came from its teeth and feet. Interesting! Where did this horrific behavior originate?

“and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it:” (vs 7)

The bear would “devour” (7:5) and the leopard would have “dominion” over (7:6). This fourth beast would deal violently by crushing with its teeth and trampling or shattering them underfoot. Similar mouth/feet destructive expressions are noted elsewhere (Daniel 7:34-35, 40, 44; 8:10, 23). The claws are described later as brass (7:19).

The imagery portrays this beast as more powerful and vicious than the other three. Intriguingly – Daniel could have associated it with a demonic creature, rough-goat or dragon. He didn’t. It was so grotesque that it couldn’t be described. In Hosea 13:5-6 a fourth animal was also unnamed.

Since the beast is also prophetically described by its **acts**, a divine check on its deeds will soon be justified.

This beast represents Rome. It came onto the world scene in 63 B.C. when the Roman General Pompey captured Jerusalem.¹⁸ “Rome possessed a power and longevity unlike anything the world had ever known. Nations were crushed under the iron boot of the Roman legions, its power was supreme, and the extent of its influence surpassed the other three kingdoms.”¹⁹

“and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns” (vs 7)

The word “diverse” (*shena* – A) or “different” is a fascinating passive word. Seemingly, by divine design in this predictive prophecy, it would represent an unusually perverse nature and power.

Horns, like heads, symbolize kings or kingdoms (7:24; cf. Psalm 132:17, Zechariah 1:18). They give power to the beast they are on (Deuteronomy 33:17, I Kings 22:11, Psalm 75:11), just as a “horn” can represent God’s power to save His people (Psalm 18:3, 132:17; Luke 1:69). Here, they represent the same as the “ten toes” of the Daniel 2 image. There, they are of iron and clay. Here, a distinction from the ruling empire is not made. That means that these ten horns give the fourth beast power, which surpasses all the others.

The number “ten” in prophecy represents completeness. Its number or power is complete. That would also suggest superiority. A unique illustration of this number comes from chapter 1.

¹⁷ Steinmann, *op. cit.*, p. 347.

¹⁸ Whitcomb, *op. cit.*, p. 96.

¹⁹ Miller, *op. cit.*, p. 201.

There, the dietary test period for the four Hebrew youths was ten days (complete number – all that was necessary) (1:12, 15, 18). Then, continuing the symbolic lesson, Melzar found them “fairer” and “fatter” at the end of ten days, and after three years the king found them ten times greater in wisdom and understanding than the magicians and astrologers (1:20). Their wisdom was the highest quality the king could expect to assist in his realm.

Historically, many expositors attempt to name the ten federated divisions of the Roman Empire, symbolized by each of the ten horns. However, most scholars today resist that step, leaving no statement as to their meaning. That appears to be a prudent stance.

There is a list of divisions that some make from the early powers, which led to many of the European nations of today. But even with that identity, uncertainty as to the exact meaning remains because of textual concerns.

“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 (Daniel 7:8).

Among many ways the fourth beast differs from the other three are the ten horns. Daniel momentarily focuses on that area.

“I considered the horns,” (vs 8)

Something about these ten horns draw his attention. One might even imagine that he is riveted on them long enough to count ten. While studying them, drama begins to unfold.

Since the fourth beast represents the Roman Empire, the ten horns on this creature must represent a federation of kings or nations that supported the Old Roman Empire.²⁰

“and, behold, there came up among them another little horn,” (vs 8)

“This is a spectacular new element in predictive prophecy.”²¹

Immediately, we observe two issues:

1. This is horn number eleven
2. It is small when he first notices it. If the horns are kings, kingdoms or unique powerbases (and they appear to be at least one of those) at a time when the Roman Empire is *thriving* (during its height of world control), another power arises. Though small at first, it would later become a dominant force.

Since it isn’t included in the original ten horns and the vision portrays its growth, a vast new power is represented and emphasized.

²⁰ Miller, Stephen R.; *The New American Commentary*, vol. 18 (Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1994), p. 202.

²¹ Whitcomb, John C.; *Daniel* (Moody Press; Chicago, IL – 1985), p. 96.

“before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots:” (vs 8)

The uprooting means either total destruction or complete subjugation. The “plucking” or “uprooting” is a passive verb that implies that *the rise* of this little horn power *resulted* somehow *in bringing them down*. Whatever occurs, this one horn *takes the place of* the other three *in its early stages*. Since later it is apparent that this little horn has grown, it will eventually take over or take the place of the beast’s empire (7:24). The ultimate demise, then, of the Roman Empire is in evidence.

Three kingdoms/nations/powers apparently are unable to resist this growing quest of the little horn into power, and come to their independent end. Who those three are, again, remains very uncertain!

Since it is all centered in Rome (and we will soon discover that it is a religious antichrist power), our only choice is to identify this rising horn power as the papacy. Some claim that the passive verb must mean that God is directing in the “plucking.” He clearly “contains” all earthly moves, but the Aramaic states that the little horn is the *cause* of the uprooting of the three.

Again, who were those three? Something so obvious in the prophetic text has been elusive to historians. A few expositors claim they were the Heruli, Ostrogoths and the Vandals – all European tribes/nations.

The following is such an example from expositor and historian Mervin C. Maxwell:

“The shift from ‘catholic’ to ‘Roman Catholic’ took place at the time when the Roman Empire was declining and was being invaded by a series of Germanic tribes.

“Constantine, the first Christian emperor (305–337 A.D.), ruled at a time when runaway inflation, high taxes, sagging morale, and insistent military pressure on the borders made it seem advisable to move the capital from Rome to Constantinople (now Istanbul). The move left the Roman bishop almost on his own in Italy and added greatly to his stature.

“In 376 a large population of uncivilized Visigoths received official permission to cross the River Danube into the territory of the Roman Empire. ‘They poured across the stream day and night, without ceasing, embarking in troops on board ships and rafts, and in canoes made of the hollow trunks of trees.’ ‘The man who should wish to ascertain their number,’ wrote the contemporary historian, Ammianus Marcellinus, quoting Virgil, ‘might as well ... attempt to count the waves in the African Sea, or the grains of sand tossed about by the zephyrs.’

“Over the next century or so the Visigoths were followed by perhaps a score of other tribes, some large some very small, the makings of the European nations of today. Of these the most significant besides the Visigoths were the Ostrogoths, the Vandals, the Burgundians, the Lombards, the Anglo-Saxons, the Franks, the Alemannians, the Heruls, and the Sueves. Here are Daniel’s **‘ten horns.’**

“*Three horns uprooted*. Some of these tribes had been Christianized prior to their invasion of the empire, but their Christianity was Catholic. It was a kind of Arianism. That is, unlike the Catholics, these tribes believed that although Jesus is very great, He is not ‘God’ essentially but is a created being. Because of their difference in belief the Catholics and Arians opposed each other. When the Arian Ostrogoths under Theodoric took over Italy in the year 493, they considerably limited the power of the Roman pope. In 523 Theodoric even bundled off the

pope to Constantinople with the instructions to persuade the Catholic emperor there to stop persecuting Arians in what was left of the Roman Empire. A little later he actually put the pope in jail.

“But the Catholic emperors of the eastern empire found ways to help the pope by eliminating three of the Arian tribes. The Catholic emperor Zeno (474-491) arranged a treaty with the Ostrogoths in 487 which resulted in the eradication of the kingdom of the Arian *Heruls* in 493. And the Catholic emperor Justinian (527-565) exterminated the Arian *Vandals* in 534 and significantly broke the power of the Arian *Ostrogoths* in 538. Thus were Daniel’s three horns – the Heruls, the Vandals, and the Ostrogoths – **‘plucked up by the roots.’**”²²

This “resumé fulfillment” is accepted by many regarding these three nations and the little horn. But action from the little horn power, per se, weakening and eliminating three powers is limited (as the Biblical record portrays) and remains elusive to our understanding. Also, the little horn begins this work when the beast power is in its strength.

“and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things” (vs 8)

The repeated use by Daniel of the word “behold” adds drama for the reader. He is desiring that we not miss any of those points. We might assume that he was equally transfixed with intrigue as each event occurred. “Behold” – “don’t miss this!”

“in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth” (vs 8)

The eyes and mouth reveal that this little horn power is a human institution.²³ Some even suggest that it represents an individual. The eyes imply intelligence, insight and wisdom (Zechariah 3:9, 4:10; Revelation 4:6, 5:6).²⁴ To Collins it asserts haughtiness (Isaiah 2:11, 5:15; Psalm 12:3; Obadiah 12).²⁵

Intriguingly, two of the seven things God hates in Solomon’s fascinating list are “haughty eyes [and a] lying tongue” (Proverbs 6:16, 19).²⁶

“speaking great things” (vs 8)

The “great things” this “institution” speaks are against God and His people (7:21, 25). This clearly represents blasphemy, arrogant assertions and/or boastful claims. It is the only entity in the chapter that attacks God’s people. Many scholars conclude that this little horn is the antichrist, first depicted prophetically following the Roman Empire, and later at the very end of time (Daniel 11:36-37, II Thessalonians 2:3-12, Revelation 13:5-6).

In the end-time application, this papal institution will rule the world (Revelation 13:3, 7-8, 12; cf. Daniel 8:9-11).

²² Maxwell, C. Mervin; *God Cares* (Pacific Press Publishing Association; Boise, Idaho; 1985), vol. I, p. 123.

²³ Steinmann, Andrew E.; *Daniel* (Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis), p. 348.

²⁴ Miller, *op. cit.*, p. 202.

²⁵ Collins, John J.; *Daniel* (Fortress Press, Minneapolis, MN – 1993), p. 299.

²⁶ Lucas, Ernest C.; *Daniel* (Intervarsity Press, Downers Grove, IL; 2002), p. 180.

“The combination of these two characteristics [from the eyes and mouth] points to a man capable of incomparably brilliant blasphemies, not simply speaking against God but doing so in a manner that will attract and deceive vast numbers of men. Indeed, he will be Satan’s masterpiece – a superbly effective instrument of ‘the father of lies,’ who was ‘a murderer from the beginning’ (John 8:44).”²⁷

Up to this point in the prophetic narrative, God has brought to light key “world power players,” which portray historic eras and related instructive events leading to a final rise of a horrendous Rome-based power that defies Him. These players were presented in a benign historical setting in Daniel 2, which ended with God’s eternal kingdom being established on earth. In Daniel 7:1-8 those nations step into the redemptive history realm, wielding stunning power. The accelerating conflict between good and evil takes center stage. That emphasis will supervene in the divine missives throughout the rest of Daniel and into the book of Revelation.

In much of the Scriptures, prophetic works, narratives, visions and explanations are often **interrupted** by “commentary inserts” – often seemingly on a different subject – but usually in a sequence that strongly hints **when** it occurs. Daniel is no exception. The next two verses come during or shortly after the height of this little horn power. Then we will see that power return in a totally different era in verse 11. Thus, a dramatic storyline of the “players” during the Christian dispensation has come onto the stage. These are those agencies that God identifies as important to the redemptive clock. An end-time application will turn these symbols into eschatological metaphors.

What follows is a unique Old Testament portrayal of heavenly activity of two divine Beings: the Ancient of Days and the Son of man. Two of the Godhead are unequivocally and distinctly described in activity that **follows** this little horn narrative.

Here’s the sequence:

- Babylon
- Medo-Persia
- Greece
- Rome
- Papal Rome
- Onset** of a judicial process
- Papal Rome – second rise
- Re-application of the four kingdoms – time of the end
- End** of the judicial process
- God’s everlasting kingdom

This is actually a helpful resumé of what will arise in **all** subsequent apocalyptic prophecy.

²⁷ Whitcomb, *op. cit.*, p. 96.

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