

(To be revised)

TROUBLING ACTIVITY OF THAT LITTLE HORN

(Daniel 7 – Part 4)

“I Daniel was grieved in my spirit in the midst of my body, and the visions of my head troubled me” (Daniel 7:15).

“I Daniel was grieved in my spirit in the midst of my body,” (vs 15)

Daniel was profoundly affected by this “word from God.”¹ He had already experienced a similar emotion of astonished dismay when he heard Nebuchadnezzar’s dream that the king would eat with the beasts of the field:

- “Daniel … was **astonished** for one hour, and his thoughts troubled him” (4:19).
- A similar reaction will once again sweep over him in 7:28 (cf. Ezekiel 1:28; 3:14-15, 25-26).

What disturbed him the most? We shall soon see that it is what the little horn and its terrifying beast did. Even the vision of the Son of Man and the Ancient of Days did not overshadow his negative reaction to that fourth beast and its one blasphemous horn!

The KJV, talking about the “*midst of my body*” actually comes from the words “*midst of my sheath*.” This is found elsewhere only in Job 27:8. Ancient rabbis talked about the body being the “sheath of the soul.”² “In the middle of my body I am grieved and deeply concerned!”

The ancient Hebrews also had a saying that “from my bowels came compassion” or “strong emotion” (*splangchnizomoi*). It is probable that Daniel’s expression was similar to our expression of today: “I feel this from the bottom of my heart.”

“and the visions of my head troubled me” (vs 15)

The prophetic revelation alarmed him. Montgomery feels that our modern expression suggests “the visions are giving me lots of anxiety.”³ Thus, in two ways Daniel is uniquely transparent about his feelings. This is profoundly instructive to us! If this giant statesman and appointed messenger of God is so deeply disturbed, the missive is something we need to study with intense interest!

“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” (Daniel 7:16).

¹ Whitcomb, John C.; *Daniel* (Moody Press; Chicago, IL – 1985), p. 100.

² Keil, C. F. and Delitzsch, F.; *Commentary on the Old Testament* (Henderson Publishers, Massachusetts), vol. 9, p. 648.

³ Collins, John J.; *Daniel* (Fortress Press, Minneapolis, MN – 1993), p. 311, quoting Montgomery, p. 305.

"I came near unto one of them that stood by, and asked him the truth of all this." (vs 16)

Two divine beings have been central to this vision. But – the imagery now suggests that another being in that heavenly courtroom was standing near where Daniel likely was (in vision). This being is to function now as an interpreting angel within the vision context (similar to Ezekiel 40:4, 45 and Zechariah 1:9).⁴

Gabriel is specifically noted as the interpreter in the next chapter (8:16). Therefore, the “one of them” is likely him. Some even feel that Daniel presents this being as a “throne attendant”⁵ or “celestial attendant.”⁶

It is interesting that Daniel, the man, is the interpreter in chapters 4 and 6; and Gabriel, the angel, is the interpreter in chapters 7–12. This reveals a transition in the genre and context between the two halves of the book.⁷

Daniel is free with this visionary scene to converse with this heavenly being. Towards the end of the book, Daniel will be permitted to converse with Christ, again, within a visionary scene (Daniel 12).

"So he told me, and made me know the interpretation of the things" (vs 16)

Clearly, Daniel had a passionate desire to know more of what God was conveying. Not only did the message create anxiety but the missive was incomplete. God similarly invites us to inquire regarding truth. James beautifully illustrates this: “*If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all [men] liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him*” (James 1:5).

Daniel inquires – Gabriel interprets. Yet, issues would remain unexplained. For Daniel, that was in God’s plan. For us, everything is now open to our understanding.

"These great beasts, which are four, are four kings, which shall arise out of the earth."
(Daniel 7:17).

Now comes Gabriel’s clarification of the vision.

"These great beasts, which are four, are four kings," (vs 17)

The concepts of kings and kingdoms are interchangeable in Daniel’s dreams and visions. In Nebuchadnezzar’s dream, he (the king), was the head of gold on the image (2:38). Yet, the head was also the Babylonian kingdom. In the next chapter the he-goat was the “*king of Greece*” (8:21a), yet the single horn on its forehead was “*the first king*” (8:21b). Thus, the goat is not a single king but a kingdom.⁸

⁴ Hartman, Louis F. and Di Lella, Alexander A.; *The Book of Daniel* (Doubleday, New York, 1977), pp. 219-220.

⁵ Lucas, Ernest C.; *Daniel* (Intervarsity Press, Downers Grove, IL – 2002), p. 187.

⁶ Goldingay, John E.; Daniel – *Word Biblical Commentary*, vol. 30 (Word Books – Dallas, TX), p. 173.

⁷ Collins, *op. cit.*, p. 311.

⁸ Steinmann, Andrew E.; *Daniel* (Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis), p. 365.

This same rule, where the king/kingdom description is amalgamated, is later seen in the “*king of the north*” (11:5-35) and the “*king of the south*” prophecies, representing entire “*kingdoms*,” including even succession of kings or leaders. Here in 7:17, the four beasts are shown to represent four kings; in 7:23, the fourth is a kingdom.

“which shall arise out of the earth.” (vs 17)

The verb “*shall arise*” (*quwm*) is in the Peal Aramaic tense, representing anticipated action of the beast (“to arise,” “will arise”). Daniel was in Babylon under its last ruler when these words were given. Gabriel says that the “four” related to the future **and** they would arise from the **earth**. This is a sudden change in information venue.

This is a prophecy filled with unique symbols. Daniel 2 defines the four kingdoms through a great metallic image. Here, the same four kingdoms initially arise out of the sea (symbolic of peoples, nations, languages, etc. – Revelation 17:15). The portrayal is now changed to an apocalyptic future, with each of those kingdoms coming out of the “earth.” Though verses 2–8 reflect a Daniel 2 kingdom parallel, verse 12 reveals that they are metaphors for something new!

The imagery of the beasts coming out of the “earth” tells us that new beast kingdom understandings are in view. The word “earth” in the Bible has two basic meanings: (1) local – especially for the nation of Israel (I Samuel 13:19, Zechariah 12:12, Matthew 2:6) or (2) universal – all the earth (Genesis 1:1; Matthew 5:18, 21:1). It can also be personified, especially referring to the wicked inhabitants (Genesis 6:1).

The context is important. If there are no qualifiers, the immediate meaning suggests that out of planet earth, these powers will arise or be manifest. In Daniel 8 the ram represents Medo-Persia and is a metaphor for Christ’s kingdom. The rough he-goat represents Greece and is a metaphor for Satan’s kingdom. Thus, there is not only a literal beast application, but God draws our attention first to a symbolic understanding, then to an end-time metaphor. Thus, in the Book of Revelation, the declaration that “Babylon is fallen” (Revelation 14:8, 18:2) is another example of one of these apocalyptic end-time beast!

Gabriel is telling us, through Daniel, that the greater focus on these creatures **is** end-time! That is his theme. “The interpreter speaks as if Babylon as much as the succeeding empires is still future.”⁹ If that is so, then there should be a sequential link to these creatures with God’s final kingdom. That **is** what the next verse introduces.

“But the saints of the most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever.” (Daniel 7:18)

“But the saints of the most High” (vs 18)

The “saints” will be described soon in verses 21 and 22. They are the true future members of the New Testament covenant fulfillment – the “spiritual Israel” from all nations.¹⁰

⁹ Goldingay, *op. cit.*, p. 173.

¹⁰ Keil, *op. cit.*, p. 649.

The Hebrew adjective *q̄dosim* is used here as a noun for the “saints.” Anciently, that word suggested “heavenly beings.”¹¹ Contextually, the imagery is of an eschatological picture of God’s people **when** they have become priests and kings (Revelation 5:10; cf. Psalm 34:10, Exodus 19:6, Daniel 12:7). Leaders and heirs of the kingdom are always people. This would place the beasts in the previous verse within that same period of time.

The “Most High” is plural in the Aramaic. The Ancient of Days and the Son of Man have been the contextual divine beings in this chapter. These “holy ones” are subjects/followers of those Beings.¹²

“shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever.” (vs 18)

The earthly kingdoms are here merged with the Messianic kingdom in its final eschatological picture of the new heaven and earth.¹³

Four kingdoms – literal – out of the “populace” of the sea (historically)

Four kingdoms – metaphorical – appear on “planet earth” (eschatologically)

Eternal kingdom – literal – given to “body of saints” (heavenly)

There is also a fascinating “kingdom of God” association in this chapter. In 7:13-14 the Son of Man receives “the kingdom,” and here in verse 18 the saints receive “the kingdom.” Putting these together, this unique eschatological picture emerges:

The son of Man **and** the saints receive the “kingdom of God” in a setting at the time of Daniel’s visionary “end.”

- Christ receives ***His kingdom*** at the end of four beast metaphors.
- The saints receive “***the kingdom***” at the end of four beast metaphors.

This imagery ties to the incredible anthems of victory and rewards expressed in Revelation:

For Christ: “And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, *The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.... And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.... These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him [are] called, and chosen, and faithful.... And he hath on [his] vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS*” (Revelation 11:15, 12:10, 17:14, 19:16).

¹¹ Lucas, *op. cit.*, p. 191.

¹² Miller, Stephen R.; *The New American Commentary*, vol. 18 (Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1994), p. 211, quoting Montgomery, *Daniel*, p. 308.

¹³ *Ibid.*, quoting: Savey, R. L.; *The Case for Progressive Dispensationalism* (Zondervan; Grand Rapids, MI – 1993), p. 288.

For the Saints: “And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him [be] glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.... And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: ... And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever” (Revelation 1:6, 2:26, 22:5).

This is all a beautiful rendition of the heavenly kingdom.¹⁴ But what does it imply? At the very end is the “marriage of the Lamb” to His “wife” (Revelation 19:7). When that occurs, Jesus and the saints are wedded as husband and wife to share eternally the kingdom! No wonder the stunning language in Revelation: “And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God” (Revelation 19:9).

This evidence of linking Daniel 7 with Revelation is overwhelming. Note the additional thought that Daniel records regarding Christ’s dominion and kingdom: “which shall not be destroyed” (vs 14) – with the saints possessing the kingdom “for ever, even for ever and ever” (vs 18).

This in turn ties again with that beautiful picture in Revelation.¹⁵

The Son of Man alone is worthy to receive the kingdom – but He graciously grants a deed to that kingdom to all who believe Him: “you have made them a kingdom” (Revelation 5:10)!!

“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; (Daniel 7:19).

It is fascinating that Gabriel’s first response to Daniel’s anxiety over the vision was a summary statement by contrasting the kingdoms. Everything that you’ve seen moves forward from a temporal, earthly dominion to an eternal dominion. Jesus responds in a similar fashion in the next chapter. Gabriel asks Him (on our behalf) about the earthly little horn power (8:13). Jesus answers by pointing to a time when holiness will be vindicated (8:14).



God has in mind that we see this overview. These prophecies are dynamic and forward-looking. We enter into the flow of its unfolding wonders as our study deepens. This, in turn, invites urgency in preparing for the heavenly kingdom.

Daniel wants more details. He may have understood at least the historical meaning of the first three. But – that fourth:

¹⁴ Steinmann, *op. cit.*, p. 366.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

“Then I would know the truth of the fourth beast,” (vs 19)

Then the seer tells us what he recalled the fourth beast was like from verse 7, embellishing the details:

- “diverse from all the others” (in appearance)
- “exceedingly dreadful” (in appearance)
- “whose teeth were of iron”
- “and his nails of brass” (new observation from verse 7)
- “which [the beast used to] devoured, brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with his feet”

Based upon the kingdom imagery of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream, this terrible beast is Rome. Those metal claws, along with its iron teeth, represent its mobility and power¹⁶ to grasp and hold its prey, portraying its lethal destructive behavior.

“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” (Daniel 7:20).

Though the fourth beast was horrendous in appearance, Daniel’s focused interest was on the horns, especially the ***little horn*** that had been personified (vs 8). Daniel is questioning Gabriel with graphic recall:

The setting: “*Then I would know ...*” (vs 19)

“And of the ten horns that were in his head, and of the other which came up, and before whom three fell;” (vs 20)

1. “even of that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spake very great things,”
2. “whose look was more stout than his fellows”

Though the “little horn” is diminutive in verse 8, here it is larger than the other horns. Its prominence clearly relates to its human characteristics that defy God and His saints. Its eyes made it look intimidating.¹⁷ Its mouth is fearful because of its threatening words. It appears that this is what frightened Daniel the most. That stout horn is an intelligent power bent on harm.

In fact, the structure of his questioning reveals “forced concern,” not waiting for Gabriel to answer each issue. He seems excited and stressed in the questioning, almost wanting to pose all the issues “in a single breath.” He seems to have a need to develop a preamble to the explicit concern for the little horn. Why? The next verse reveals the “sensitive issue.”

“I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them;” (Daniel 7:21).

There are parallels elsewhere in the record:

¹⁶ Miller, *op. cit.*, p. 212.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

1. The horrible beast:
 - a. *"Devoured and brake in pieces and stamped the residue with the feet of it"* (7:7)
 - b. Recapitulation (7:19) – *"stamped the residue with his feet."*
 - c. Similar activity of the he-goat (8:7) – *"cast him down to the ground and stamped upon him"*
 - d. *"Gentiles ... the holy city shall they tread underfoot forty and two months"* (Revelation 11:2)
2. The little horn:
 - a. *"Cast down some of the host and of the stars to the ground, and stamped upon them"* (8:10)
 - b. *"And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished: for that that is determined shall be done"* (Daniel 11:36).
 - c. Ten horns make war with the Lamb (Revelation 17:12-14).
 - d. *"And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them:"* (Revelation 13:7a).
 - e. *"And power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations"* (Revelation 13:7b).

The imagery suggests that Daniel's fourth beast with its little horn is similar to the he-goat and its final "little horn" in Daniel 8, the sea beast of Revelation 13 and the woman and the beast of Revelation 17. Pointedly, in all those prophecies the devil/dragon is the functioning power behind all (cf. Revelation 13:2).

Again, we are strongly invited to look away from the historical model of Daniel 2 and referenced in 7:3-7 to the eschatological metaphors they present. Most of Daniel 8–12 and the book of Revelation are presenting a second rise of a Roman power that the world will be enamored, by and through which the saints will suffer!

What does the word "prevail" mean? *Yekel* (Aramaic) contextually means God's people are helpless and persecuted. The figurative language used elsewhere in the text noted above suggests a most difficult time for the saints. Some may even be martyred – graphically presented in the fifth Seal (Revelation 6:9-11).

Additional views of this are given by the two witnesses in Revelation 11. There, the work of giving earth its final warning and invitation is presented – then when the mission ***is*** accomplished (Revelation 11:7), they are "killed" (silenced). It isn't long until they are "raised" and go to heaven (depicted at the Second Coming).

There is a limit to this persecution, which is shown in the next verse by the word "until." The little horn/beast prevailed "until" – something reverses the tide of battle.

The little horn is the antichrist, perverting the gospel. He is "the lawless one" whom God will slay "with the breath of his mouth" and the "brightness of his coming" (II Thessalonians 2:10). Christ is depicted as the Word of God (sword in His mouth) (Revelation 19:15). The antichrist

in Revelation is Satan's mouthpiece (portrayed as blasphemy). This confirms the meaning of the "great words" from Daniel's little horn. False doctrine leads people away from Christ.¹⁸

"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" (Daniel 7:22).

"Until the Ancient of days came," (vs 22)

The persecution and the blasphemy continue "until" the Ancient of Days comes. This is a "timing clue." At first the casual reader might consider Christ – known also as the "everlasting Father" (Isaiah 9:6) as this Being, intimating His Second Advent. But something deeper is in view. The imagery suggests that God the Father has concluded His judicial work. He has rendered a decision in favor of the saints. This automatically terminates the little horn power – intimating that "he" is not a saint.

God the Father was first portrayed in vision at the onset of a judgment scene as "the Ancient of Days" (7:9-10). That identity continued. Saint persecution continues in this vision until a ***transition in the judgment scene occurs, when*** the saints take over! This suggests that there are now two groups – saints and non-saints. Also, the time ***has come*** when the kingdom of God is fully made up.

"and judgment was given to the saints of the most High;" (vs 22)

This is portrayed as in a millennial period in Revelation: "*And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them ... and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.*" (Revelation 20:4).

Ancient of Days (Dan. 7:9-10)	"True and righteous are his judgments" (Rev. 19:2).
Ancient of Days (Dan. 7:22)	"For he hath judged the great whore [Babylon]" (Rev. 19:2). She/it has come to its end (Rev. 18:21; cf. 16:19).
Judgment given to saints (Dan. 7:27)	Judgment given to "them" (Rev. 20:4)
Time came (Dan. 7:27)	Millennium (Rev. 20:4)
Saints possess kingdom (Dan. 7:27)	Thrones saints sit upon (Rev. 20:4)

"Saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned. And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth" (Revelation 11:17-18).

This is profound. What God-directed judgment is now given to the saints and what judicial role do the saints play? Since the saints have now begun to reign with Christ, the judgment first

¹⁸ Steinmann, *op. cit.*, 372.

must have been about choosing “who would be saved.” Now the saints are given a task to review the justice of dealing with the “court’s decision” to reject the wicked. This is further portrayed in an analysis of the seven-sealed scroll of Revelation 5, which the saints will review. That isn’t finally opened until right after the Second Coming, when the seventh seal is broken. It contains the deeds of the wicked, which leads God to His final judicial rejection.

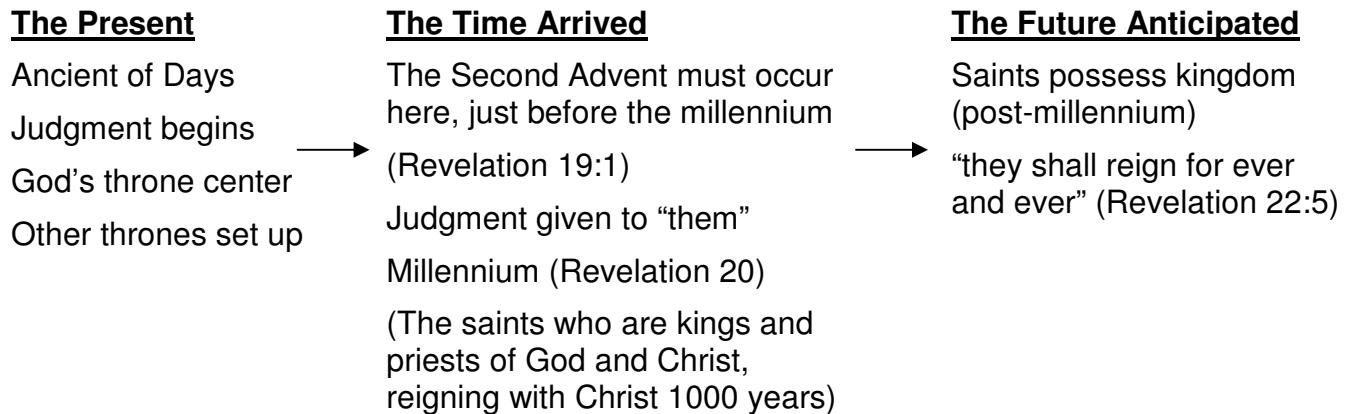
The Ancient of Days has just rendered a just decision on behalf of the saints.¹⁹

The focus is end-time, with the beast imagery and little horn power subject to the final **era** of divinely directed judgment!

Then Daniel continues:

“and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom” (vs 22)

This reviews what was revealed in verse 18:



Daniel’s lengthy but informative question has ended. But of great value was how he detailed the sequence of events and their timing.

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 (Daniel 7:23).

“Thus he said,” (vs 23)

This announces the continuation of Gabriel’s explanation from verses 17 and 18. Daniel’s interest was focused on the fourth beast and the little horn. That is now addressed.

“The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms,” (vs 23)

In the genre of Nebuchadnezzar’s image this would be its legs of iron, the Roman Empire. The power/kingdom that evolved after the Roman Empire began to crumble was Papal Rome. There is more to **that** vision/dream that bears discourse. The feet become iron and clay – a

¹⁹ Miller, *op. cit.*, p. 713.

mixture that weakens that tough metal. Then the toes – ten assumed – are mentioned (2:41-42). The ten toes are of the same clay/iron mixture as the feet, suggesting coexistence of ten associated powers. Though Arian nations are often listed, the **Papal States** number **ten**: Imola, Bolonga, Faenza, Ferrara, Ancona, Osimo, Umana, Tuscany, Calabria and Corsica. The **end-time** metaphor represents the ten world divisions the United Nations, United States and the Club of Rome have made (Revelation 13:1, 17:12).

A dual application for the sequenced kingdoms is presented in Daniel: (1) historical and (2) eschatological. Affirming thoughts regarding the latter:

1. “**In the days of these kings** shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed” (Daniel 2:44).
 - a. God’s kingdom destroys the other kingdoms (coexisting **all at the same time**)!
 - b. The stone that Nebuchadnezzar saw cut out of a mountain (2:34, 45), another kingdom (Isaiah 2:2, Jeremiah 51:25, Ezekiel 35:3, Zechariah 4:7, Psalm 68:15, II Timothy 4:1), represents the 144,000 and their global work in finishing the gospel.
2. That stone breaks **all** the “kingdoms of iron, brass, clay, silver and gold (2:45) **at the same time!**
 - a. Again, this reveals the coexistence of all those kingdoms in an end-time metaphor! They are “broken to pieces **together**” (2:35).
 - b. The stone becomes a mountain that fills the whole earth, symbolizing that all have heard the gospel and have a knowledge of God (Isaiah 11:9) – and His kingdom will then be set up forever.
3. Daniel has already noted that the beasts out of the sea would have “their **lives prolonged**.” Then there are end-time messages:
 - a. Christ comes to get His kingdom (7:13).
 - b. Saints take the kingdom to possess it forever (7:18, 27)
 - c. Just preceding God’s kingdom, this fourth beast subdues/conquers/breaks all kingdoms of the earth (7:23). It is a Roman tyrannical global power. Finally, its little horn comes to its end (7:26), implying the beast with it.

The focus of Daniel 7 is end-time! Those beasts are noted initially in an ancient kingdom context. They define, as metaphors, the great end-time players. The fourth beast is the Rome-based Vatican (Revelation 17), possessing ten horns. To understand this end-time setting, a most helpful clue is found in Revelation:

A woman (representing a church – Isaiah 26:17-18, 66:7; Jeremiah 4:31; Micah 4:10; Ephesians 5:25, etc.) is on a beast (kingdom/state), whose heads are called “seven mountains” or hills. That historically depicts the city of Rome.

A church that sits on the heads represents control over the kingdom represented by the “beast.” That chapter describes the Roman Catholic Church and its Vatican State at the end of time.²⁰ That beast also has ten horns, which will receive power as kings for “one hour” (short time) with the beast. That occurs later as seen in Revelation 13, when those horns are then crowned (13:1).

²⁰ Fowler, Franklin S., M.D.; *The “Church” Rides the Beast*, pp. 7-8.

The world has been divided into ten regions by the United Nations, the Club of Rome and the U.S. State Department (see [Appendix I](#)). This image of the papacy (leopard-like sea beast with ten horns) being honored and worshiped by the world is redrawn in Revelation 13. In an end-time portrayal, Satan and his minions are intriguingly depicted as Greece (leopard-like – 7:6), then as a rough he-goat (Daniel 8:5, 8, 21; 7:6), with a terminal little horn!

All descriptions reveal that the papacy will rise to a world power in association with the ten regions of the earth. The beast is depicted as vicious, devouring and trampling the earth. Though the initial focus is this “beast,” the center of discourse is the final career of its little horn, the “lawless one” (II Thessalonians 2:8-9) with its rise and then fall at the second coming.²¹

“and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces” (vs 23)

This description is of the Roman papal power exerting its influence right at the end. It is a prophecy still pending. The imagery is one of a geopolitical power and tyranny against any opposition. There is a temptation to ascribe such prophecies to the Dark Ages. However, the context is fast-forwarding to the very end of time in the second and final phase of the Roman papacy.

“All the world wondered after the beast.... And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by [the means of] those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live” (Revelation 13:3c, 14).

Expositor White wrote concerning this time: “The Roman Church is far-reaching in her plans and modes of operation. ***She is employing every device to extend her influence and increase her power in preparation for a fierce and determined conflict to regain control of the world, to re-establish persecution, and to undo all that Protestantism has done.*** Catholicism is gaining ground upon every side. See the increasing number of her churches and chapels in Protestant countries. Look at the popularity of her colleges and seminaries in America, so widely patronized by Protestants. Look at the growth of ritualism in England and the frequent defections to the ranks of the Catholics. These things should awaken the anxiety of all who prize the pure principles of the gospel.”²²

“As we approach the last crisis, it is of vital moment that harmony and unity exist among the Lord's instrumentalities. The world is filled with storm and war and variance. ***Yet under one head – the papal power – the people will unite to oppose God in the person of His witnesses.*** This union is cemented by the great apostate.”²³

“God's word has given warning of the impending danger; let this be unheeded, and the Protestant world will learn what the purposes of Rome really are, only when it is too late to escape the snare. She is silently growing into power. Her doctrines are exerting their influence

²¹ Gaebeliein, Frank E.; *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, vol. 12 (Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, MI), 1984, vol. 7, p. 93.

²² White, Ellen G.; *The Great Controversy*, pp. 565-566 (emphasis added).

²³ White, Ellen G.; *Testimonies*, vol. 7, p. 182 (emphasis added).

in legislative halls, in the churches, and in the hearts of men. She is piling up her lofty and massive structures in the secret recesses of which her former persecutions will be repeated. ***Stealthily and unsuspectedly she is strengthening her forces to further her own ends when the time shall come for her to strike.*** All that she desires is vantage ground, and this is already being given her. We shall soon ***see and shall feel*** what the purpose of the Roman element is. Whoever shall believe and obey the word of God will thereby incur reproach and persecution.”²⁴

The imagery suggests “destruction” of what God and His people had earlier established on earth. With similar ties in the book of Revelation, with blasphemy and fornication language (Revelation 17 and 13), the focus is on spiritual devastation, leading to an apostate movement, called Babylon!

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²⁴ White, Ellen G.; *The Great Controversy*, p. 581 (emphasis added).