

GOD'S PATHWAY THROUGH PROPHECY

EMPIRES IN PROPHECY: God's Perspective Pt. 2

Daniel 7:1-18/Luke 21:24

INTRODUCTION: While Daniel 7 covers much of the same material as did Daniel 2, both in prophetic content and concept, it does so from an entirely different perspective of the “*TIMES OF THE GENTILES*”. Daniel 7 provides a vastly different reading of prophetic history in both symbol and substance. In Nebuchadnezzar’s dream we have a humanistic view of the Empires in Prophecy. In Daniel’s dream we have a heavenly view of the Empires in Prophecy. Man tends to view history from a closed and colored lens. He sees events UNDER the sun. But there is a God in heaven which sees through an entirely different lens because He has a perspective from ABOVE the sun. This Divine perspective is now presented in Daniel’s dream of four dreadful beasts. Through it we learn that what man finds attractive so as to be adored, God finds abominable so as to be abhorred and annihilated through judgment. As Psalm 49:12 states, “*Man being in honor abideth not: he is like the beasts that perish*”. Such is the end of the “*TIMES OF THE GENTILES*,” as depicted in the message now before us in both outline and observation.

In this second part of our treatment, outlining and observing Daniel’s dream, the broad telescopic approach to the four beasts in general, turns to a far more precise microscopic assessment of the fourth and final beast of Daniel’s vision of the four beasts. In analyzing the fourth beast emphasis is also placed upon the amplified relationship of the future and final form of the beast to the eschatological coming of the Son of Man and the ascension of the Ancient of Days for final judgment. The plain sense of the angelic explanation given to God’s appointed prophetic servant makes it abundantly clear that the future and final form of the beast will commence just prior to the Son of Man’s personal, literal, and visible return. And that it will continue up until the catastrophic climax of the times of the Gentiles by means of the decreed destruction of the final form of the beast at the hands of the Son of Man when He personally, literally, and visibly returns riding upon the clouds of glory! The spotlight now turns to the central impression of the vision.

- A. Daniel’s Inspired **INTRODUCTION** to His Vision – v. 1.
- B. Daniel’s Inspired **IDENTIFICATION** of His Vision – vs. 2-14.
- C. Daniel’s Inspired **INVESTIGATION** of His Vision – vs. 15-16a
- D. Daniel’s Inspired **ILLUMINATION** of His Vision – v. 16b
- E. Daniel’s Inspired **INTERPRETATION** of His Vision – vs. 17-18
- F. Daniel’s Inspired **IMPRESSION** of His Vision – vs. 19-28

NOTE: Once the angelic interpreter provided sufficient data on the four beasts in general, Daniel requested specific amplification on the fourth dreadful beast. This focus on the fourth beast dominates the remainder of the vision, in large part, because the fourth beast itself dominates the eschatological scheme of God’s prophetic program. The continual course of

prophetic history culminates with the future phase of the fourth beast and then finally climaxes with the literal, personal, visible return of the Son of Man. The fourth beast and the return of the Son of man are closely associated in intersection and interpretation. For this reason, the fourth beast forms the ultimate impression of the vision and dictates Daniel's priority of perception as it relates to the inspired interpretation of the vision.

Since Daniel was inspired of the Holy Spirit to see something prophetically diverse and dominant in the fourth beast, we too should be sensitive to pay special attention to the fourth beast. We should follow Daniel's lead of giving special time and attention to the fourth beast so as to apprehend its diverse impression and properly apply each and every detail of the vision to God's pathway through prophecy. One would be exegetically amiss to pass over this fourth beast as just another historical beast like unto the previous three. Scripture goes to great lengths to drive home the fact that there is something unique, something diverse about this particular beast. Its diversity implies a mystery of prophetic transformational transition throughout the ages. This transformative aspect of the beast is unveiled in its various phases of expression throughout God's prophetic program.

1. The Fourth Beast: Its **FIRST** Phase – vs. 19, 23

NOTE: At Daniel's behest, the angel finally begins the Divinely guided illumination and interpretation, not of the entire vision, but of the predominant aspect of the vision, the fourth beast in its first, future, and final phase leading up to the literal, personal, and visible return of the Son of Man, which alone shall bring the beast to his destined demise and destruction forever ending the times of the Gentiles.

a. Its **Description**

- 1) *Diverse from all the others* – This fourth beast defies description. It is a composite of the other three as seen in Revelation 13:2. And yet, it possesses a mysterious distinction from all others which must be prayerfully and carefully amplified.
- 2) *Exceeding dreadful* – The horror of this beast surpasses all human description. Its impact upon Daniel physical and emotional state gives testimony as to just how dreadful the very sight of the beast actually was.
- 3) *Teeth were of iron* – Corresponds to the iron legs of Nebuchadnezzar's image. The fourth beast is the "Iron Beast". It is durable and destructive. It can be tarnished and marred, but not utterly destroyed by human efforts.
- 4) *Nails of brass* – A new element that seems to indicate that this beast will bring in some of the aspects of the previous beasts. Throughout sacred writ brass/bronze consistently connotes judgment or punishment. It seems that this

beast has a special proclivity to the persecution and punishment of God's people.

b. Its **Deeds**

- 1) *Devoured*
- 2) *Brake in pieces*
- 3) *Stamped the residue*

NOTE: These three aspects describe the ferocity and fullness of this vile beast's power for absolute violence and destruction. Its actions depict just how unmercifully vicious and unrelentingly violent this beast shall be. It seems to take pleasure in violence and destruction.

c. Its **Designation**

- 1) *The fourth beast* – Corresponds to the fourth aspect of Nebuchadnezzar's image and has the same symbolic force.
- 2) *The fourth kingdom upon earth* – Each beast represents God's perspective of a prophetic empire. The fourth beast is the fourth kingdom, ROME. History has now confirmed this fact. Babylon arose first. Then came Medo-Persia. Afterward Greece rose to power. Finally, Rome became the fourth world empire.

2. The Fourth Beast: Its **FUTURE** Phase – vs. 20a, 24a

NOTE: Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit Daniel's heightened interest in the fourth beast draws specific attention to the dominant feature of the beast as it relates to its eschatological emphasis, the ten-horn phase, and the little horn that came forth out of the beast-system. The fact that Daniel is driven to this particular characteristic of the beast implies at least four things. One, these horns form the dominant focus of the beast relative to God's prophetic program for the future. Two, these horns should draw serious and sober attention from all of God's people just as they did from Daniel. Three, these horns play a vital role in rightly interpreting God's program for the ages. If we rightly interpret these horns, we will rightly interpret God's plan for concluding the times of the Gentiles and the coming of the Kingdom. If we incorrectly interpret these horns, we will incorrectly interpret God's plan for concluding the times of the Gentiles and the coming of the Kingdom. Four, these horns will collectively co-exist up to the time the Son of Man returns. They will not meet their demise and ultimate destruction until the Son of Man personally, visibly, literally, and historically returns. It is the coming of the Son of Man that brings an end to the ten-horn coalition. For these reasons the Holy Spirit sheds light upon the future phase of the fourth kingdom.

- a. Its **Description** – “*Ten horns.*” These ten horns exist simultaneously on the beast just as the ten toes existed simultaneously on Nebuchadnezzar’s great image. They are NOT the beast itself, but a coalition of powers which arise out of the beast. The ten horns represent the same prophetic image as the ten toes, a 10 nation federation of European powers.
- b. Its **Derivation** – “*In his head.*” The ten horns are NOT the beast, but come out of the beast, that is, the fourth world empire, Rome. Thus, the ten horns are not ancient Rome, which historically fulfilled the first phase of the fourth beast. They constitute a yet future phase of the fourth beast which derive out of the ancient forms of the beast. Just as the ten toes derive from the feet, which issue out of the legs of the image, so the horns come forth out of the beast. The horns are a Revived Phase of the Old Roman Empire, but are not to be confused with the original ancient Empire which has already been fulfilled.
- c. Its **Designation** – “*Ten Kings.*” The “ten horns” symbolize “ten kings” or political leaders. The point is that ten separate nations ruled by ten kings shall come out of the fourth and final kingdom to form a federation of a 10 Nation Western-League. Current world events in Europe demonstrate that this prophecy is rapidly moving toward a literal fulfillment just as the previous elements of the prophecy have already been historically and literally fulfilled already. God’s people are repeatedly warned to study the signs of the times and to be alert and awake to the hour in which they live. Current events cannot and must not be overstated or sensationalized as predictive fulfillments; but they should be carefully considered with caution with an expectation of God fulfilling His plan and purposes for planet earth, especially as these events relate to God’s chosen people and the land promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in concert with His plan to use the European Community. Such current global events include that following:

On May 14th, 1948 Israel was once again proclaimed a National State and with this providentially guided proclamation God’s prophetic clock began to tic toward eternity. In 1967 war broke out between the Arabs and the Jews. The now famous “six-day war” was fought between Arab forces spearheaded by Egypt, Iraq, and Syria; and the newly formed nation of Israel. Backed by the God-hating powers of the Soviet Union, the Arab allied armies had one objective in mind, the total annihilation of the state of Israel. The president of Iraq openly boasted of their objective: “The existence of Israel is an error which must be rectified. This is our opportunity to wipe out the ignominy which has been with us since 1948. Our goal is clear—to wipe Israel off the map.” From every side of the battle things looked bleak and hopeless for the tiny new fledgling nation. And yet, in the midst of a nation gripped by trembling trepidation, one Rabbi called the nation to remember the words of Deuteronomy 28:10 “Then all peoples of the earth shall see that you are called by the name of the LORD, and they shall be afraid of you.” Israel looked to the United States for help but America chose to stand down. With God as their one and

only hope, the Jewish people courageously confronted their enemies. One source provides a snapshot of the backdrop and miraculous outcome of the War:

In the spring of 1967, following close to a decade of relative calm, Israel found itself poised for war against four of its Arab neighbors.

According to all the military analysts and pundits, it was to be a lopsided match. The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) consisted of 275,000 troops, compared to the 456,000 soldiers of the combined Iraqi, Syrian, Jordanian and Egyptian armies. The united Arab forces also had a decided edge with regards to weaponry and military equipment: they boasted more than double the amount of tanks, and close to four times the amount of combat aircraft. The three-week period preceding the Six-Day War was one of dread, shock and fright for the residents of the Holy Land.

With close to two and a half million Jews living in the tiny country, it had the highest concentration of Jews since pre-Holocaust Eastern Europe. So pessimistic was the outlook that the nation's cemeteries and national parks were marked to become gravesites for the many who would surely perish in the course of the war.

However, despite all the prognostications, by the time the war ended, the territory under Israeli control had tripled in size. Jews returned to sites where their ancestors had lived for thousands of years, sites from which waves of terror were launched against them for so many years. The casualties and losses were painful, but minimal in comparison to all projections. The Jewish nation was miraculously victorious in the face of unbelievable odds (Chabbad.org).

One example of the gracious guidance of God's providential hand performing miracle after miracle on behalf of His chosen people, took place on the very first day of the war. Rather than waiting for the overwhelming forces of their foes to attack, Israel mounted a preemptive air strike against Egyptian airfields. As their vastly outnumbered and outmanned Airforce took to the skies, Jordanian radar immediately picked them up and sent reports to Egyptian command. But without any rhyme or reason, and without anyone's knowledge, the Egyptians had changed their coding frequencies the evening before. The Jordanians did not know of the change, and had no means of obtaining the new codes in time. The result was that the warning alert never went through and the Israeli airstrike was successful in maintaining the strategic element of surprise. Israeli fighter jets were able to destroy six Egyptian airfields and hundreds of Egyptian planes. By the end of the first day of the war Israel had successfully annihilated the combined air power of Egypt and Syria before they could even leave the ground. Not because of superior power, but because of supernatural Providence governing the most minute details of the battle just one day before, namely, the breakdown of communications.

In only six short days of miraculous fighting Israel prevailed and recaptured her holy city of Jerusalem and the area of the Temple Mount. From a Christian perspective, Harold Wilmington provides a summary which sheds light on the miraculous nature of the war:

From June 4 through June 8, 1967, the world famous six-day war between Israel and Egypt took place. When the smoke had cleared, Israel had won a stunning and fantastic victory. Her land area had increased from 7,992 square miles to over 26,000 square miles. With less than 50,000 troops she had all but annihilated Nasser's 90,000 soldiers. During that fateful week Egypt suffered 30,000 casualties, 197 planes, 700 tanks, and watched two billion dollars go up in smoke. Israel on the other hand, lost 61 tanks, 275 dead, and 800 wounded.

With National Israel back in her homeland God's prophetic program could now begin to move toward the latter day stages of the formation of a Western-League of Ten Nations.

Nine years after Israel's statehood, the Treaty of Rome (1957) established the "European Common Market" which initiated loosely united economic policies of member nations. On the very same day the same member nations signed the "European Atomic Energy Community" thus restoring the development of atomic activity in Europe. From its inception the (ECM) was viewed as having the potential to become a powerful European trading community. More importantly, the (ECM) signaled the start of activities in Europe toward a Revived European Federation. As the years passed the various nations of Europe outgrew the Treaty of Rome and so the European Community pressed forward toward a "United States of Europe." The goal of such a union or league-of-nations is global unification in three areas: political power, military might, and economic expansion.

By the early 90's European leaders introduced "Project 1992," a plan aimed at dropping all European trade barriers so as to create a single "economically" and "politically" based "European Federation" no later than January 1, 1993. Many economists and analysts projected that this alarming plan had the potential to make Europe an economic power that would overshadow the United States and Japan combined. This would indeed be a "Dreadful Euro-Beast"! The very term employed by secular analyst.

The movement toward a global European economy escalated on January 1, 1999 with the birth of the Euro, and the European Monetary Union (EMU). The Euro became the legal currency of eleven (EU) member-nations. It was modeled after the U.S. currency system. After February 28, 2002, the euro became the sole currency of 12 EU member states, and their national currencies ceased to be legal tender. The European Union (EU) already has a central bank called the European Central Bank (ECB), meant to displace the U. S. Federal Reserve. This raises an interesting question of what will happen once America can no longer handle her national debt, and the U. S. dollar crashes so that America's current decline as a primary world power becomes complete.

As we speak the global government of Europe has taken early shape in the form of the European Union (EU) presently consisting of some 27 member nations. As of 2020 the

number remains at 27, but only 19 nations currently comprise the Eurozone. Alongside the (EU), the Western European Union (WEU) formed in 1995 under the Brussels Treaty. The primary objective of the Brussels Treaty Powers was to begin the revival of the Old Roman Empire. Thus, while the (EU) consists of some 27 member-nations, it must be observed that only TEN (10) NATIONS have separate and special status of full membership and vote. These 10 nations are the original members of the (WEU) – Belgium, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Luxemburg, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, United Kingdom. As full member states they possess total authority in the council of the (WEU). It should be noted that of January 31, 2020, the United Kingdom departed from the (EU). The other member-nations have “associate” or “observer” status. These associates participate in military unification. The (EU) even has its own anthem, its own flag, and its own European Union Constitution.

On March 31, 2010 this 10 nation confederation agreed to transfer their power to the (EU) under the Lisbon Treaty. This treaty forms the constitutional basis of the (EU). The Full Membership remained at 10 member-nations as indicated by the following chart. Javier Solana, former Secretary-General of the (WEU) has stated that the number of full-member states forming this Euro-Beast would not change from TEN (10)!!! The current Secretary-General of the (WEU) is Jeppe Tranholm-Mikkelsen. He was originally appointed on 21 April 2015 and served a five-year term before being reappointed for a second term on 29 April 2020. The second, five-year term runs from 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2025.

3. The Fourth Beast: Its **FINAL** Phase – vs. 20b-22, 24b-26

a. His **Derivation**

- 1) “*the other which came up*” – The Little horn comes up from within the European Union. This means that the Little horn will be a European leader who will become a One World dictator. He is not one of the original ten, but comes up from within them. This is marked by the fact that he arises after the ten are already in place. It cannot be overstated that the future little horn cannot rise to power until the ten-horn federation is already formed and functional, an eschatological episode in European world-government which has not yet taken place, and which will not take place until just before the time of the coming of the Son of Man!
- 2) “*another shall arise after them*” – The Little horn will arise AFTER the formation of the Western-League of 10 nations. In the days of these ten kings/world leaders, the world can expect to see the rise of the Little Horn, also known as the Antichrist, the Man of Sin, the Beast out of the Sea, and the Beast out of the bottomless pit.

b. His **Description**

- 1) “*had eyes*” – In biblical prophecy “eyes” refer to knowledge, cleverness, and wisdom. The Antichrist will be a brilliant and cunning world leader. He will be charismatic and crafty. The most magnificent manipulator the world has ever known, and the most sinister seducer Satan has ever produced.
- 2) “*a mouth*” – The Little Horn will be a charismatic orator who will mesmerize the masses and speak profane blasphemies against God. History shows that every demonized political power and every cultic leader has been a smooth-talking con-artist whose speech seduced gullible sinners seeking a superhero to follow. This was true of Napoleon, Mussolini, Hitler, Mao, Castro, Clinton, and Obama; and it will be abundantly true of Antichrist.
- 3) “*whose look was more stout*” – The power, person, and performance of the Little Horn will far surpass that of all leaders the world has ever known. The descriptive term “stout” (Aram. *rab*) means “greater in might and power, as well as size.” Thus, the NASV reads, “Which was larger in appearance than its associates”; and the ESV renders it, “That seemed greater than its companions.” The appellation, “Little Horn” must not be misconstrued. There will be nothing little about this Tyrant. He will cast a huge and horrific satanic shadow over the entire globe by his perverse presence and his program.
- 4) “*diverse from the first*” – He will be a uniquely different type of dictator. Once again Daniel employs the comparative adjective, “diverse” (Aram. *shena*) which implies a diversity in the sense of “having the ability to change, to transform, to be pliable and flexible.” This term is repeatedly used with reference to the fourth beast and conveys the transformative character of the beast that takes on diverse forms throughout different phases of prophetic progression.

c. His **Deeds**

- 1) “*before whom three fell*” – The fact that three kings fall together supports the fact that the ten horn-kings rule simultaneously as opposed to sequentially. The Little Horn rises to power by overthrowing three of his political contemporaries so as to gain dominance over the entire coalition.
- 2) “*spake very great things*” – The verb indicates the “speaking of blasphemy” against God. This is a chief mark of the Little Horn, he blasphemes God. He is not only against God, he will seek to replace God.

- 3) *“made war with the saints”* – The saints are God’s chosen people. The Little Horn not only opposes and blasphemes God, he fights against the people of God and aggressively assaults them with satanic hatred. It must be stated clearly that this particular persecution of the “little horn” must persist until the Son of Man visibly comes on the clouds of glory. It is not a spiritual coming, or an invisible coming. It is a literal and visible coming upon the clouds of glory for every eye to behold. Only then will this specific period of persecution be brought to an end. To ascribe this persecution to some past period of fulfilled persecution during Roman history ignores the plain sense of the context that makes it clear that this specific prophetic persecution plays out just prior to the literal, visible, and bodily return of the Son of Man on the clouds of heaven, and the subsequent establishment of the Kingdom on earth.
- 4) *“prevailed against them”* – For a period of time the Little Horn will overcome the people of God. God has a providential plan and purpose, even in the persecution of His own elect people. He intends for the fires of persecution to refine us and purify us from the dross of this sinful world. He uses the trials and tribulations of life to bring an end to sin, and to bring in the peaceable fruit of righteousness. Persecution never consumes the child of God, it only consecrates him and brings him forth as pure gold for God’s glory.
- 5) *“shall subdue three things”* – The Little Horn not only conquers three kings, he subjugates them under his authority so that they become vassals under his rule.
- 6) *“shall speak great words”* – Literally, “great blasphemies or words of opposition”.
- 7) *“shall wear out the saints”* – Antichrist shall so persecute and molest God’s people as to literally “wear the saints down”. “Wear out” translates an Aramaic verb that indicates a life of misery and weariness due to continual “harassment” and “oppression”! The Little Horn will so hate God’s people that he will refuse to allow them to live in peace and safety. His mission will be their misery. He will dog them continually. He will roam about like a ravenous blood thirsty beast, ceaselessly seeking to devour the elect of God. Jesus Himself said that this time would be so hard upon the saints that if it were possible even the very elect of God should be deceived.
- 8) *“think to change times and laws”* – The Antichrist will change the course and customs of society and will strive to extend his allotted time and rule. It is important to stress the plural forms of both objects. The reference seems to indicate all times and laws without exception! Antichrist will seek to disrupt the whole course of culture and society by turning God’s cosmos into chaos. The verbiage implies the abolition of history, order, and liberties be they moral,

religious, or civil. All history is HIS-STORY, and all of the laws of nature come from the LAW-GIVER of the universe! God is the God of the past, every bit as much as He is the God of the future. Absolutely nothing in this life has ever taken place in history that is outside HIS-STORY, and His plan. To attempt to reconstruct, rewrite, and remove history is not only to despise the truth, it is to deny God's sovereignty by attempting to change times, laws, and realities. This is the work of the spirit of Antichrist and it always leads to chaos and confusion. All who seek to do so are inspired by the spirit of antichrist, and are agents of chaos and confusion. This was true of Adolph Hitler, who changed the laws, history, and custom of Germany over night. It is true of Mao who changed the laws, customs, and history of China. It will be true of the Antichrist. He will institute total tyranny under his ruthless dictatorship by altering and amending the laws of nature and the laws of nature's God, and by changing the times and seasons of past and present history so as to create a new-world order without rhyme or reason!

d. His **Duration**

- 1) "*until the Ancient of Days came*" – Despite his efforts to extend his time, the Little Horn's rule will be cut off by the arrival of the Ancient of Days and the coming of the Son of Man. It seems logically evident that since it is the literal, physical, visible, and eschatological coming of the Son of Man that brings the rule of the ten kings and the willful king to an end, they must reign and rule during the very close of the last days. Once again, to relegate Daniel's predictive verbiage concerning last day events to already fulfilled portions of Roman history seems to smack in the face of the plain sense reading of the text. Those who do so appear to miss the fact that the fourth beast has diverse transformative phases that presents elements of the beast as both already-but-not-yet. These must be kept in tension if the truth of Daniel's vision and the progression of God's prophetic program are to be understood.
- 2) "*until a time and times and the dividing of times*" – God has already fixed the period that the Antichrist will exercise power. "Time" = 1 year, "times" = 2 years, and "dividing of times" = ½ year. Thus the total time of the Little Horns rule will be 3 ½ years. Each year consists of 12 months of 30 days per month for a total of 350 days per year. The Little Horns kingdom will last for 42 months, or 1260 days.

e. His **Destruction**

- 1) "*they shall take away his dominion*" – By the sovereign will of the Ancient of Days and under the Kingship and Lordship of the Son of Man, the saints of God

will ultimately prevail and conquer the Little Horn. His dominion will be destroyed during the Day of the Lord and the Battle of Armageddon.

- 2) *“to consume and to destroy it”* – This is the final end of the Little Horn/Antichrist. Divinely decreed destruction is the destiny for all worldly princes, powers, and potentates. The pathetic and perverse times of the Gentiles will be abolished and relegated to perdition. On that day these words will be finally and forever fulfilled:

He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision. Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure. Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel: (Ps. 2:4-9).

APPLICATION: While dates and times cannot be certain because God has reserved this for Himself, Christians can be certain that the stage is all but set for the arrival of the Antichrist on the center stage of history. It would seem as if this ominous figure is already living somewhere in Europe and is simply waiting in the shadows for that time already appointed by the Most High God of Heaven when he shall come upon the scene and begin his dreadful and diabolical dictatorship that will make that of Adolph Hitler look like a mere walk in the park. God help us!!!