

TRIUMPH OF THE SON – Part 2 **(Daniel 7:15-28 November 6, 2005)**

Yesterday's news made for pretty depressing reading. I logged on and here were the top four stories in order.

Violence and protests at the free trade summit in Argentina.

The trial of three gang rapists in Sydney.

An Islamic Fundamentalist attack in Indonesia is expected by the end of the year.

More deaths from bird flu.

I read these articles and the impression was that this is a dangerous, unstable world becoming even more dangerous and unstable.

It is enough to keep you awake at nights.

Every week we hear the warnings. Islamic Fundamentalism is on the move. The Greenhouse effect is causing havoc with our weather. Viral pandemics are waiting to sweep down on us. The family is disintegrating. Globalisation is creating oppressed minorities who will fight back.

We read of dictators and evil men who run the powerful institutions of our world.

And yet, I have to tell you – I sleep like a baby at night. And one of the main reasons I sleep well is the message of Daniel 7. God is in control of history. God has a plan for history.

Last time we began to look at this incredible chapter.

I told you then that the whole book of Daniel is structured to point to chapter 7 as a crucial chapter.



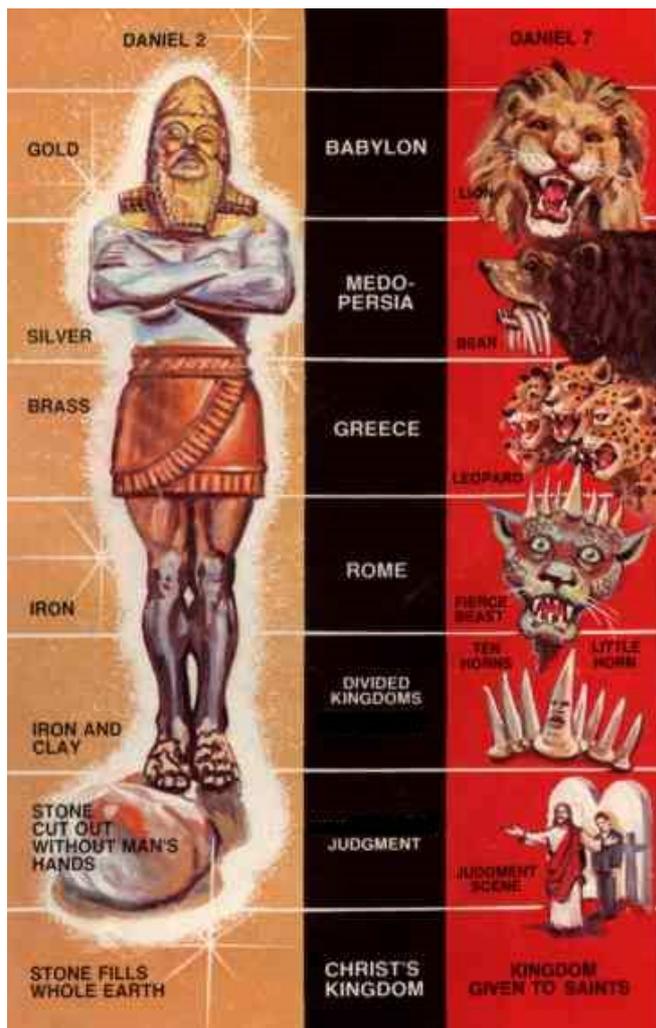
And then I told you that even within chapter 7 – the structure of the book points to verses 9-14 as the crucial section.



In a series of visions, chapter 7 outlines the flow and culmination of world history.

Daniel sees a vision of four beasts – and we are told they represent four kingdoms that God will raise up and bring to an end.

These four beasts correspond to the four parts of the statue in the vision found in Daniel 2.



The whole picture shows us that nations will rise and fall. Antichrists will come and go. But the point is that the time when beasts run wild in this world and men refuse to bow the knee to God will come to an end.

Sandwiched in the middle of this chapter are six verses. Verses in which the Ancient of Days – God Almighty – crushes every other kingdom, establishes His everlasting Kingdom – and then hands this kingdom over to the Son of Man – Jesus Christ – and everyone worships the Son of Man for all eternity.

His kingdom does not end. His kingdom lasts forever.

But the chapter ends with a focus on a time when the forces of ungodliness will coalesce in one godless beast – who will then be crushed by the Lord.

We come this morning to verses 15 to 28. In these verses – Daniel turns his attention to the fourth beast – one who has ten horns – but then grows another horn – a little horn. And this little horn has something to teach us about world history.

Last time I told you that the four kingdoms were Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome.



Babylon

Medo-Persia

Greece

Rome

I went through the vision in verses 4-7 and showed you that the vision matches these four kingdoms with incredible detail.

But a number of scholars see the four kingdoms as:



Babylon

Media

Persia

Greece

This is not the time to go into detail but suffice it to say that these scholars struggle to make the description of these beasts fit these kingdoms.

The bear lifted up on one side – fits perfectly with the idea that the Persian part of the empire came to dominate. Devouring three ribs in its mouth – represents the three kingdoms Medo-Persia conquered.

Having the bear represent just the kingdom of Media doesn't fit the description. In no way was one part of the kingdom larger – and it takes some imagination to make Media alone be the conqueror of three kingdoms.

The leopard fits a description of Greece perfectly. The speed by which Alexander conquered the world. The four heads representing the four kingdoms that Alexander's empire was divided into.

Persia was never represented by a leopard – and never was divided into four parts. Some try and make the four heads into four Persian kings – but this doesn't fit well. You have to massage the history.

And the terrible fourth beast – fits perfectly with the cruel savagery of Rome. But Greece never was divided into ten parts.

So if these four beasts fit Babylon, Medo-Persian, Greece and Rome so perfectly – why would anyone ever want to use this other scheme?

There are two groups who use this second scheme.

The first are the liberals. Basically, they don't believe Daniel wrote Daniel. They believe someone writing during the second century BC wrote this book and ascribed it to Daniel.

They would love to put the date even further back – but the finding of the Dead Sea Scrolls meant the latest Daniel could have been written was the second century BC.

Our unknown person writing in the second century BC could only write the history up to that time.

Babylon had come and gone, Media and Persia had come and gone – Alexander had come – and his kingdom was had been divided.

BUT, Rome hadn't become a world power. So – our phantom second century BC writer *couldn't* have been speaking about Rome as the fourth beast.

So despite the difficulties – they make the four beasts to be Babylon, Media, Persia and Greece – because to see the fourth beast as Rome would mean there was *real* prophecy involved – and the liberals just can't have that.

But there is another group who holds to this way of seeing the kingdoms – and they are not liberal.

Why is it that this group sees the beasts in this way?

They see it this way because of the little horn in verse 8. Remember, this fourth beast grew a little horn who uprooted three of the ten horns.

Now look with me over at chapter 8.

Here, Daniel is having another vision – a vision of a two-horned ram and a shaggy goat. But in chapter 8, there is no argument at all about who these beasts are.

Look at chapter 8, verses 20-21:

The two-horned ram that you saw represents the kings of Media and Persia.

Note – that the *one* beast represents the kingdoms of both Media *and* Persia. That is important – it fits with the outline I gave you. But we then find that:

The shaggy goat is the king of Greece, and the large horn between his eyes is the first king [Alexander the Great].

There is no doubt that the goat is Greece. But, what we need to note is that once again – as in chapter 7 – we find a little horn.

Look back up at verses 8 and 9:

The goat became very great, but at the height of his power his large horn [Alexander] was broken off, and in its place four prominent horns grew up toward the four winds of heaven [the four kingdoms]. Out of one of them came another horn, which started small but grew in power to the south and to the east and toward the Beautiful Land.

Once again – a beast that develops a little horn that grows powerful.

But we don't have to wonder who this little horn is. Look down at verse 22:

The four horns that replaced the one that was broken off represent four kingdoms that will emerge from his nation but will not have the same power.

The goat was Alexander. At the height of his power – his horn is broken off and four horns grow. Historically, that is exactly what happened. Alexander's kingdom was divided into four. But then verses 23-25:

In the latter part of their reign, when rebels have become completely wicked, a stern-faced king, a master of intrigue, will arise. He will become very strong, but not by his own power. He will cause astounding devastation and will succeed in whatever he does. He will destroy the mighty men and the holy people. He will cause deceit to prosper, and he will consider himself superior. When they feel secure, he will destroy many and take his stand against the Prince of princes. Yet he will be destroyed, but not by human power.

There is no doubt as to who this is. All are in agreement. It is Antiochus IV Epiphanes. One of the four kingdoms that Alexander's empire was divided into was the Seleucid

Kingdom – and Antiochus IV Epiphanes came to rule this kingdom. And he became a beast who attacked Israel and desecrated the Holy Land.

There is no doubt that the little horn in chapter 8 is Antiochus IV Epiphanes – King of the Seleucids from 175 to 164 BC.

So many scholars have said – if Antiochus is the little horn in chapter 8 – he *must* be the little horn in chapter 7. The unclear horn of chapter 7 is clarified by the clear horn of chapter 8.

And since we know Antiochus came out of the remnant of the Greek empire – as hard as it is to make it all fit – the fourth beast in Daniel 7 *must* be Greece – and that is why they hold to that scheme.

If I have lost you – let me try to explain.

Both chapter 7 and chapter 8 speak of a *little horn*.

Chapter 8 tells us that the little horn comes out of the kingdom of Greece.

In chapter 7 – the little horn comes out of the fourth beast – therefore they say the fourth beast must be Greece.

But, what I want you to see is that there is **no way** the little horn in chapter 7 is Antiochus IV Epiphanes.

The visions are quite different – and purposefully so.

The visions are so different that we are meant to realise that while these little horns have similarities – they are **not** the same.

CHAPTER 7	CHAPTER 8
10 horns Little horn grows separate to the ten horns	4 horns Little horn comes out of one of the four horns

And in case we confused them – there is a fact here in chapter 7 that shows this simply cannot be Antiochus IV Epiphanes. Look at verses 21 and 22:

As I watched, this horn was waging war against the saints and defeating them, until the Ancient of Days came and pronounced judgment in favour of the saints of the Most High, and the time came when they possessed the kingdom.

And down to verse 27:

Then [after the little horn is defeated] the sovereignty, power and greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be handed over to the saints, the people of the Most High. His kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom, and all rulers will worship and obey him.'

There is no way that in 164 BC when Antiochus died that the saints became rulers over all the kingdoms of this world and the everlasting kingdom of the Son of Man began.

Daniel wants us to understand that this vision now extends to the end times.

And just in case we somehow miss this – the book ends with Daniel prophesying again about these times.

In Daniel chapter 11, verse 21 and following we find a remarkable prophecy about the rise and career of Antiochus IV Epiphanes. It is even more detailed than the prophecy of chapter 8.

Then chapter 11 ends with a vision of another King – a King like Antiochus – but a King who will arise in the very last days – the final antichrist.

And just in case we miss that we are now talking about the very end of history we have chapter 12. In chapter 12 verse 1 we find that the people of God will suffer great distress until the Lord intervenes at the end of world history to rescue them.

In verse 4 – Daniel is told to conceal these words – this prophecy – and seal up this book until the end of time.

Then comes the remarkable vision of the man in linen. Daniel 12:6:

One of them said to the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, "How long will it be before these astonishing things are fulfilled?"

When are we talking about – Antiochus, the end times – what? Verse 7:

The man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, lifted his right hand and his left hand toward heaven, and I heard him swear by him who lives forever, saying, "It will be for a time, times and half a time. When the power of the holy people has been finally broken, all these things will be completed."

Verses 8-9:

I heard, but I did not understand. So I asked, “My lord, what will the outcome of all this be?” He replied, “Go your way, Daniel, because the words are closed up and sealed *until the time of the end.*”

And verse 13:

As for you, go your way *till the end*. You will rest, and then *at the end of the days you will rise to receive your allotted inheritance.*

The time is the end of history – the time of the resurrection.

These chapters move from the time of Antiochus to the time of the end of human history.

And that is exactly what happens in chapter 7.

So what this vision in Daniel 7 does is it makes the fourth beast reach from the days of Rome to the very end of history.

The Roman empire is traditionally dated to begin in 31 BC when Augustus became the first emperor. But for a hundred and fifty years Rome had been the developing superpower of the region.

The end of the Roman Empire is usually dated at 1453 when the Constantinople fell to Ottomans.

But the effect of Rome lasts to this day. Most of the other kingdoms that have risen to power have built on what Rome had done.

The Holy Roman Empire, British Empire, the US – much of the legal, governmental and cultural systems derived from Rome. In a sense the Roman Empire leads to all the ones that follow.

In this way Rome will continue to the end of history.

So with this background under our belts – we can look at these visions.

Daniel 7, verse 15:

I, Daniel, was troubled in spirit, and the visions that passed through my mind disturbed me.

Daniel didn't grasp everything about these visions – but he saw enough to worry him.

Jeremiah prophesied that the Babylonian exile would last seventy years. The widespread expectation was that after the exile – Israel would be restored to her full glory and Messiah would come.

But as Daniel watched this vision – he knew that the coming of Messiah’s kingdom was not imminent. Far from it.

Instead, the world would face a period where beasts would ravage the land and the people of God.

Daniel understood that much – but some parts of the events he had seen confused him. Verse 16:

I approached one of those standing there and asked him the true meaning of all this. “So he told me and gave me the interpretation of these things:

Daniel approached one of the angels who stood around the throne of the Ancient of Days – who gave him some further details.

Verse 17:

The four great beasts are four kingdoms that will rise from the earth.

There will be a time where the beasts rule over the world. Kingdoms will arise and they will all fall. God is in complete control.

BUT – Verse 18 – the time of the beasts is set by God and then:

The saints of the Most High will receive the kingdom and will possess it forever—yes, for ever and ever.

I am sure that Daniel would have desired to see the Kingdom of the Son of God come soon.

I am sure Daniel is like the saints in Revelation 6 who cry out – How long O Lord?

But what comforted Daniel is the fact that this vision tells us that one day the rise and fall of kingdoms will end.

Finally God will cry – enough.

Revelation 10 describes the day a great angel of God will stand with one foot on the sea and one foot on the land and cry – Enough – there will be delay no longer.

The kingdoms of this world will have come to their end. The Kingdom of the Son of Man – will be established and the saints of the Most High will inherit the kingdom.

Who are these saints? This term – holy ones – could mean angels or men. In Daniel it is used only in two other places and both refer to angels – so some say this speaks of angels inheriting the kingdom.

But the context here – strongly suggests this is men.

The kingdoms here are earthly kingdoms – kingdoms made of men.

In verses 9 – it is the saints who are on the thrones. In verse 14 – it is the saints who make up the kingdom.

But I think that most likely this refers to *both* angels and men. In this chapter we have a vision of the battle going on in the earthly realm. But in chapter 10 we have a glimpse into the battle that is going on in the angelic realm.

The coming of the Son of Man will end *all* battles and men and angels will inherit the kingdom.

Verse 19:

Then I wanted to know the true meaning of the fourth beast, which was different from all the others and most terrifying, with its iron teeth and bronze claws—the beast that crushed and devoured its victims and trampled underfoot whatever was left.

This fourth beast was different from the first three.

This beast is non-descript. It isn't a lion or bear or leopard.

It is the most terrifying, with its iron teeth and bronze claws. In one sense this fits Rome well. The extent of the empire, the power of the empire were incredible.

But I think the reason it is different is that it doesn't just depict one short world empire. Rome lasted many, many centuries – and in a sense the influence of Rome continues to this day.

So this beast depicts not just Rome – but all the world empires from Rome to the end of the world. All of the terrifying, cruel, capricious regimes that have arisen to oppress men.

In this way it is different.

Verse 20:

I also wanted to know about the ten horns on its head and about the other horn that came up, before which three of them fell—the horn that looked more imposing than the others and that had eyes and a mouth that spoke boastfully.

All I can say here is Daniel isn't the only one who wants to know about the ten horns and the little horn.

There is more confusion on this than you would believe.

But we have a few more details. Verses 21-24:

As I watched, this horn was waging war against the saints and defeating them, until the Ancient of Days came and pronounced judgment in favour of the saints

of the Most High, and the time came when they possessed the kingdom. “He gave me this explanation: ‘The fourth beast is a fourth kingdom that will appear on earth. It will be different from all the other kingdoms and will devour the whole earth, trampling it down and crushing it. The ten horns are ten kings who will come from this kingdom. After them another king will arise, different from the earlier ones; he will subdue three kings.

The ten horns are ten kings and the little horn is another king.

Basically, there are two interpretations of who the one king is.

Who is the little horn?

1. Antiochus IV Epiphanes

2. The final Antichrist

First, there are those who say the little horn is Antiochus IV Epiphanes – the Seleucid king from 175 to 164 BC who persecuted the Jews mercilessly.

But, if you say this is Antiochus you have the trouble of fitting this with the text. Who are the ten kings?

There were only seven Seleucid kings by the time of Antiochus. Some have added in the two Ptolemaic kings who ruled Palestine for a time – but that still is only nine.

And if we add all the other kings in the other three kingdoms – there are far more than ten.

And the identity of the three kings Antiochus uprooted is even more problematic – historically – he didn’t uproot three kings.

I have read a large number of possible suggestions – none of which even remotely fits what happened historically.

And the fact that in verse 21 and 22, the Ancient of Days comes and defeats this little horn and then sets up His eternal kingdom means it *cannot* be Antiochus. This is end times language.

The other possibility is that this king is the final great Antichrist. Scripture speaks again and again of the reality that at the end of history – there will be one final great beast – the antichrist who will arise in the last days.

One final arrogant, blasphemous embodiment of all the beasts who have gone before.

Without doubt, that is who this final beast is. His defeat ushers in the kingdom.

If this is the final Antichrist, it raises the question – why refer to Antiochus IV Epiphanes in chapter 8 as a little horn?

Antiochus becomes a template for the antichrists to come. A blasphemous, arrogant beast who attacks the people of God.

Many beasts will come – *like* Antiochus – Nero and Popes and Hitler – and they culminate in the final great Antichrist.

Antiochus becomes the example of the antichrists to follow that lead up to the final antichrist.

Then who are the ten horns?

Who are the ten horns?

- 1. Ten kings before Antiochus**
- 2. Ten end times kings**
- 3. All the beasts and antichrists from Rome to the end of world history**

There are three possible views.

One is that they are ten kings before Antiochus. But, as I have pointed out – this view isn't possible.

Others say that they are ten kings who rule at the end of world history. At the end of world history there will be ten great kings dominating the world.

I am sure you remember the prophetic frenzy that happened on January 1, 1981 when Greece joined the European Economic Community as its *tenth* member.

All the conspiracy talk that the ten nation revived Roman Empire was here.

But that died away when Spain and Portugal became the eleventh and twelfth members.

Currently there are twenty-five members of the EEC – four countries whose applications are being considered and sixteen applicant countries.

But incredibly this still doesn't stop commentators – good evangelical commentators – who know the EEC is far larger than ten from making statements like this from John Phillips:

By the time Daniel's end-times prophecies come finally into focus, a ten-nation European union will exist.¹

He is still convinced that the EEC will whittle down to ten European nations who will come to dominate the world.

Look it is possible that this refers to ten end times kings – but I think it is very unlikely.

In verse 24 – it states that the little horn *arises* after these ten kings. They seem to lead up to the Antichrist not all be there at the time of Antichrist.

So more than likely the ten kings refer to all the beasts and antichrists who arise from Rome to the end times.

In a number of apocalyptic texts we find references to ten generations of kings to represent *all* the kings to come.

Ten is a number of completeness.

This is a symbolic number referring to *all* the kings, emperors, dictators, beasts who will rise from Rome to now.

It refers to Caesar and Genghis Khan and Napoleon and Hitler and Saddam Hussein.

The point is that there will be many beasts, many kingdoms, many rulers – until the end.

This leads to the question – who are the three horns?

¹ John Phillips, *Exploring the Book of Daniel* (Kregel: Grand Rapids, 2004) p. 120.

Who are the three horns?

1. Three kings at the time of Antiochus
2. Three end times kings
3. The beasts and kings overthrown by Antichrist at the end

Again there are three possible views.

Three kings living at the time of Antiochus – who he overcomes. But this isn't really possible.

Three end times kings. The idea is that of these ten ruling kings – three decide to oppose antichrist and are crushed.

Again, possible – but unlikely.

More likely the three refers to all of the empires, kingdoms, beasts alive when the final great antichrist rises to power. He will force them to bow to his will.

They just represent those nations who are forced into subjugation to the proud beast in the final times.

He will demand worship and allegiance. He will place himself above all others.

As I was looking at these questions, I found it interesting reading the commentaries on this section. It was so similar to the debate surrounding Revelation chapter 17. Turn there if you will.

That chapter also describes world history culminating in antichrist by means of a vision of a horrible beast.

But again, many want to tie the whole description down to one individual – in this case Nero or some see Domitian.

But, the language makes it clear that this beast refers not to one individual, but to many kingdoms who rise and fall throughout history. Verse 10 of Revelation 17 tells us very clearly that the seven heads are seven kings. This is **not** one individual.

The message we are supposed to glean here is that this beast is many leaders, many kingdoms, many world powers who oppose God.

This beast once was, now is not and will come again.

Each kingdom in history receives a fatal blow. No kingdom lasts. But then from the ashes or elsewhere in the world – another beast rises.

This beast is Nebuchadnezzar, he is Alexander, he is Antiochus IV Epiphanes, he is Nero, he is Rome itself, he is Domitian, he is Pope Innocent III, he is Hitler, he is Saddam Hussein.

In the second century BC – the form of the beast was Antiochus IV Epiphanes.

In John's day – the form of the beast was the Roman Empire. That is why in Revelation 17 verse 9 – the beast has seven heads which are seven mountains or hills on which the harlot sits.

Seven hills or mountains. This could only refer to Rome. Rome began as seven settlements on seven hills on the left bank of the River Tiber. They coalesced to form Rome which to this day is known as the city on seven hills.

Rome became the epitome of opposition to the church of John's day.

But, to make sure we don't see this as *all* the vision refers to – verse 10 says of this beast, his seven heads are also seven kings; five have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come; and when he comes, he must remain a little while.

What does this mean?

Again, some what to limit this to the time of John and see these seven kings as seven Caesars leading to Nero or Domitian.

But no matter which Caesars you pick – no group fits this verse. Just like the 10 kings in the time of Antiochus – nothing fits neatly.

So what does this mean? Seven is the number of completeness – the number of all the beastly Satan-powered empires that will arise in the whole history of the world.

They are the very same as the ten horns of Daniel and in fact these ten horns are mentioned in verse 12. John is drawing on the imagery of Daniel to show this beast is all the empires of all time.

John says – five have fallen – it simply shows that these empires do not last. Exactly what we saw in Daniel – empires come and go.

One is – there is always a manifestation of this Satanic wrath. For John, in his day and in the place he lived, it was Rome. Daniel prophesies of the coming of Antiochus – the beast of his day.

One is yet to come. This encompasses every empire that opposes the people of God from John's day to the end of world history.

And out of these seven will come the final great beast – the eighth horn – the final great antichrist.

The imagery of Daniel 7 is picked up by John to make the same point.

History is a series of empires. God raises them up and brings them down. None last.

And they culminate in one final great Antichrist. To see how this works out, turn back to Daniel 7. Verse 25:

He [the little horn] will speak against the Most High and oppress his saints and try to change the set times and the laws.

This antichrist will encompass all the false religions, ideologies, cults who draw men from God. By force, by persuasion, by deceit – whatever it takes to draw men from the truth.

He will blaspheme against God and draw the worship of the world to himself.

And his rage will be directed particularly against the saints.

Antiochus IV Epiphanes forbade the keeping of the Jewish law and keeping Jewish holidays and festivals.

The final great Antichrist will act in like manner.

He will try to change the set times and laws. He will do whatever it takes to draw men from God.

Our calendar has religious holidays in it. Our laws are based on the ten commandments.

He will make it hard to worship God and keep His laws. How this fleshes out – I don't know. But he will erode our religious liberties and undermine the godly basis by which we live our lives.

Verse 25:

The saints will be handed over to him for a time, times and half a time.

What is this time, times and half a time?

Some have seen this as the period of time this final Antichrist has liberty before God exerts His power. His three and a half years of power.

This is possible, but the way this term is used signifies a broader meaning.

In one form or another, this time reference keeps cropping up in apocalyptic literature. Time (1), times (2) and half a time ($\frac{1}{2}$) or three and a half years or 1,260 days or forty-two months.

This time reference may have been somewhat obscure at the time Daniel wrote – but it became clearer.

Three and a half years was the period of time Antiochus IV Epiphanes persecuted Israel.

In later apocalyptic writings, this period of time – three and a half years – was used to represent a time of extreme suffering and persecution that ends with victory for the people of God.

So three and a half in all its various manifestations came to mean a time of great suffering for the people of God that would one day end.

In biblical literature this time came to mean the whole period of time in which God grants a degree of liberty to the beasts.

The whole age in which the beasts run amok and the people of God are persecuted.

The saints are martyred and cry out – How long O Lord.

It represents all of the time up until the final day when God says – enough – and the kingdom of the Son of Man begins.

And there we have the prophecy of the beasts and the little horn. A difficult and ambiguous section of Scripture.

And you may or may not agree with me about the little horn, the ten horns, the three horns or the time, times and half a time.

And that is OK – in a sense they are purposefully vague.

But what you cannot miss is that antichrists have come – they are here and will come – and the final Antichrist will embody them all. Empires will rise and fall. **But** finally this time of empires and beasts *will* end. And the climax of all history will come.

We find it in verse 26:

But the court will sit, and his power will be taken away and completely destroyed forever.

The victory belongs to the Son of Man and those who are His.

Satan and Antichrist and all the antichrists and the false prophets and all those who have their mark – their day of judgment will come.

They will find themselves powerless and judged and thrown into the lake of fire forever.

But it gets even better. Verse 27:

Then the sovereignty, power and greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be handed over to the saints, the people of the Most High. His kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom, and all rulers will worship and obey him.

I don't know what the greatest kingdom in history is. Israel under David. Babylon under Nebuchadnezzar. England under Victoria.

But they pale into nothing compared to the final kingdom.

Add every kingdom together and they are nothing compared to the kingdom of the Lamb.

And we – you and I – we will reign with Him over that kingdom. And that kingdom will never end.

And we will worship the Son of Man and the Ancient of Days forever.

Verse 28:

This is the end of the matter. I, Daniel, was deeply troubled by my thoughts, and my face turned pale, but I kept the matter to myself.

Wow!

Brothers and sisters – this world has seen some horrible events. The cruelty of Assyria. The Inquisitions, the Holocaust, the Killing Fields.

And if Christ tarries – it will see yet more brutality.

But this passage tells us – God is in control. The beasts are on a short leash. None stays long. None keeps any glory and power.

So why this cycle of beasts and persecution?

History is merely a time in which men get the opportunity to choose. This world is a testing ground.

We have two choices this world and its master – the beasts – or the world to come and its master – Christ.

Do I choose the beast – the horn – Antichrist – with his worldly pleasures – which passes?

Or do I choose to follow the Lamb, the Son of Man – Jesus Christ – and inherit His kingdom which is not of this world – but which is more glorious than any this world has seen and will not pass?

If you don't know Christ – if He is not your Lord – then yours is the way of the beasts – destruction – eternally.

Daniel wrote this prophecy five and a half centuries before Christ came – before these kingdoms rose and fell. It came to pass exactly as Daniel prophesied. The fall of the kingdoms of this world is certain.

And this final kingdom – it *will* rise as Daniel saw and never fall. You can be in that kingdom.

Trust Him. Choose Him. Be with Him and live.

I know hell is real. I know heaven is real. And I know there is life in Christ. It is what this whole world is about.

I beg you – choose life – choose Christ.

And for those in Christ – sleep well. The beasts have no real power. They can touch our earthly shell – but not our soul.

God has all things under control.

His kingdom will come and we will reign forever.

And the time of the beasts will be done and the time of the Son of Man will have come.

Rejoice and be glad.