



THE PROPHECY OF DANIEL

Lesson Number 23



TRANSLATION LEGEND: ASV=American Standard Version (1901), BBE=Bible in Basic English (1949), DRA=Douay-Rheims (1899), ESV=English Standard Version (2001), KJV=King James Version (1611), NKJV=New King James Version (1982), NAB=New American Bible (1995), NASB=New American Standard Bible (1977), NAU=New American Standard Bible (1995), NIB=New International Bible, NIV=New International Version (1984), NJB=New Jerusalem Bible, NLT=New Living Translation, NRSV=New Revised Standard Version (1989), RSV=Revised Standard Version (1952), TNK=JPS Tanakh (1985), YLT=Young's Literal Translation (1862).

----- Bible Translation Codes with Identification -----

AN EXPLANATION OF THE VISION IS GIVEN, #2

²² 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. ²³ 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. ²⁴ And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise: and another shall rise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings. ²⁵ And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time. ²⁶ But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end. ²⁷ And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him. ²⁸ Hitherto is the end of the matter. As for me Daniel, my cogitations much troubled me, and my countenance changed in me: but I kept the matter in my heart." ^{KJV} (Dan 7:22-28)

INTRODUCTION

Daniel's faith has compelled him to seek for more understanding. In a protracted vision, he has witnessed the entrance of wicked and dominating empires into the world. He has seen the rise of another despotic power that speaks against God and wages war against His

saints. He has also witnessed this power **prevailing** against the saints, even though they would eventually take the kingdom. The whole matter was disturbing to Daniel. However, this was not the disturbance of unbelief, but a troubling caused by faith. It is caused

because he believes God, yet does not fully comprehend what has been revealed to him. He has inquired concerning the truth of all the things he has seen. Graciously, the vision has been extended, and an explanation is forthcoming. He is asking, and will therefore receive.

Daniel receives further understanding concerning the fourth beast and the little horn, by Given O. Blakely

OUTLINE

- ▶ THE ANCIENT OF DAYS CAME (7:22a)
- ▶ THE SAINTS, JUDGMENT, AND THE KINGDOM (7:22b)
- ▶ THE FOURTH BEAST (7:23)
- ▶ THE TEN HORNS (7:24a)
- ▶ THE LITTLE HORN (7:24b-25)
- ▶ DOMINION TAKEN AWAY (7:26)
- ▶ THE KINGDOM GIVEN TO THE SAINTS (7:27)
- ▶ DANIEL PONDERES THE MATTER (7:28)

THE EXPERIENCE OF HABAKKUK

Daniel is much like Habakkuk in this regard. Habakkuk was shown that Israel would be punished for its iniquity by a bitter and hasty nation – the heathen nation Babylon. The punishment would be harsh, and it was difficult for the prophet to hear about it. He cried out to God, *“Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity: wherefore lookest thou upon them that deal treacherously, and holdest thy tongue when the wicked devoureth the man that is more righteous than he?”* (Hab 1:13). Habakkuk was not arguing with the Lord, nor was he angry about what he was shown. Rather, he was inquiring for further understanding. Like Daniel, he sensed the oppression of the wicked could not continue indefinitely. He knew the nature of God would not allow the extended expression of iniquity.

The Lord answered Habakkuk, clarifying the whole matter. He told him that a Divine appointment was involved that would not be reversed. *“For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry”* (Hab 2:3). Notwithstanding, because Babylon, under the leadership of Nebuchadnezzar, would do wickedly, the Lord would also bring them down – even though He would use them to chasten His people. *“Because thou hast spoiled many nations, all the*

remnant of the people shall spoil thee; because of men’s blood, and for the violence of the land, of the city, and of all that dwell therein” (Hab 2:8).

DANIEL’S VISION

Daniel’s vision is also about an appointment. Just as Habakkuk saw wicked people oppressing those *“more righteous”* than they, so Daniel has seen a wicked power oppressing the saints, who were also *“more righteous.”* Just as Habakkuk, **Daniel knew the Lord was righteous in allowing such things to happen. Therefore, he inquires concerning the truth of these things.**

It is important to note that he does not ask WHY these things will occur, but rather that he might have a greater understanding of them. **Faith begins with the postulate that “The LORD is righteous in all His ways, and holy in all His works”** (Psa 145:17). That is how faith moves the believer to reason. Thus the following inquiries have been made by holy men.

- ☐ **MOSES.** *“Now therefore, I pray thee, if I have found grace in thy sight, show me now thy way, that I may know thee, that I may find grace in thy sight”* (Ex 33:13). *“And he said, I beseech thee, show me thy glory”* (Ex 33:18).
- ☐ **GIDEON.** *“And he said unto him, If now I have found grace in thy sight, then show me a sign that thou talkest with me”* (Judg 6:17).
- ☐ **JOB.** *“I will say unto God, Do not condemn me; show me wherefore Thou contendest with me”* (Job 10:2).
- ☐ **DAVID.** *“Show me Thy ways, O LORD; teach me Thy paths”* (Psa 25:4).

Now Daniel has inquired

concerning *“the truth of the fourth beast . . . and of the ten horns . . . and of the other (horn) which came up.”* He has not asked out of mere curiosity, but because of his knowledge of God and His righteousness. **It is the Spirit that compelled his request that will now bring the answer to the man of God.**

NOT JUST HISTORY IN ADVANCE

I want to once again emphasize that we are not merely viewing history in advance. While the revelation vouchsafed to Daniel spoke of the kingdoms of this world, they were not the heart and core of the visions given to him. **It is a principle in God’s kingdom that what is incidental at the least, and preparatory at the most. What transpires in the heavenly realms is always fundamental.**

This has already been confirmed in the book of Daniel. When Nebuchadnezzar was given a vision of the dominant world empires, the vision did not end with those empires. Rather, it was what *“the God of heaven”* did was primary. What He did was forever, what occurred among men was temporary (2:44-45). Further, the rise, fall, and replacement of those four kingdoms was initiated in heaven, not upon the earth.

The vision before us has the same emphasis. Viewing the same four kingdoms of chapter two from the standpoint of their character, they are all shown to be temporary, even though they were remarkably influential.

As we view the panorama of the vision of the four beasts, **the primary aspects of the vision relate to God, His Son, and His people.** Our minds are not allowed to remain for long upon the four gruesome and ruthless beasts. No sooner have we been shown them in their true character than we see *“the Ancient of days,”* sitting in regal splendor and

DANIEL KNEW THE LORD WAS RIGHTEOUS IN ALLOWING SUCH THINGS TO HAPPEN. THEREFORE, HE INQUIRES CONCERNING THE TRUTH OF THESE THINGS.

Daniel receives further understanding concerning the fourth beast and the little horn, by Given O. Blakely

” WE MUST RESIST ANY INCLINATION TO LET THESE BEASTS OR THE LITTLE HORN DOMINATE OUR VISION.

surrounded by myriad of ministering hosts. Immediately, the worst of the beasts is slain and reduced to oblivion (7:9-12). No sooner has this taken place, than we are shown one “like unto the Son of man” being brought before “the Ancient of days.” **It is an introduction to the Savior of the world, returning from the conquest of the foe.** He is given “*dominion, glory, and a kingdom.*” All “*people, nations, and languages*” serve Him, and His “*dominion is an everlasting dominion.*” His kingdom is one that “*shall not be destroyed*” (7:13-14).

Upon inquiring about this vision, Daniel is told that the four beasts are “*four kings which shall arise out of the earth.*” However, before another word is said, or another aspect of the vision is

seen, the prophet is told, “*But the saints of the most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever*” (Dan 7:18).

Who would conclude at this point that men ought to be unduly enamored of the four beasts? What would justify a theology that placed the accent upon worldly empires, when God has clearly placed it upon His own kingdom. He set it up during the peak of worldly power. He gave it to His Son. Now He has revealed it is also going to be given to the saints, who are “*joint heirs with Christ*” (Rom 8:17).

Now, after seeing the “*little horn*” making war with the saints and prevailing against them, we are again brought to consider “*the ancient of days.*” **We must**

resist any inclination to let these beasts or the little horn dominate our thoughts. The vision certainly includes some significant things about these governments and rulers. However, they are not the heart of the message. The unfolding of this vision to Daniel revealed the following priorities.

- (1) The God of heaven – His throne and His judgment.
- (2) The Son of man – His exaltation and reception of the Kingdom.
- (3) The Kingdom of God.
- (4) The saints of the most High God.
- (5) The governments of the world and their rulers.

Our thinking must reflect these priorities. The consideration of Scripture must not be allowed to start and end with thoughts of the governments of men. **Rather, it must start and end with Deity.**

THE ANCIENT OF DAYS CAME

^{7:22a} **Until the Ancient of days came . . . ”**

The idea is that the “*little horn*” continued to prevail against the saints UNTIL God intervened. The NIV reads, “*As I watched, this horn was waging war against the saints and defeating them, until the Ancient of Days came.*”

UNTIL

This is a significant word meaning, “up to the time that,” “even to,” or “up to.” It is a term of limitation – Divine limitation. This is an expression of Divine Sovereignty, or government. **It reflects the outworking of Divine purpose, particularly regarding the frustration of evil purposes.**

Including this verse, Daniel has used this word sixteen times thus far.

☐ The statue of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream remained prominent “UNTIL

that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image” (2:34).

☐ The humbling of Nebuchadnezzar in becoming like a beast grazing in the open field continued “UNTIL seven times” passed (4:23,32).

☐ The above humbling lasted “UNTIL” Nebuchadnezzar knew “*that the most High rules in the kingdoms of men*” (4:25,32).

☐ The first of the four beasts of this very vision was like a ravening lion “UNTIL the wings thereof were plucked” (7:4).

☐ The “*little horn*” of this vision was prominent “UNTIL thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days” sat in judgment (7:9).

☐ The “*little horn*” spoke great and

blasphemous words “UNTIL the beast” that supported it “*was slain*” (7:11).

There comes a time when the mighty God of heaven asserts Himself, bearing, as it were, His “*holy arm*” (Isa 52:10). **It is then that men see the rule of God that has been in place all along.** His arm is made bare when He simply injects Himself into the affairs of men – when He “*comes.*”

When the Lord comes in this sense He is never ignored, and there is never resistance. When He “*came from Sinai, and rose up in Seir,*” He met with no resistance. At that time He “*shined forth from mount Paran,*” and there was no glory that competed with His own. It is only God’s concealment that allows for men to rise up and “*gather together against the Lord, and against His Christ*” (Acts 4:26). **Those who “make war with the Lamb” do so only**

because He is hidden to them (Rev 17:14).

When the Lord unveils His glory, or when He displays His Son in all of His glory, *“the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men,”* will not rush out to fight Him. Rather, they will hide *“themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains.”* They will say *“to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb”* (Rev 6:15-16).

Ultimately, it is the presence of the Lord that utterly disrupts all that is ungodly. The ultimate revelation of this will take place when the Lord returns in all of His glory. It is then that the wicked one will be consumed *“with the spirit of His mouth,”* being destroyed *“with the brightness of His coming”* (2 Thess 2:8).

THE ANCIENT OF DAYS CAME

The coming of the Ancient of days declares that judgment is about to take place. **God cannot focus upon His people without showing them mercy, or look intently upon the wicked without His wrath falling upon them.** It is possible for men to look at iniquity without it disturbing them. **It is not possible for God to do so!** It is also possible for men to see the children of God in great affliction, and not be moved to mercy by the sight. **It is not possible for God to do so!** When the Lord focuses His attention upon the unrighteous, they are about to be judged. When He beholds the affliction of the righteous, they are about to be delivered. Further, there is a point where the iniquity of men will no longer be tolerated by God. Equally true,

the suffering of His saints can also reach a point where it will no longer be endured by the God of heaven.

Examples

Therefore, when the earth became corrupt *“before God,”* and was filled with violence, God *“looked upon the earth.”* When this occurred, judgment was pronounced (Gen 6:11-13). When the sin of Sodom became *“grievous,”* and God looked upon it, the people were judged,

(Psa 24:6; 27:8; 31:16). They are desiring that He look upon them, *“search”* them, *“know”* their hearts, and *“try”* them (Psa 139:23). They know in their hearts that God is affected by what He beholds. Therefore they conclude their desire for mercy and forgiveness will be met when the Lord looks upon them.

Circumstances Change

Notice what happens when the Ancient of days **comes!** The

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while delivering righteous Lot (Gen 18:20-21; 19:13).

Conversely, when the eyes of Lord look upon His suffering people, deliverance is on the way. Therefore, when God saw *“the affliction”* of His people in Egypt, and *“heard their cry,”* the exodus was set in motion, as well as the judgment of their oppressors (Ex 3:7-8).

An awareness of these things is what prompted David to cry out, *“Turn us again, O God, and cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved”* (Psa 80:3,7,19). Again he prayed, *“Look upon mine affliction and my pain; and forgive all my sins”* (Psa 25:18).

Thus those who *“seek”* His face are looking for a revelation of His Person

circumstances will change. **The oppression of the ungodly will cease, and judgment will be rendered in favor of the saints of God.** This is because, when the Lord *“comes,”* He does so to deliver judgment. He will not be passive or indifferent about what He beholds! It is thrice written in Scripture, *“He cometh to judge the earth”* (1 Chron 16:33; Psa 96:13; 98:9). That judgment is **against** the ungodly, and **in favor** the godly. It is in order to put down the oppressor and raise up the oppressed.

All of this is done in strict accord with Divine purpose, and the times and seasons, which are in God’s power, and His power alone. It is also in unvarying harmony with His Divine nature, which is always against the ungodly and for the godly. Let of have done with childish views of God!

THE SAINTS, JUDGMENT, AND THE KINGDOM

“^{22b} . . . and judgment was given to the saints of the most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom.”

Notice the Divine care that is evident in this vision. The Lord graciously guards against the rise of fear, which has

a tendency to blind the eyes and harden the heart. Before elaborating further upon the vision, the prophet is again shown the conclusion of the matter. If it is true that *“we are saved by hope”* (Rom 7:24), then **hope must be satisfied before any further information is given to the mind.**

The *“little horn”* prevailed against the saints – **but only for a time.** He received his power **for a season,** the saints receive theirs *“for ever, even for ever and ever”* (v 18).

JUDGMENT WAS GIVEN

“^{22b} . . . and judgment was given

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to the saints of the most High . . . ” Other versions read, “a judgment was made **in favor** of the saints of the Most High,”^{NKJV} “judgment was passed **in favor** of the saints of the Highest One,”^{NASB} “and pronounced judgment **in favor** of the saints of the Most High,”^{NIV} and “then judgment **was given** for the holy ones of the Most High.”^{NRSV}

The “little horn” had judged the saints of the most High to be “the scum of the earth, the refuse of the world” (1 Cor 4:13).^{NIV} That is why he chose to wage war against them. That was his foolish and bedarkened judgment – an assessment which moved him to oppose the people of God.

saints possessed the kingdom.” Other versions read, “and the time came **for** the saints to possess the kingdom,”^{NKJV} “and the time arrived **when** the saints took possession of the kingdom,”^{NASB} “and **the appointed time arrived**, and the saints possessed the kingdom,”^{DARBY} “**when the time came** for the holy ones to assume kingship,”^{NJB} and “for **the time had come**, and the holy ones took possession of the kingdom.”^{TNK}

Times Are Appointed
God is a God that appoints times. This is involved in “times” and “seasons” being in “His own power” (Acts 1:7). By an act of His will the Lord can conclude or commence both times and

the selfsame day it came to pass, that all the hosts of the LORD went out from the land of Egypt” (Exo 12:41).

- ▣ **The birth of Isaac.** “Is any thing too hard for the LORD? At the time appointed I will return unto thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son” (Gen 18:14).
- ▣ **The plagues of Egypt.** “And the LORD appointed a set time, saying, To morrow the LORD shall do this thing in the land” (Ex 9:5). “And it came to pass the selfsame day, that the LORD did bring the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt by their armies” (Exo 12:51).
- ▣ **The Babylonian captivity.** “For, lo, I raise up the Chaldeans, that bitter and hasty nation, which shall march through the breadth of the land, to possess the dwellingplaces that are not theirs . . . For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry” (Hab 1:6; 2:3).
- ▣ **The birth of Jesus.** “But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law” (Gal 4:4).
- ▣ **The day of Pentecost.** “And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place” (Acts 2:1).

In each of these examples a new era began. A change of circumstances took place, by the will of God, and at the appointed time.

The Saint’s Time

God has appointed a time when the kingdom will be given to His saints. Until they receive it, it has been given to the Son, who is presently administering that kingdom with the saints of God in mind (Heb 2:9).

The Old Covenant writings contained hints of the saints receiving the kingdom. However, apart from Daniel’s revelation, they were somewhat vague. An example of one of these

ULTIMATELY EVERY DECISION THAT MEN MAKE WILL BE FILTERED THROUGH THE JUDGMENT OF GOD. THOSE DECISIONS THAT WERE IN HARMONY WITH HIS JUDGMENT WILL ACCRUE TO THE BENEFIT OF THOSE MAKING THEM.

Man, however, is not the final judge. It is the Living God who is the “Judge of all the earth” (Gen 18:25). **His verdict is always the final one, and it takes effect when it is passed.** Ultimately every decision that men make will be filtered through the judgment of God. Those decisions that were in harmony with His judgment will accrue to the benefit of those making them. At every point that human judgment varied from Divine judgment, due penalties will be levied against the transgressors. It is this ultimate judgment to which Paul refers when he wrote, “So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God” (Rom 14:12).

Now the Living God rules in favor of the saints. There is no opposing His judgment. It is final, and it is effective. This is a judgment to which the enemy must bow.

THE TIME CAME

“ . . . and **the time came** that the

seasons. He can give the power of the Chaldeans to the Medes and Persians (Dan 5:28), doing so at the appointed time. In this text, the kingdom is given into the hands of the saints. It is accomplished by an act of Divine judgment – judgment that ruled in favor of the saints, who were being oppressed. This came at the appointed time. Thus we read, “the time came.”

This aspect of the Divine nature – appointing times – is frequently declared in Scripture. A few examples will suffice to introduce this section.

- ▣ **Noah’s entrance into the ark.** “In the selfsame day entered Noah, and Shem, and Ham, and Japheth, the sons of Noah, and Noah’s wife, and the three wives of his sons with them, into the ark” (Gen 7:13)
- ▣ **Israel’s deliverance from Egypt.** “And it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years, even

prophecies is found in the 45th Psalm. *“The king’s daughter is all glorious within: her clothing is of wrought gold. She shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needlework: the virgins her companions that follow her shall be brought unto thee. With gladness and rejoicing shall they be brought: they shall enter into the king’s palace. Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children, whom Thou mayest make princes in all the earth”* (Psa 45:13-16).

Another such prophecy is found in the 149th Psalm. *“Let the saints be joyful in glory: let them sing aloud upon their beds. Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a twoedged sword in their hand; To execute vengeance upon the heathen, and punishments upon the people; To bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron; To execute upon them the judgment written: this honor have all His saints. Praise ye the LORD”* (Psa 149:5-9).

The 49th Psalm contains a remarkable allusion to the appointed destiny of the righteous. *“Like sheep they are laid in the grave; death shall feed on them; and the upright shall have dominion over them in the morning; and their beauty shall consume in the grave from their dwelling”* (Psa 49:14).

Isaiah also spoke to Israel of such dominion. *“For the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted. The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee, the fir tree, the pine tree, and the box together, to beautify the place of my sanctuary; and I will make the place of my feet glorious. The sons also of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto thee; and all they that despised thee shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet; and they shall call thee, The city of the LORD, The Zion of the Holy One of Israel”* (Isa 60:14).

None, however, were so clear as the affirmations of this text. What Daniel is given to see is most precisely related to Apostolic proclamations, which makes it all the more remarkable.

▣ *“Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world*

shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life?” (1 Cor 6:2-3)

▣ *“It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with Him, we shall also live with Him: If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him: if we deny Him, He also will deny us”* (2 Tim 2:11-12).

▣ *“And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even*

They will not always be subjected to persecution, malignance, and opposition. Such things will occur ONLY during the time of their earthly sojourn. There is coming a time when the saints – all of them – will fulfill this word: *“Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.”* And, lest anyone consider these to be vain and irrelevant words, Jesus adds, *“Who hath ears to hear, let him hear”* (Mat 13:43).

“The time came” of our text, is the “Then” of Matthew 13:43! It is when Jesus will “make” the enemies of the saints bow at their feet (Rev 3:9), and when they will be given “power over the nations” (Rev 2:27). It is when they will

JUST AS SURELY AS THE SAINTS OF GOD ARE PRESENTLY SUBJECTED TO THE AGGRESSION OF THE DEVIL, EVEN THAT SURELY “THE GOD OF PEACE SHALL BRUISE SATAN UNDER YOUR FEET”

as I received of my Father” (Rev 2:27).

▣ *“To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in His throne”* (Rev 3:21).

▣ *“And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth”* (Rev 5:10).

The glorified Christ delivered a stirring message to the church in Philadelphia – a church that was being oppressed by religious people, and retained only a little strength by reason of the conflict. His word to them reflected the truth made known in our text. *“Indeed I will make those of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews and are not, but lie; indeed I will make them come and worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved you”* ^{NKJV} (Rev 3:9).

Daniel is seeing all of these texts, and more, being fulfilled. The God of heaven has determined His people will not always be the brunt of abuse!

“judge the world” and “angels” (1 Cor 6:2-3), and “reign with” Christ (2 Tim 2:12).

This time is an appointed time. That is why Daniel saw it come. It is a time cast in stone, as it were, that cannot be altered or made void. It is a time that is as precise as the appointed time for the commencement of flood (Gen 6:3; 7:13). It is as sure as the appointed time for Isaac’s birth (Gen 18:14). It is sure as the appointed time for the deliverance of Israel from Egypt (Ex 12:51). It is as certain as the birth of Jesus in the “fulness of the time” (Gal 4:4).

There is coming a time when God will render judgment in favor of the saints, and the tables will be turned. They will become “the head,” and “not the tail” (Deut 28:13). **No more** will a “little horn,” or any other earthly power, oppress them. **No more** will they be “made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men” (1 Cor 4:9). **No more** will they be “persecuted for righteousness’ sake” (Matt 5:10), or be

“tempted” by “the tempter” (1 Thess 3:5). **Just as surely as the saints of God are presently subjected to the aggression of the devil, even that surely “the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet”** (Rom 16:20).

The Sureness of the Vision

Daniel, “a man greatly beloved” (Dan 10:11), was given to catch a glimpse of this time while the First, and inferior, covenant was still in place. He saw these things during a time of chastening, while captive in a heathen land, and surrounded by heathen wise men. **The fact of these circumstances confirms the sureness of the Divine appointment.**

Since the time God revealed these things to Daniel, over 2,500 years have

that kingdom now. They are given to move about in it, and occupy certain areas of it, even as Israel moved into Canaan, occupying portions of it. **There are certain rights and privileges they presently enjoy that are a pledge of better and fuller things to come.**

The Spirit is careful to state this circumstance in most precise words. *“Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear”* (Heb 12:28). Our reception of the Kingdom presently consists of coming into a certain spiritual domain – one that dominates all other domains. Here is how the Spirit says it. *“But ye are come unto mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the*

with reverence and godly fear” (Heb 12:28).

What Daniel saw is NOT fulfilled while the saints are walking by faith. Our present condition is one of orientation and preparation. It is a time when we are given lesser things to rule – like our own bodies (1 Cor 9:27). It is a time when we judge lesser things – called “smaller matters,” and “things that pertain to this life” (1 Cor 6:2-3). We do “shine as lights in the world” (Phil 2:15), but we do not yet “shine forth as the sun in the kingdom” of our “Father” (Matt 13:43). Our enemies do not yet bow at our feet, nor has Satan been crushed beneath them (Rev 3:9; Rom 16:20).

Like Abraham

We are presently like Abraham in Canaan. The land belonged to him by promise, and he sojourned in it. Yet dominion was not given to him at that time. It is said of our father Abraham, *“And He gave him none inheritance in it, no, not so much as to set his foot on: yet He promised that He would give it to him for a possession, and to his seed after him, when as yet he had no child”* (Acts 7:5). God showed Abraham his inheritance and said, *“I am the LORD that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it”* (Gen 15:7, 18-21).

That is precisely our present condition. **The Lord is showing us the kingdom He has appointed to us.** At this time, we do not see it all, but what we see is glorious. We are sampling some of the essential elements of that kingdom, like “righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit” (Rom 14:17). We realize token victories, as the Lord “causes us to triumph in Christ” (2 Cor 2:14). When we “resist the devil” and he “flees from us” (James 4:7), we are walking in the promised land, like Abraham.

But this is not the fulness of the blessing! This is not the pinnacle of our appointed reign! The time WILL come when we will fully “possess the kingdom!”

Like David

Presently, we are “kings.” That is the solemn proclamation of the Lord. *“And from Jesus Christ, who is the*

THERE ARE CERTAIN RIGHTS AND PRIVILEGES THE SAINTS PRESENTLY ENJOY THAT ARE A PLEDGE OF BETTER AND FULLER THINGS TO COME.

passed, and “the end is not yet” (Matt 24:6). However, faith is able to perceive that this only accents the sureness of the vision. **God has declared it to be His manner to make something known in advance, as though challenging the universe of adversaries to stop His appointment from happening.** He did this when He told the devil the Seed of the woman would bruise his head (Gen 3:15). He did it when He spoke to Abraham of a Seed, through whom the nations of the world would be blessed (Gen 22:18; Gal 3:16). Thus did the God of heaven say of Himself, *“I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure”* (Isa 46:9-10).

Daniel saw the time when “the saints possessed the kingdom,” and possess it they will!

RECEIVED NOW BY FAITH

By faith, those in Christ receive

heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel” (Heb 12:22-24).

NOT YET FULLY

Our present circumstance, however, is not the fulness of the blessing. We know this is the case because we remain in a condition where jeopardy exists. Thus the text continues, *“See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from Him that speaketh from heaven”* (Heb 12:25). The kingdom itself cannot be moved, but those who remain in this world can be moved. Therefore they are warned, *“Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably*

Faithful Witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the Prince of the kings of the earth. Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen" (Rev 1:5-6).

But do not imagine that circumstance makes you master over every situation, or guarantees your domination of every present enemy. Those who teach such things are not honest, and are not representing the mind of the Lord. **It is true, we are now "kings," but, like David was for a season, we are kings incognito or in secret and undercover.**

There came a point in David's life when the Spirit of God departed from his predecessor king Saul, and rested upon him. He was but a lad when this occurred, and far from actually sitting upon the throne of Israel. It happened BEFORE he faced Goliath, and while he yet tended but a few sheep for his father. The record of this transfer of the Spirit is related to the time when Samuel anointed David. God had revealed to Samuel that He had "rejected" Saul "from reigning over Israel," and had "provided" for Himself a king from the sons of Jesse (1 Sam 16:1).

The circumstance: God had rejected Saul as king, and provided another king to reign in his place. The record of the actual anointing is most precise. "Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brethren: and the Spirit of the LORD came upon David from that day forward. So Samuel rose up, and went to Ramah. But the spirit of the LORD

departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the LORD troubled him" (1 Sam 16:13-14).

David actually "began to reign"

he waged war against, and defeated, Ishbosheth (2 Sam 2:13-32).

All of these triumphs occurred AFTER he was anointed,

BUT JUST AS SURELY AS DAVID EVENTUALLY WAS SEATED UPON THE THRONE OF THE HOUSE OF JUDAH, JUST THAT SURELY THE SAINTS WILL "POSSESS THE KINGDOM!"

when he was "thirty years old" (2 Sam 5:4). The men of Judah "anointed David king over the house of Judah" shortly before that, after Saul had died (2 Sam 2:4). **That was at least twelve years AFTER he was anointed king** (1030 B.C. - 1018 B.C.). However, even during those twelve years he was, in a sure sense, king, and the Spirit of the Lord was upon him.

During that time he triumphed over a lion and a bear who threatened his small flock (1 Sam 17:34-36). He also prevailed over Goliath of Gath (1 Sam 17:50). He also conducted a campaign against the Philistines "and slew them with a great slaughter" (1 Sam 19:8). Prior to actually sitting upon the throne, David also "saved the inhabitants of Keilah," smiting the Philistines "with a great slaughter" (1 Sam 23:5).

He also "invaded the Geshurites, and the Gezrites, and the Amalekites," smiting their land in a total triumph (1 Sam 27:8-9). He also rescued the people of Ziklag who had been captured by the Amalekites (1 Sam 30:1-31). Additionally,

yet were BEFORE he began his reign of forty years.

As the saints of the most High God, this is precisely the circumstance in which we presently find ourselves! We have presently been "anointed" (2 Cor 1:21; 1 John 2:27), and have been constituted "kings" unto God (Rev 1:6). However, we are not yet sitting with Jesus in His throne. We do not yet "appear" as we will ultimately appear (1 John 3:1-2).

But while we wait, we are experiencing some triumphs like David. These triumphs are occasional and not consistent. Sometimes we must flee, like anointed David did from Saul (1 Sam 19:10,18; 20:1; 27:1).

But just as surely as David eventually was seated upon the throne of the house of Judah, just that surely the saints will "possess the kingdom!" That is such a sure thing that God revealed the truth of it to Daniel over 2,500 years ago (as of 11/15/2002). It is something you can surely believe.

THE FOURTH BEAST

²³ **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."**

DIVERSE FROM ALL KINGDOMS

Daniel has asked to "know the exact meaning" ^{NASB} of three things. (1) "The fourth beast," (2) "the ten horns," and (3) "the other horn which came up, and before whom three fell" – namely "that horn which had eyes and a mouth which spoke pompous words." ^{NKJV} His request is specific, and thus the

answer given to him will also be particular and precise.

This precision, however, will be from the heavenly point of view, not that of men. It will not detract from what has been revealed of "the Ancient of days," one "like unto the Son of man," or "the

Daniel receives further understanding concerning the fourth beast and the little horn, by Given O. Blakely

I AM PERSUADED THAT MANY PRAYERS PROVE TO BE VAIN BECAUSE OF A FAILURE TO SPECIFIC IN ACKNOWLEDGING THE LORD AND MAKING REQUESTS OF HIM.

saints of the Most High.” One of the acid tests of “*sound doctrine*” is how it leaves one thinking about God, Christ, and the people of God. **If what is taught, or what is embraced, tends to reduce ones view of the Father, the Son, and the saints, it cannot be from God.** No message from heaven cultivates a larger view of the earth or a smaller view of heaven. No word from God accentuates man or de-emphasizes God. After the Lord has spoken, or given insight, He Himself, together with Christ Jesus, will rise to the surface of thought. Also, a further understanding of, and appreciation for, His people will be realized. A message, insight, or understanding that does not generate these results is not to be embraced as from the Lord.

A Word About Specificity

There is a certain frame of mind that is evident in the prayers of godly men and women. They are not noted for generalities or vagueness. Whether it is the acknowledgment of the Lord or fervent supplication, prayer is generally noted for its specificity, or exactness. Supplication tends to demand exactness. Some examples should prove helpful.

Hannah

- ▣ **Acknowledgment.** “*The LORD killeth, and maketh alive: he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up. The LORD maketh poor, and maketh rich: he bringeth low, and lifteth up. He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory: for the pillars of the earth are the Lord’s, and he hath set the world upon them*” (1 Sam 2:6-8).
- ▣ **Supplication.** “*And she vowed a*

vow, and said, O LORD of hosts, if thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of thine handmaid, and remember me, and not forget thine handmaid, but wilt give unto thine handmaid a man child, then I will give him unto the LORD all the days of his life, and there shall no razor come upon his head” (1 Sam 1:11).

Elijah

- ▣ **Acknowledgment.** “*And he cried unto the LORD, and said, O LORD my God, hast thou also brought evil upon the widow with whom I sojourn, by slaying her son?*” (1 Kgs 17:20).
- ▣ **Supplication.** “*And he stretched himself upon the child three times, and cried unto the LORD, and said, O LORD my God, I pray thee, let this child’s soul come into him again*” (1 Kgs 17:21)

Jehosaphat

- ▣ **Acknowledgment.** “*And said, O LORD God of our fathers, art not thou God in heaven? and rulest not thou over all the kingdoms of the heathen? and in thine hand is there not power and might, so that none is able to withstand thee? Art not thou our God, who didst drive out the inhabitants of this land before thy people Israel, and gavest it to the seed of Abraham thy friend for ever?*” (2 Chr 20:6-7).
- ▣ **Supplication.** “*And now, behold, the children of Ammon and Moab and mount Seir, whom thou wouldest not let Israel invade, when they came out of the land of Egypt, but they turned from them, and destroyed them not; Behold, I say, how they reward us, to come to cast us out of thy possession, which thou hast given us to inherit. O our God, wilt thou not judge them? for we have no might against this*

great company that cometh against us; neither know we what to do: but our eyes are upon thee” (2 Chr 20:10-12).

Disciples In Choosing an Apostle

- ▣ **Acknowledgment.** “*And they prayed, and said, Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men . . .*” (Acts 1:24)
- ▣ **Supplication.** “. . . *show whether of these two thou hast chosen, That he may take part of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place*” (Acts 1:25)
- #### The Early Disciples
- ▣ **Acknowledgment.** “*Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is: Who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things?*” (Acts 4:24-25).
- ▣ **Supplication.** “*And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word, by stretching forth thine hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus*” (Acts 4:29-30).

I am persuaded that many prayers prove to be vain because of a failure to be specific in acknowledging the Lord and making requests of Him. When we are admonished, “*pour out your heart before Him*” (Psa 62:8), it is to be understood insight is to be involved. That insight should extend from the due recognition of God Himself, to the kind of requests we make of Him. **You will find that it is exceedingly difficult to be zealous and general at the same time.** On the other hand, being specific in our petitions tends to encourage both zeal and importunity. More of both heart and mind are involved in being specific.

Diverse from All Kingdoms

“*Thus he said, The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth,*

which shall be diverse from all kingdoms . . . ” Other versions read, “different from all other kingdoms,”^{NKJV} “greater than all other kingdoms,”^{DOUAY} and “excel all other kingdoms.”^{Septuagint}

The word “diverse” means more than simply being different. The word translated “diverse” literally means “to change” or “be altered.”^{STRONGS} This describes the **manner** in which this kingdom was different. **It forced change in other kingdoms, heartlessly pummeling them into subjection.** Thus some versions read “greater than all other kingdoms,” or “excel all other kingdoms.” This kingdom did not excel in beauty, or in glory, but in strength and ruthlessness. It was not morally superior, or politically superior, but superior in aggressiveness and raw brutality.

Other kingdoms were sometimes tolerant of their captives or foreigners, even exalting some among them to places of prominence. This was seen in the exaltation of Joseph and Moses (Egypt), Daniel (Babylon, Medes, and Persians), and Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego (Babylon). However, this was not the manner of “the fourth kingdom upon the earth.”

DEVOUR THE WHOLE EARTH

“ . . . and shall devour the whole earth . . . ” Other versions read, “it will overcome all the earth,”^{BEBE} and “it consumeth all the earth.”^{NLT} Nearly every other version reads “devour the whole earth.”

The word “devour” means “to eat.” It is language that depicts a wild and ravenous beast. You may recall the introduction to this beast said it “devoured its victims,”^{NIV} “ate its victims”^{NJB} (Dan 7:7). Now “its victims” are said to be “the whole earth.” **It would be a savage global dynasty to an extent far greater than the other three kingdoms – or any other – ever realized.**

This kingdom would not expand its borders by arbitration or negotiation, but by raw military power.

This fourth kingdom is Rome,

which spread across the world like a wild and devouring beast. It subdued Italy, Spain, Sicily, and all of Greece and Macedonia. Asia Minor, Africa, and Cyprus were also swept under its dominion. It was a grasping and dominating kingdom.

A Noticeable Lack of Specifics

The explanation being given to Daniel does not contain the specifics the

“trample it and break it in pieces,”^{NKJV} “tread it down and crush it,”^{NASB} “trampling it down and crushing it,”^{NIV} “crushing it down and smashing it,”^{BEBE} “trample and destroy it,”^{Septuagint} and “tamplng everything in its path.”^{NLT}

In addition to the kingdoms already mentioned, Rome also subdued and brought into submission Gaul, Britain, Germany, Illyrieum, penetrating

I saw a fourth beast-it had great iron teeth— This is allowed, on all hands, to be the Roman empire. It was dreadful, terrible, and exceeding strong: it devoured, and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue, that is, the remains of the former kingdoms, with its feet. It reduced Macedon into a Roman province about one hundred and sixty-eight years before Christ; the kingdom of Perpamos about one hundred and thirty-three years; Syria about sixty-five; and Egypt about thirty years before Christ. And, besides the remains of the Macedonian empire, it subdued many other provinces and kingdoms; so that it might, by a very usual figure, be said to devour the whole earth, to tread it down, and break it to pieces; and became in effect, what the Roman writers delight to call it, the empire of the whole world.

It (the fourth beast) was diverse from all the beasts that were before it — Not only in its republican form of government, but also in power and greatness, extent of dominion, and length of duration.

flesh would desire. Remember, this vision was given to Daniel in the first year of Belshazzar’s rule – when Babylon, the “head of gold,” was in its glory, with no apparent competitors. Yet, Daniel does not inquire concerning the demise of Babylon, or the kingdom of the Medes and the Persians, which was beginning to loom on the political horizon. Neither, indeed, does he inquire into the demise of the third kingdom, which was Grecia (8:21; 10:20).

The fourth beastly kingdom has particularly intriguing and troubled Daniel because of the oppressive power that came out of it – the “little horn,” who wages war against the saints. That is enough to move Daniel to pursue a further understanding of this ruthless power.

Still, the explanation given to him first declares the power will be brought to nothing, and that its aggression against the saints will be abruptly brought to a conclusion by the judgment of God.

TREAD IT DOWN, BREAK IT IN PIECES

“ . . . and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces.” Other versions read,

into Asia. It soon gained possession of Syria and Egypt as well. They were noted for cruelty never before witnessed by the sons of men. Bloody wars were common and innocent people were mercilessly slain in every city and country. The citizens of Rome thirsted for blood, and found entertainment in beholding gladiators fight to the death and wild beasts devour people in their sporting arenas.

In the New Testament Scriptures

During the time when Jesus was born, the Roman empire had already spread across the earth. It is written, “And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed” (Luke 2:1). Some of the Roman cruelties are mentioned in the New Testament Scriptures. In an attempt to get rid of the One “born King of the Jews,” Herod, a puppet of Rome, instigated a slaughter of infants “from two years and under” (Matt 2:16). On another occasion some reported to Jesus “of the Galilaeans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices” (Luke 13:1). Knowing the ruthless nature of the Romans, a council of the chief priests and Pharisees reasoned concerning Jesus, “If we let Him thus alone, all men will believe

on Him: and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation” (John 11:48). Another ruler names Claudius “commanded all Jews to depart from Rome”(Acts 18:20).

The Britannica Encyclopedia says the following of Rome. “For well over a millennium, Rome controlled the destiny of all civilization known to Europe.” BRITANNICA 2002 Grollier’s Encyclopedia says this of the approach of Rome to law. “Roman civil law, which reached its peak under the emperors, excelled in precision of formulation and logic of thought; but it was a law of inequality and social prejudice, and that also became part of the Roman heritage.”

The pagan Roman government leveled ten persecutions against Christians. They are listed below. All of them were vicious, yet only set the stage for the even greater war of the “little horn.”

- ▣ **The persecution under Nero, A.D. 64.** He had Christians hunted down and killed in most atrocious ways. These included: (1) Covering them with the skins of wild beasts, then throwing them to wild dogs who tore them to pieces. (2) Fastening them to crosses, wrapping them in combustible garments, then igniting them to give light in the night. (3) Many of them were burned to ashes before him, which sight he considered to be entertainment. Both Paul and Peter were martyred during his reign.
- ▣ **The persecution under Domitian toward the close of the first century.** During the year of 95, it is reported that 40,000 believers were put to death.
- ▣ **The persecution under Trajan, beginning in A.D. 100.** This persecution continued several years. Laws were passed against Christians meeting, and great numbers of them were put to death.
- ▣ **The persecution under Antoninus.** It was during this persecution that Polycarp, well known disciple of John, was burned to death. Revealing the barbarism of the people, others were devoured by

wild beasts, some were tortured in an iron chair made red hot by the Roman barbarians.

- ▣ **The persecution under Sererus, beginning in A.D. 197.** By law, severe penalties were exacted against both Jews and Christians. The persecution extended into Palestine, Egypt, Africa, Italy, Gaul, and other parts.
- ▣ **The Persecution during the reign of Maximinus in A.D. 235.** The persecution was very severe in many places, yet the written records of it are sparse.
- ▣ **The persecution during the reign of Decius, A.D. 249.** Great numbers were killed publicly, and many deserted the faith, consenting to burn incense on the altars of idols. It is said that the most cruel tortures were employed to kill Christians.
- ▣ **The persecution under the emporer Valerian in A.D. 257.** One of the terrible atrocities that took place at this time was the cutting of the throats of the infants of Christian families.

tortures of the most severe order. Some were impaled alive. Some had their limbs broken, and were then left to die in pain. Others were roasted by slow fires, while others were hung upside down over smoldering fires that caused them to die from smoke inhalation. Some had melted lead poured down their throats, and the flesh of some was torn off by shells. Still others had splinters of reeds pushed under the nails of their fingers and toes. Those who were not actually killed had their limbs and features mutilated. Through Divine providence, God brought an end to this ruthless reign of terror. The next emporer, Constantine, himself became a Christian and published the first law that favored them. This persecution lasted ten years, during which over 900,000 Christians died.

RECORD TAKEN FROM
MCLINTOCK AND STRONGS CYCLOPEDIA

These accounts are all in addition to the atrocities associated with Rome’s subjugation of the governments of the world. With these things in mind, let us hear the description of the fourth beast again. “Thus he said, The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth,

OTHERS WERE ROASTED BY SLOW FIRES, WHILE OTHERS WERE HUNG UPSIDE DOWN OVER SMOLDERING FIRES THAT CAUSED THEM TO DIE FROM SMOKE INHALATION. SOME HAD MELTED LEAD POURED DOWN THEIR THROATS, AND THE FLESH OF SOME WAS TORN OFF BY SHELLS.

- ▣ **The persecution under the emperor Aurelian, in A.D. 274.** This persecution was relatively small and brought little disruption to the church. It is as though a period of rest was granted to the churches.
- ▣ **The persecution under the emporer Diocletian in A.D. 303.** Great numbers of Christians suffered

which shall be diverse from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces.” (Dan 7:23).

How vividly history confirms the precision of this prophecy – which is as it know it should be. And, we must remember the significance of the vision relates to the Kingdom of God, and its possession by the saints of the Most High.

THE TEN HORNS

^{24a} *And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise . . . ”*

In the continued explanation of the vision, the angel will unveil the truth in such a manner as to diffuse fleshly curiosity. There will be specifics, but not the kind that will satisfy the carnal mind, or those with a penchant for academics.

TEN KINGS

The significance of this circumstance is how it differs from the

kings.”

A Principle to be Seen

There is a principle here that must be understood. This principle is greater than any effort to be precise in identifying the ten kings. **The principle is this: Things that come from the earth tend toward division. Things that come from heaven make for unity and singleness.**

The kingdoms of the earth were depicted as a statute of divers metals, and four wild and diverse beasts. The kingdom

“everlasting kingdom” (Dan 4:3; 7:27; 2 Pet 1:11).

The Reasoning

Thus far, the vision has promoted a certain kind of reasoning. It is a rationality that is discouraging to the flesh, but encouraging to those who are living by faith. **Things characterized by division are destined to pass away, and will eventually yield to that which is eternal.** Further, whatever is beastly in nature will eventually be overcome by something more fierce than itself – i.e., *“all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword”* (Mat 26:52). Again, *“Whoso sheddeth man’s blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man”* (Gen 9:6). And again, *“He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword”* (Rev 13:10).

Another pattern of reasoning that emerges from this vision is this. **Those who are identified with God will eventually dominate, inheriting all things.** That is the unfailing promise of God to them. Thus, the saints of God, against whom war was waged, eventually possessed the kingdom.

The Ten Horns

If we view the *“ten horns”* with these things in mind, we will not allow our vision to rest upon them, for they are temporary, and will eventually yield their power to the God of heaven. It is this very condition that moves us not to attach too much significance to their specific identity. With those things in mind, I will proceed with the consideration of these ten horns, making every effort not to be moved from the primary purpose of the vision.

In summary, the *“the horns”* show a division of the Roman empire: ten divisions ruled by ten different rulers – and all at the same time. These divisions did not exist at the beginning of the empire, for the text later states *“the ten horns are ten kings who will come from*

HOWEVER, THE HEAVENLY KINGDOM DID NOT CHANGE, EVEN THOUGH IT PASSED FROM THE ANCIENT OF DAYS TO THE SON OF MAN, AND ULTIMATELY TO THE SAINTS OF GOD. THE KINGDOM ITSELF PARTOOK OF THE NATURE OF GOD, AND THUS REMAINED SUBSTANTIALLY THE SAME.

rise of the four beasts themselves. The beasts did not exist simultaneously, but rose up in sequence. However, this is not the case with the ten horns. They all exist contemporaneously, or at the same time.

Thus, through the revelation of the beastly kingdoms, division has become more and more prominent. **Babylon** was represented by a single head of gold (2:32,38), and a lion with eagle’s wings (7:4). The Medes and Persians were represented by a breast and arms of silver (2:32), and a bear that raised itself upon one side, depicting the prominence of the Persians (7:5). The Grecian kingdom was shown as a belly and thighs of grass (2:32), and a leopard with four heads (7:6). The Roman kingdom was seen as legs of iron, with feet of iron and clay (2:33,40-43), and a beast with ten horns (7:7). Thus the first kingdom had no divisions, the second had two, the third had four, and the fourth had ten – *“ten*

of God was depicted as a solitary stone that became a solitary mountain, and a single kingdom given to the Son of man, and now to the saints of God. Further, each succeeding worldly kingdom differed from the one before and after it. The nature of the kingdoms changed in accordance with the ones in charge of them. Thus, temporal kingdoms are different one from the other, just as surely as their rulers differ from one another. That difference also generates division, for **division is an aspect of temporality.** Something that is deteriorating tends to divide.

However, the heavenly kingdom did not change, even though it passed from the Ancient of days to the Son of man, and ultimately to the saints of God. The Kingdom itself partook of the nature of God, and thus remained substantially the same. Those given charge of the kingdom did not alter the kingdom itself. That is one of the aspects of it being an

Daniel receives further understanding concerning the fourth beast and the little horn, by Given O. Blakely

this kingdom."^{NIV} Therefore, at some point in time, ten divisions would occur in this kingdom, with each division being ruled by a different king.

There have been a variety of opinions given by godly men as to the identity of these ten kingdoms. While the opinions differ slightly, they all deal with very real historical divisions of the fourth great kingdom. That there were, in fact, ten divisions within the kingdom cannot be denied, although there is some disagreement as to which ten they were, and in what time period they occurred.

I am providing a table below that lists the various opinions of those devoted to a study of the Word of God. Following that list, I will make some observations that I believe are pertinent to the understanding of this text.

MEDE

1. Britons
2. Saxons
3. Franks
4. Burgundians
5. Visigoths
6. Suevians and Alanes
7. Vandals
8. Almanes
9. Ostrogoths
10. Greeks

BISHOP LLOYD

1. Hunns,A.D. 356.
2. Ostrogoths, about 377
3. Visigoths,about 378.
4. Franks, A.D. 410.
5. Vandals, A.D. 407.
6. Suevians and Alans, A.D. 407
7. Burgundians, 407.
8. Herules, Rugians, and Thoringians, A.D.476.
9. Saxons, 476.
10. Longobards, A.D. 383

ISAAC NEWTON

1. Vandals and Alans
2. of the Suevians in Spain
3. of the Visigoths
4. of the Alans in Gallia
5. of the Burgundians
6. of the Franks
7. of the Britons
8. of the Hunns

9. of the Lombards
10. of Ravenna

JOHN GILL

1. France
2. Spain
3. Portugal
4. Germany
5. Great Britain
6. Sardinia
7. Denmark
8. the two Sicilies
9. Swedeland
10. Prussia
- 11.Poland

ADAM CLARKE

1. The Roman senate
2. The Greeks in Ravenna
3. The Lombards in Lombardy
4. The Buns in Hungary
5. The Alerans in Germany
6. The Franks in France
7. The Burgundians in Burgundy
8. The Saracens in Africa/Spain
9. The Goths in the rest of Spain
10. The Saxons in Britain

world.

Observation Number 1

The lack of agreement among these men is owing to at least two things. **First**, the Word of God specifies neither the names of the individual kingdoms, nor the time of their appearance. **Second**, those who feel "*the saints*" are the Jews, as opposed to those in Christ Jesus, choose a time of division that parallels the persecution of the Jews. Thus, Farrar puts the divisions in the early days of the Roman empire (B.C.), while the others put it when it was at its peak, after the exaltation of Christ.

Observation Number 2

The real point of this vision is not the four kingdoms themselves. Neither, indeed, is it the fourth kingdom that was different than all of the others. **The emphasis is placed upon the "little horn," whose trait is blasphemy, and who wages relentless war against**

THEREFORE, AT SOME POINT IN TIME, TEN DIVISIONS WOULD OCCUR IN THIS KINGDOM, WITH EACH DIVISION BEING RULED BY A DIFFERENT KING.

F.W. FARRAR

1. Selucius I (Nicator) 312-280 B.C.
2. Antiochus I (Soter) 280-261 B.C.
3. Antiochus II (Theos) 261-246 B.C.
4. Seleucus II (Kallinikos) 246-226 B.C.
5. Seleucus III (Keraunos) 226-223 B.C.
6. Antiochus III (Megas) 223-187 B.C.
7. Seleucus IV (Philopator) 187-176 B.C.
8. Demetrius 175 B.C.
9. Heliodorus 176 B.C.
10. Ptolemy Philometor 181-146 B.C.

ANOTHER VIEW

Because some men feel the "*little horn*" is yet in the future, and has not yet been revealed, they choose to view these ten kings as the future revival of the Roman empire. Many of them are prone to believe the European confederacy if the initial formation of that revived Roman empire. In their estimation, the "*little horn*" is a future Antichrist, not yet revealed, who will ruthlessly dominate the whole

the saints of God, prevailing over them. For this reason, the burden of Divine emphasis is on that "*little horn*," which make the "*ten kings*" incidental. While there is no doubt a specific period and particular kings that fulfilled this aspect of the vision, it is not necessary to define them. A determination to define them will call for too much surmising.

Observation Number 3

In my judgment, those who feel the "*ten kings*" speak of the future revival of the Roman empire, out of which the "Antichrist" will rise, have **not** considered key aspects of Nebuchadnezzar's dream and Daniel's vision.

- God revealed He would set up His kingdom during the times of the four kings and kingdoms depicted in

Nebuchadnezzar's dream (2:44).

- ▣ That kingdom, set up during the time of the kingdoms, would bring destruction to global kingdoms (2:44).
- ▣ The kingdoms would be devastated by God's kingdom during the time of the fourth kingdom, which was the immediate target of the stone (2:34).
- ▣ The four kingdoms were, in a sense, a single kingdom, as depicted by the single statue of Nebuchadnezzar's dream (2:31-33). No provision is made for a revival, or reconstitution, of any part of that image.
- ▣ In Daniel's vision, the fourth beast "was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame" (7:11). The very language forbids the thought of that kingdom being revived, or reconstituted in another political form.

Summary

This is not a subject over which the people of God are to be divided, or about which they are to become contentious. Because of the lack of specifics in this passage, "sound doctrine" cannot be shaped by it alone. Our views of Scripture must be molded by what is

plain, not what is vague. We must begin with what is clear, and reason as best we can toward what is not clear. An old aphorism that encapsulates this thought is, "It is through the known, and only through the know, that we come to learn of things unknown."

I will therefore proceed with the following conclusions in mind. They will shape how I will view this remarkable vision.

- ▣ That the ten kings are not the focal point of this vision.
- ▣ That the "little horn" is the more prominent part of the vision.
- ▣ That the vision is in view of the exaltation of Christ, when He came before the Ancient of days and received a kingdom, dominion, and glory. This exaltation is related to the Son of God laying down His life and taking it up again – not to His return to the earth in glory.
- ▣ That the commencement of the kingdom of God, when it was given to the Son of man, occurred during the prominence of the fourth kingdom. This kingdom I consider to be Rome.
- ▣ Rome did, in fact, follow the Grecian

kingdom, which is specifically identified by name. Further, the Grecian kingdom is made known as the third kingdom, which followed the Medes and Persians, who followed the Babylonian kingdom (5:28; 8:21; 10:20).

- ▣ That nothing in either Nebuchadnezzar's dream, or Daniel's vision, allows for the revival of kingdoms said to be destroyed.
- ▣ That the significance of this vision is highlighted by its direct bearing upon the saints of God. They are the ones who are oppressed, and they are the ones who receive the kingdom. The vision, therefore, postulates the presence of the saints on the earth during the reign of the "little horn."
- ▣ That some aspects of this vision may have dual significance, as occurs in other Scriptural texts (Hos 11:1/Matt 2:15; 2 Sam 7:11-16/Acts 2:30; Gen 17:7/Gal 3:29).

With these things in mind, I will proceed with the consideration of "the little horn." I will seek to accent revealed principle above details, Divine purpose above history, and the end of all things. Our aim is to capture the essence of the message.

THE LITTLE HORN

^{24b} . . . and another shall rise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings. ²⁵ And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time."

There is such a solemn tone to this text that we dare not barge into it with a mere academic mind. Neither, indeed, must we seek to justify any preconceived notions by means of this text. Our immediate objective must be to perceive the overall picture here, and not be drawn into considerations that do not edify.

When we ponder a personality speaking great words against the God of heaven, wearing out the saints, and thinking to change times and laws, we are in an area demanding great soberness of mind. We must be willing to thrust from our minds all humanly conceived theological views, for which God has no tolerance. We must also approach this text with the clear revelation of the Gospel in mind, else we will be diverted to the consideration of lesser things.

Since the greatest revelation of God is found in Christ Jesus, in whom dwells "all fulness" (Col 1:19; 2:19), this text must be seen in view of Him – with the light of His countenance shining upon it. Also, our understanding of God, as

clarified in the Son, must be the light that illumines this passage. As it is written, "For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light" (Psa 36:9).

I have taken the time to make these brief comments because of the prominence and popularity of various human views of this passage. I suggest we must come to Scriptural texts with a certain disdain for preconceived notions.

ANOTHER SHALL RISE

" . . . and another shall rise after them . . ." Another version reads, "After them another king will arise,"^{NIV} This is the explanation of "the little horn."

The expression "after these" does

not suggest the “*little horn*” comes into being after the rise and fall of the kings depicted by the “*ten horns*.” Later this king will be said to displace three of the other ten kings. Thus “*after these*” means after these kings had been established, or the ten divisions of the fourth-beast-kingdom had been put into place. Therefore, we may look for the beginning of this king while the fourth kingdom was in power. Yet, it will assume the priority over all other divisions of that kingdom.

DIVERSE FROM THE FIRST

“... and he shall be diverse from the first . . .” Other versions read, “different from the first ones,”^{NKJV} “different from the previous ones,”^{NASB} “different from the earlier ones,”^{NIV} and “different from the former ones.”^{NRSV}

The ten kings depicted by the ten

HE SHALL SUBDUE THREE KINGS

“... and he shall subdue three kings . . .” Other versions read, “shall put down three kings,”^{NRSV} “shall bring down three kings,”^{DOUAY} “will bring low three kings,”^{TNK} and “three kings it humbleth.”^{YLT}

The rule, therefore, of this power will be at the expense of other rulers. It will fill up the territory formerly dominated by others.

The way in which this kingdom expanded does not appear to be only force, as characterized the four beasts. It was growth that appears to have uprooted three other horns. That is, as the influence of this ruler spread, the influence of others was displaced – as opposed to an aggressive attempt to overthrow them.

Thus it is with this “*little horn*.” The difference between it and the other horns is so significant that ultimately they cannot coexist.

There are, therefore, two circumstances that will **not** be set forth in this vision.

☐ **First**, the “*little horn*” will **NOT bear rule in the same manner as the other kings**. It will operate on different principles, and be a different kind of kingdom -, i.e., “*diverse from the first ones*.”

☐ **Second**, the kingdom of God, particularly as governed by the exalted Christ, **will never assume the characteristics of a worldly kingdom**.

These observations are fundamental to a proper understanding of the book of Daniel. The perception of the second remark is essential to the understanding of the future of God’s people. **Our theology must not be allowed to take a sudden turn toward the world at the end of time.** Yet, in spite of this, a significant amount of contemporary theology views eschatology, or the study of last things, from a purely earthly point of view. While there are, indeed, several prophecies of disturbances in both nature and worldly kingdoms toward the end of time, the kingdom of God itself remains essentially “*not of this world*.”

Who are the Three Kings?

We are not provided the identity of the three kings, or the specific time in which they existed.

Some have surmised that the “*little horn*” is Julius Caesar, and that the three displaced kings were Lepidus, Antony, and Octavius.^{CALVIN} This persuasion sees Julius Caesar as a “*little horn*” because he did not assume the title of “*king*.” The difficulty with this view is that this did not make him “*diverse from the first*.” In this view, he remained essentially the same as the other kings. I see this as contradictory of the passage.

Another view sees “*the little horn*” as a depiction of the popedom, or the rise of the pope and papal powers. In this view

OUR THEOLOGY MUST NOT BE ALLOWED TO TAKE A SUDDEN TURN TOWARD THE WORLD AT THE END OF TIME. YET, IN SPITE OF THIS, A SIGNIFICANT AMOUNT OF CONTEMPORARY THEOLOGY VIEWS ESCHATOLOGY, OR THE STUDY OF LAST THINGS, FROM A PURELY EARTHLY POINT OF VIEW.

horns, were much the same. They governed different areas, but did so in the same manner. They carried out a single will and purpose. This king, however, would be distinctive from all the others. He would operate under different principles, and with a different agenda in mind. He would be as different from the other kings, as the fourth kingdom was from the other three kingdoms.

This “*king*” would rise while the other kings were in place, but eventually would outlast them all. Thus the various versions refer to the kings in the past tense: “*first*,” “*previous*,” “*earlier*,” and “*former*.”

In this “*little horn*” we will see the establishment of a different kind of rule. It will be ruthless, yet be different in both form and purpose.

I gather the reason for this circumstance was the difference of the rule of the “*little horn*.” The fourth beast was different from all the others, and was thus described as becoming more prominent than them. So the “*little horn*” is different from the other horns, and thus becomes more influential than they were.

A Principle

A principle to be seen here is that **in order to rise above peers, there must be a difference**. This is one of the things that accounts for the ultimate triumph of Christ’s kingdom: it is “*not of this world*” (John 18:36). It differs from the entire world order. Because of this, it is inevitable that a confrontation of the kingdom of Christ and the kingdoms of this world will occur. When that happens, Christ’s kingdom will swallow them up.

the three kings are identified as follows. (1) Ravena, given to pope Stephen II by Pepin, king of France, in A.D. 755. (2) The kingdom of the Lombards, given to pope St. Peter by Charlemagne in A.D. 774. (3) The state of Rome, vested in pope Adrian I, in spiritual and temporal matters, and confirmed to him by Lewis the pious. ^{ADAM CLARKE} I am inclined to this view, persuaded "the little horn" is more a role than a particular person.

A Religio-Political Power

In summary, I perceive "the little horn" as a new kind of authority or power. In it there is a merging of religion and the principles of earthly government. In that strange conglomeration the earth becomes more prominent, while spiritual power is claimed. This is the same kind of imagery presented in the book of Revelation.

After depicting the church as "a woman" (Rev 12:1,4,6,13-17), another woman is introduced. This one is a harlot, riding upon the beast of worldly government - i.e., carried along by worldly principles. The beast was full of names of blasphemy, and had "ten horns," just like the fourth beast of Daniel. The woman riding the beast was decked with all manner of royal clothing, precious stones, and pearls - elsewhere portrayed as related to the saints (Rev 7:13-14; 21:19,21). However, she had a cup in her hand from which she drank, and it was "full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication." The name written upon her forehead was "MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH" (Rev 17:3-5). She was also "drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus" (Rev 17:6). The imagery of a harlot speaks of being identified with Christ, yet prostituting her affection by an alliance with the world. Spiritual harlotry is not a view of the world apart from Christ, but of professed believers who choose to be re-aligned with the world.

The difference between this "woman" and the "little horn" is this. The "little horn" is the one through whom this atrocity was formed. The "woman" is the dominion, or result of the influence of the "little horn."

HE SHALL SPEAK AGAINST THE MOST HIGH

"And he shall speak great words against the most High . . ." Other versions read, "He shall speak pompous words against the Most High," ^{NKJV} "And he will speak out against the Most High," ^{NASB} "he will insult the Most High," ^{NJB} "He will defy the Most High," ^{NLT} and "words as an adversary of the Most High it doth speak." ^{YLT}

In this regard, there are a number of things said of popery (office of the pope) that confirm the seriousness of the transgression of that position. These are all taken from official Catholic resources.

▣ Beginning in the eighth century, the pope was officially called "the vicar of Christ." ^{BRITANNICA 2002} The word "vicar" means "one serving as substitute or agent." ^{MIRRIAM-WEBSTER}

IN IT THERE IS A MERGING OF RELIGION AND THE PRINCIPLES OF EARTHLY GOVERNMENT. IN THAT STRANGE CONGLOMERATION THE EARTH BECOMES MORE PROMINENT, WHILE SPIRITUAL POWER IS CLAIMED.

On this passage, Jerome (A.D. 370) quoted Symmachus (translator of the Old Testament during the second century) as saying, "He shall speak as if he were God." ^{CLARKE} That is a very arresting observation!

The idea here is that of lifting ones self up to a place of prominence, claiming the prerogatives of God. This is the attitude attributed to Satan himself. "For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High" (Isa 14:13-14). Rather than speaking derisively of the Person of God, this is the sin of seeking to be equal or above Him.

It is not speaking against God like Pharaoh (Ex 5:2) or Sennacherib (2 Chron 32:15). Rather speaking as though the offending person stood in the place of God, presuming to represent Him and deliver His message. This is viewed as defying the Lord, boasting oneself against Him, and speaking great words against Him. Those who usurp Divine offices are viewed by heaven as blasphemers, for they have assumed a role that only God can give.

▣ How to address the pope. "The question often arises on how we should address the pope. The answer is simple, with only a few options: 'Dear Holy Father,' (or) 'Your Holiness.'" From "Protocol," from "The True Catholic Church" home page (<http://www.truecatholic.org>).

▣ "Some titles for the pope include Holy Father - Saint Ignatius of Antioch said that the pope is like the living image of God; Bishop of Rome - direct line of succession from Peter, the first Bishop of Rome; and Supreme Pontiff - from the Latin, a bridge builder, the connector between God and humans. John Paul II is the 264th head of the Catholic Church since Saint Peter." from "Structure of the Catholic Church," published by St Justin Martyr Roman Catholic Church (http://www.sjm87.org/structure_of_the_catholic_church.htm).

▣ More official titles of the pope. "Vicar of Jesus Christ, Supreme Pontiff, Successor of St, Peter, Prince of the Apostles, Patriarch of the West, Primate of Italy, Archbishop and Metropolitan of the Roman Province, and Sovereign of the State of Vatican City." from "The Messenger," published "with Ecclesiastical Approbation."

- ▣ “The Pope, the Vicar of Christ on earth, is the official representative of Christ. No one in the Church ranks above him in power and honor. He is the supreme teacher, lawgiver, and sanctifier. When the Pope, speaking officially as head of the Church, solemnly defines matters of faith and morals, he is infallible.” from “The Messenger,” published “with Ecclesiastical Approbation.”

Quotations from the Roman Catholic Catechism

- ▣ “The Pope is the Head of the Church. For the Roman Pontiff, by reason of his office as Vicar of Christ, and as pastor of the entire Church has full, supreme, and universal power over

- ▣ “The pope is of so great dignity and so exalted that he is not a mere man ... he is as it were God on earth, sole sovereign of the faithful of Christ, chief of kings, having plenitude of power.” -Lucius Ferraris, *Prompta Bibliotheca*, 1763, Volume VI, ‘Papa II’, pp.25-29.

- ▣ “The supreme teacher in the Church is the Roman Pontiff. Union of minds, therefore, requires complete submission and obedience of will to the Church and to the Roman Pontiff, as to God Himself.” -Leo VIII, *On the Chief Duties of Christians as Citizens*, Encyclical letter, 1890

- ▣ “The Savior Himself is the door of the sheepfold: ‘I am the door of the

arrogate to themselves names, responsibilities, and authority that God has revealed belongs to Him and His Son, a transgression of unspeakable magnitude has been committed. This is precisely the transgression for which Satan was expelled from heaven (Isa 14:12-15).

I understand that some are of the opinion that the fourteenth chapter of Isaiah has nothing to do with the devil himself. Because Isaiah’s word was addressed to the king of Babylon, it is thought it could have nothing to do with Satan. However, such thinking is flawed to the core. The king of Babylon had taken upon himself the traits of the devil, and the devil was at work in him. Therefore, he was addressed as though he was Satan himself.

This is not an isolated incident in Scripture. On one occasion Jesus called Peter “*Satan*” (Matt 16:23). He did so because Peter had taken a fleshly view of His death, and was doubtless under Satan’s influence when he objected to our Lord’s reference to His imminent death and resurrection (Matt 16:21).

On another occasion, Jesus told His disciples one among them was “*a devil*” (John 6:70). Regarding this verse, every translation reads “*devil*.” The reason is because Jesus used the word *διάβολός* (di-ab-o-los), a term applied to Satan. It is used in Scripture forty times. Thirty-seven of them apply exclusively to Satan. Two of them are translated “*false accusers*,” and are ascribed to those who have Satan’s characteristic of slandering (1 Tim 3:11; 2 Tim 3:3). In both of these cases, the word used is an adjective. Yet, in John 6:70 Jesus refers to Peter as “*Satan*” – in the noun form. He does **not** speak of an expression, like “*false accusers*” (1 Tim 3:11; 2 Tim 3:3).

To this very day the devil transforms himself into “*an angel of light*,” taking to himself Divine traits, and thus deceiving the people (2 Cor 11:14).

Summation

The “*little horn*,” in my understanding is corrupt religious power that attempts to come in the name of Christ, yet functions according to the principles of the world. It answers to

WHEN MEN ARROGATE TO THEMSELVES NAMES, RESPONSIBILITIES, AND AUTHORITY THAT GOD HAS REVEALED BELONGS TO HIM AND HIS SON, A TRANSGRESSION OF UNSPEAKABLE MAGNITUDE HAS BEEN COMMITTED.

the whole Church, a power which he can always exercise unhindered.” Verification: #882, p. 254)

- ▣ “The Pope is the Supreme Pastor and Teacher. ‘The Roman Pontiff...as supreme pastor and teacher of all the faithful.’” Verification: (#891, p. 256).
- ▣ “The Pope has Ultimate Power Over Every Soul. ‘The Pope enjoys, by divine institution, supreme, full, immediate, and universal power in the care of souls.’” Verification: (#937, p.267). “For the Roman Pontiff, by reason of his office as Vicar of Christ, and as pastor of the entire Church has full, supreme, and universal power over the whole Church, a power which he can always exercise unhindered.” Verification: (#882, p. 254)

Sundry Quotations

sheep.’ Into this fold of Jesus Christ, no man may enter unless he be led by the Sovereign Pontiff; and only if they be united to him can men be saved, for the Roman Pontiff is the Vicar of Christ and His personal representative on earth.” (Pope John XXIII in his homily to the Bishops and faithful assisting at his coronation on November 4, 1958).

- ▣ “We define that the Holy Apostolic See (the Vatican) and the Roman Pontiff hold the primacy over the whole world.”-A Decree of the Council of Trent, quoted in Philippe Labbe and Gabriel Cossart, “The Most Holy Councils,” col. 1167

Just Like the Devil

There may be some who feel it is unduly critical to draw attention to these things. This only confirms the effect of this departure from the faith. **When men**

Paul's vivid description, *"Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God"* (2 Thess 2:4). It also reminds us of John's vision on Patmos. *"And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, and His tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven"* (Rev 13:6).

This type of power was embodied in the office of the pope, but has not been confined there. It rose from the ashes of Imperial Rome. It differed from all powers previous to it, for it was a combination of spiritual and secular power. It made claim to have power over both realms.

The nature of this spiritual tyranny has penetrated into every part of the Christian world, not at all being confined to Roman Catholicism. It is found in Christian educational institutions, local congregations, within the eldership, and among church boards. **There is hardly a person who hungers and thirsts after righteousness that has not, in some way, confronted ecclesiastical power.** The landscape of Christianity is cluttered with the wreckage of souls who have been bludgeoned by the institution, and cut out of the work they love. Those who labor for Christ have consistently found their greatest opponents to be religious in nature – those whose wretched occupations and powers were threatened by a quest for the truth and a refusal to settle for spiritual chaff.

HE SHALL WEAR OUT THE SAINTS

"... and shall wear out the saints of the most High . . ." Other versions read, *"shall persecute the saints,"* ^{NKJV} *"Wear down the saints,"* ^{NASB} *"oppress His saints,"* ^{NIV} *"attempting to put an end to the saints,"* ^{BBE} *"crush the saints,"* ^{DOUAY} *"torment the holy ones,"* ^{NJB} and *"harass the holy ones."* ^{TNK}

The words are most arresting! Here is a power that not only wages war against the people of God, but prevails over them. It is a persecuting power that will not allow for the love of the truth, a hunger and thirst for righteousness, or pressing toward the mark for the prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus. If people assert themselves

Godward, they will be opposed by this power.

We will find history filled with all manner of wars, campaigns, inquisitions, persecutions, and slaughter of the godly.

The Inquisition

During the twelfth century, the Roman Catholic Church officially established "The Inquisition" (INQUISITIO HERETIC). The function of this inquisition was to seek out and punish heretics and unbelievers. This inquisition was implemented in several different stages. The following facts were taken from Grollier's Encyclopedia. These atrocities have been acknowledged by recent popes after having been denied for centuries. The present pope made a public confession of these, and other, sins.

☐ **The episcopal Inquisition.** Papal documents as well as the Second, Third, and Fourth Lateran councils

or the strappado, a vertical rack." This inquisition lasted into the reign of Queen Mary I of England (1553-1558) – **an astounding period of over 325 years!**

☐ **The Spanish Inquisition.** Pope Sixtus IV endorsed this separate Inquisition in 1483. This period of severe oppression was finally suppressed in Spain in 1834, and Portugal in 1821 – **lasting a period of 351 years.**

☐ **The Roman Inquisition.** Under the leadership of Pope Paul III, this Inquisition was solidified during the Reformation, in 1588, by Sixtus V into the "Congregation of the Roman and Universal Inquisition," also known as the "Holy Office." It was reorganized in 1908 under the title "Congregation of the Holy Office." Again, as late as 1965, it was reorganized by Pope Paul VI "as the

THERE IS HARDLY A PERSON WHO HUNGERS AND THIRSTS AFTER RIGHTEOUSNESS THAT HAS NOT, IN SOME WAY, CONFRONTED ECCLESIASTICAL POWER. THE LANDSCAPE OF CHRISTIANITY IS CLUTTERED WITH THE WRECKAGE OF SOULS WHO HAVE BEEN BLUDGEONED BY THE INSTITUTION, AND CUT OUT OF THE WORK THEY LOVE.

(1139, 1179, 1215) prescribed imprisonment and confiscation of property as punishment for heresy and threatened to excommunicate princes who failed to punish heretics.

☐ **The papal Inquisition** was instituted by Pope Gregory IX in 1231. "Gregory ordered convicted heretics to be seized by the secular authorities and burned." This Inquisition extended to Germany, Italy, France, Portugal, Spain, and England. Interrogation involved such painful procedures as "stretching of limbs on the rack, burning with live coals, squeezing of fingers and toes,

Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith," with the more positive task of furthering right doctrine rather than censuring heresy." Thus, from 1588 through 1965 this Inquisition received papal sanction – *a period of 377 years.*

☐ Thus the Inquisition continued from 1139, at the latest, to 1965 – **836 years!** Compare this with the period covered by persecutions from Imperial Rome – 64 thru 313, or **249 years.** And there were periods during that time when the persecution was relaxed. The professed church has been more ruthless than the world!

▢ Of this dark period of Christian history, secular writer Karlfried Froehlich said, “. . . the Inquisition has been cited as a prime example of what is thought to be the barbarism of the Middle Ages. In its day there was some popular sympathy for the Inquisition. Some saw it as a political and economic tool, others, as a necessary defense for religious belief. Nevertheless, despite all efforts at understanding the institution in the light of social, political, religious, and ideological factors, today the Inquisition is generally admitted to belong to the darker side of Christian history.” GROLLIERS ENCYCLOPEDIA, 1998

▢ One of the most extensive encyclopedias of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature, is McClintok and Strong’s Cyclopedia. **This work includes twenty-two pages on the Inquisition.**

Additional Religious Persecutions

In addition to the Inquisition,

50,000,000 were killed in persecutions launched in the name of Jesus.

The Dark Ages

During all of these persecutions the “Dark Ages” dominated for a millennium, from the fifth century through the fifteenth century. This period is also referred to as “The Middle Ages.” The entirety of civilization was impacted by this period of time. It was evidenced in barbarism and hedonism. All of the arts, from literature to painting, reflected the darkness of this period, with few pockets of light. This period reached its peak “after the collapse of Roman civilization to the period of the Renaissance in the fifteenth century” BRITANNICA 2002 – a period during with Roman Catholicism virtually ruled the world.

Daniel was given to see this whole period from a heavenly point of view. With all of these things in mind, hear the text again. **“And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most**

heathen feasts, changing calendars, and overthrowing what was customary in the world. However, it appears to me that such an interpretation conflicts sharply with the nature of revelation. God has nowhere played the role of an historical analyst of the affairs of this world. Nor, indeed, does he behold the activities of men without due regard for His own eternal purpose. When such men as Pharaoh, Sennacherib, Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, Darius, Pilate, Herod, and the likes are mentioned in Scripture, it is not from a human point of view. If someone were to inquire concerning their methodology of government, or their personal philosophy of ruling the people, they would be hard pressed to find any satisfactory information in Scripture. That is simply not the approach of the Holy Spirit.

If this trait of “the little horn” has no relation to the kingdom of God – the kingdom that was given to the Son, and will be given to the saints – I suggest it has no place in Scripture. Such an approach to the affairs of men is never taken in the Word of God. For example, of the united and organized people in the “*land of Shinar,*” we know nothing, UNTIL they conspired to make a name for themselves, ignoring the fact and presence of the Living God (Gen 11:2-7). The same is true of Pharaoh. We know nothing of his style of rule or the affairs of his government, until the time came for the deliverance of Israel. So far as the Scriptures are concerned, Pilate and Herod were non-entities until “*the Word became flesh.*”

I therefore conclude that the “*seasons*” and “*laws*” in question had to do with Divine prerogatives – “*seasons*” and “*laws*” that He had given. On this subject, I feel a statement made by Dodd encapsulates the whole matter. “Appointing fasts and feasts; canonizing persons whom he chooses to call saints; granting pardons and indulgences for sins; instituting new modes of worship utterly unknown to the Christian Church; new articles of faith; new rules of practice; and reversing, with pleasure, the laws both of God and man.” Quoted by CLARKE

Under the influence of the papacy, a new order of religion commenced. It endeavored to combine the lifeless ceremonies of Judaism, the idolatry of the

IF SOMEONE WERE TO INQUIRE CONCERNING THEIR METHODOLOGY OF GOVERNMENT, OR THEIR PERSONAL PHILOSOPHY OF RULING THE PEOPLE, THEY WOULD BE HARD PRESSED TO FIND ANY SATISFACTORY INFORMATION IN SCRIPTURE.

Fox’s Book of Martyrs lists the following papal persecutions.

- ▢ Persecutions in Italy under the Papacy.
- ▢ Persecutions in Bohemia under the papacy.
- ▢ Persecutions in Germany as the result of Luther’s teachings.
- ▢ Persecutions in the Netherlands.
- ▢ Persecutions of the French Protestants.

There is documented numbers of 14,000,000 people who were martyred during this dark period of church history. Some say that around

High”(Dan 7:25).

I do not presume to say this exhausts the text. However, there are too many occurrences that parallel our text for them to be mere coincidence.

HE SHALL THINK TO CHANGE TIMES AND LAWS

“. . . and think to change times and laws . . . ” Other versions read, “*And shall intend to change times and law,*” NKJV “*he will intend to make alterations in times and in law,*” NASB “*try and change the set times and the laws,*” NIV “*attempt to change sacred seasons and the law,*” NRSV and “*he shall think himself able to change times and laws.*” DOUAY

Some have referred this to the Roman Caesars who abrogated traditional

heathen world, the principles of government employed by the world, and the Gospel of Christ. Laws concerning meats were passed. Contrary to the word of Jesus (Matt 20:25-26), final authority was invested in men. Mary was exalted to a place of equality with Jesus. Prayers were directed to everyone from angels to departed saints. Sins were remitted by ritual in indulgences and the mass. Oral tradition was exalted to a place of equality with Scripture. Also, the church became the chief authority rather than the Lord Jesus, who is the Head of the church.

Men have learned to live with such things, but they represent a most serious departure from “*sound doctrine*” and justifying faith. Paul referred to such changes when he wrote, “*Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth*” (1 Tim 4:1-3).

THE SAINTS GIVEN INTO HIS HAND

“... and they shall be given into his hand . . .” Other versions read, “*and the saints will be given into his hands,*”^{BBE} “*and they shall be delivered into his hand,*”^{DOUAY} “*saints will be handed over to him,*”^{NJB} and “*they will be placed under his control.*”^{NLT}

Here we come into an area where human understanding dries up like the proverbial potsherd. We must stand before this text and acknowledge, “*O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!*” (Rom 11:33). The book of Daniel has already told us that authority comes from God. It is He who sets up kings and removes them. He gave authority to Nebuchadnezzar. He transferred authority from Belshazzar to Darius. **Now the saints are given into the hands of this despot.**

The Scriptures contain other depictions of this kind of action. These are not pleasant consideration.

▣ The Lord “*delivered*” Israel “*into the hands of Midian*” (Judges 6:1), into the hands of “*spoilers*” (Judges 2:14), into the hands of Syrian kings (2 Kgs 13:3), and “*into the hand of the Philistines for forty years*” (Judges 13:1).

▣ Of the “*beast*” in Revelation 13, it is

manner of hardship and difficulty – things that would ordinarily overcome them. Just as the mysterious “*little horn*” was **not** in ultimate control over the saints, so our adversaries, including the devil himself, are not lords over us.

Why Does God Do Such Things?

Men have struggled with

Just as surely Satan could not have touched righteous Job without the permission of the God of heaven, so this monstrous and corrupt power could never have worn out the saints if they had not been given into his hand.

written, “*And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months. And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, and His tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations*” (Rev 13:5-7).

▣ Concerning the rapid rise of spiritual corruption, it is written, “*For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled*” (Rev 17:17).

The success, therefore, of “*the little horn*” was not owing to his wisdom and power. He would have forever remained “*little*” had it not been for the dispensation of God. **Just as surely Satan could not have touched righteous Job without the permission of the God of heaven, so this monstrous and corrupt power could never have worn out the saints if they had not been given into his hand.**

The knowledge of such things can assist the people of God to endure all

statements such as this text. However, there is no justification for staggering at them. God has revealed enough of Himself and His ways so that we should be able to reason soundly about these things. I will put before you at least three considerations. I do not doubt there are many more. **All of them postulate a righteous God, the limited power of our enemies, and the temporality of life in this world.**

▣ **First**, there is the matter of chastening. Just as Israel was chastened by Nebuchadnezzar, so it is possible that the saints are depicted as chastened by this power. Perhaps they had left their first love like the church at Ephesus (Rev 2:4). It is possible that they were allowing doctrinal corruption among themselves like the church at Pergamos (Rev 2:14), or the church at Thyatira (Rev 2:20). Perhaps they had become dead like the church in Sardis (Rev 3:1), or lukewarm like the church in Laodicea (Rev 3:16). Such conditions may be glossed by men, but they are never overlooked by God!

▣ **Second**, there may have been some behind-the-scenes activity like there was in the time of Job. It is possible that the devil, frustrated by the consistent defeats the powers of darkness suffered at the hands of believers, had maligned them.

Perhaps he had suggested that a long term persecution would bring a sure end to the church, forever removing it from the earth.

▣ **Third**, the people of God are the light of the world, but they are also a “spectacle to angels” (1 Cor 4:9). There is a vast host of angelic spirits who are daily ministering to the heirs of salvation (Heb 1:13-14). They behold their going out and coming in. They long to look more deeply into the powerful Gospel they have embraced (1 Pet 1:12). The Lord is showing them His “*manifold wisdom*” “*through the church*” (Eph 3:10). Perhaps in the crucible of extended suffering, this holy host have been able to see aspects of God never before conceived.

Whether for these or other

Scripture but this one, it would forever stop the mouths of doomsday prophets. Rather than bringing a message of hope to the saints such teachers have themselves been conquered by the wicked one. They have no right to traffic among the saints! They are more closely aligned with the “*little horn*,” “*the beast*,” and the “*harlot*” of Revelation, than with the God of heaven.

TIME, TIMES, AND HALF A TIME

“ . . . until a time and times and the dividing of time” (Dan 7:25). Considering “*time*” to stand for a year, as it did in Nebuchadnezzar’s chastening, this would stand for three and a half years (“*time*” = 1 year, “*times*” = two years, “*dividing of time*” = ½ year). It is not unusual to hear people assign this interpretation to the passage, developing from it all manner of views concerning the tribulation, mid-tribulation, and the likes.

(Rev 12:14).

1,260 Days

This period of time can also be expressed in terms of days. Taking the Hebrew average of thirty days a month, three and a half years translates into 1,260 days (3-1/2 X 12 X 30 = 1,260).

This period is mentioned in the Revelation as a time of subdued testimony, when God’s two witnesses prophesy in sackcloth. “*And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth*” (Rev 11:3).

It is also a period assigned to the sustaining of the church under adverse circumstances, and during an oppressive time. “*And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days*” (Rev 12:6).

Forty-Two Months

This period can also be viewed as months. In this case, it would be forty-two months (3-1/2 X 12 = 42).

This is also mentioned in the Revelation, and is also related to the oppression of God’s people. “*But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months*” (Rev 11:2).

Again, the Revelation reveals a foe of the church who also had a blasphemous mouth, and who was allowed to continue for forty-two months. “*And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months*” (Rev 13:5).

A Recap

Thus we have seen this period of time from six different vantage points, all of which have to do with the oppression of the saints. It is exceedingly difficult to believe all of these texts reflect the same time period by mere coincidence, or that there is no Divine pattern in them.

▣ The “*little horn*” will prevail over the

THE SAINTS WILL RISE FROM THIS PERIOD OF OPPRESSION, AND WILL TAKE THE KINGDOM! THIS IS ONLY A TEMPORARY SITUATION, AND IS UNDER THE STRICT CONTROL OF ALMIGHTY GOD.

reasons, God has “*done nothing without cause*” (Ezek 14:23). Whatever one may think of this period, it is not the conclusion of things. **The saints will rise from this period of oppression, and will take the kingdom!** This is only a temporary situation, and is under the strict control of Almighty God.

A Word to Tribulationists

In our time, there is a wave of fear being created by the threat of a great tribulation. All manner of books and visual media have been created to promote this fear. But what do such people have to say about this text? We are faced with the staggering success of those who hate the saints. They not only wage war against God’s people, they prevail. Is there a reasonable person who assumes all of this was easy for the saints, and that ready answers were on the tip of their tongues? The millions of martyrs whose blood was shed for the word of their testimony – do they leave no message for us? If there was not another text in all of

However, that appears to me to be too simplistic, and to allow too much credit to be given to human wisdom.

Time, Times, and the Divine of Time

Daniel later mentions this same measure of time. “*And I heard the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and swore by him that liveth for ever that it shall be for a time, times, and an half; and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished*” (Dan 12:7).

The same period is mentioned in the Revelation, where it is also associated with the oppression of the saints. “*And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent*”

saints for this period (Dan 7:25).

- ▶ It is during this time that the “*holy people*” will be allowed to be scattered (Dan 12:7).
- ▶ There will be a subdued witness of the truth of God for this time (Rev 11:3).
- ▶ The saints will be forced to flee from the old serpent, yet will be nourished in a special place for this length of time (Rev 12:6).
- ▶ The holy city will be trodden under foot for this period (Rev 11:2).
- ▶ An opponent of God’s people will be given a blasphemous mouth, and will continue for this time (Rev 13:5).

SOME CONCLUSIONS

There are several conclusions that can be drawn from this text. All of them assume some mystery in the text, but not total obscurity.

- ▶ This is a prophesy of a period of time in which the truth is corrupted.
- ▶ Consequently, it is a time when the saints of God suffer.
- ▶ During this time, it will appear as though the enemies of the saints have triumphed over them, and there is no hope of recovery.
- ▶ The period of time during which truth is perverted and the saints are oppressed is lengthy.
- ▶ Although the period is lengthy, it is strictly controlled by God, and will conclude at His appointed time.
- ▶ The time of reference had no effect at all upon the determined destiny of

the saints – to take the kingdom.

- ▶ It is a time characterized by change, carnal power, and the subduing of truth.

thirsting for righteousness that has not experienced the need for isolation from the affairs of this world? Is there any individual who is pressing toward the mark who has not sensed the treading

IS THERE ANY INDIVIDUAL WHO IS PRESSING TOWARD THE MARK WHO HAS NOT SENSED THE TREADING DOWN OF THE CITY OF TRUTH, THE PUMMELING OF THE SAINTS OF GOD, AND THE EROSION OF SPIRITUAL VALUES?

- ▶ During this period, it will be difficult to declare the truth.
- ▶ This is a time when nourishment will be more private than public.
- ▶ It is a time when the people of God will be more scattered and less localized.
- ▶ It is long by reason of experience: “*one thousand, two hundred, and threescore days.*”
- ▶ It is a period that will be Divinely interrupted: “*time, times, and the dividing of time.*”
- ▶ It will be in manageable periods, with some measure of relief: “*forty and two months.*”

down of the city of truth, the pummeling of the saints of God, and the erosion of spiritual values?

We are, in my judgment, living in the wake of the “*little horn.*” I do not question that another despot is on the horizon – one who will oppress the saints. But the pioneer of oppression has already come, setting the stage for the ungodly conglomeration of the church and the world, the wisdom of God and the wisdom of the world, and the attempted merger of worldly values with spiritual life.

All such compounds are admixtures, and no ultimate good can come from them. **And it all started in an organized manner when corruption crept into church leadership.** It happened precisely as Paul said it would. “*For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them*” (Acts 20:29-30).

This is a time to be sober and vigilant, to be knowledgeable and filled with faith and hope. It is not the time to sleep.

A Summation
It should not require a lot of thought to see a phenomenal number of parallels with our own day. Where is there a lover of the truth that is not aware of the unpopularity of that truth within the professed church? Who is the person hungering and

DOMINION TAKEN AWAY

“²⁶ But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end.”

Here again is that glorious Divine disjunctive: “**BUT!**” The circumstance appears hopeless. Power appears to be only with the foe. The saints appear to be

losing the battle. And it has all continued for a long time – time enough to dry up pretended hope and feigned faith. **Empty profession cannot survive such an**

JUST AS SURELY AS JOSHUA AND CALEB OUTLASTED THE BLAST OF THE DESERT AND THE TRIAL OF FORTY YEARS OF TIME, SO THE TRUE SAINTS OF GOD WILL SURVIVE THE ASSAULT OF THE “LITTLE HORN.”

onslaught! Dead religion is soon washed away under such lengthy oppression. Those who have no appetite for the truth will soon go their preferred way.

Such trials are times of sifting – to get rid of the pretenders. That is precisely why Paul said of the disruptions at Corinth, “For there must also be factions among you, in order that those who are approved may have become evident among you”^{NASB} (1 Cor 11:19).

Just as surely as Joshua and Caleb outlasted the blast of the desert and the trial of forty years of time, so the true saints of God will survive the assault of the “little horn.” His power will only last as long as it takes for the impostors to fall in the wilderness! As soon as the threshing floor has been purged of its chaff (Matt 3:12), this despotic reign will conclude, abruptly and without hand!

THE JUDGMENT SHALL SIT

“But the judgment shall sit . . .” Other versions read, “the court shall; be seated,”^{NKJV} “the court will sit for judgment,”^{NASB} and “the court will pass judgment.”^{NLT}

The seemingly invincible “little horn” will not be cast down by a military

campaign, but by “judgment.” **His despotic reign will be brought to an end by a decision.** He will be slain by “breath,” or a “spirit,” and not by sword (2 Thess 2:8). His end will come by means of a “mouth,” just as surely as his reign had been characterized by a boasting “mouth.” **As soon as the court is seated, it will take place.**

While there very well may be periods in history when this appeared to take place, it will ultimately take place when the saints “judge the world” (1 Cor 6:2). We know this is the case from the verses that follow.

THEY SHALL TAKE AWAY HIS DOMINION

“ . . . and they shall take away his dominion . . .” The “they” are the saints, to whom judgment has been given, and who will possess the kingdom (7:22). The power and dominion of this usurping power will be stripped from him. The power that was given to him will be wrested from his grasp, and there will be nothing he will be able to do about it. And it will all happen with a judgment, a pronouncement, if you please, from “the court.” As Daniel says in another place, “but he shall be broken without hand” (8:25) – that is, without any display of overt power.

Thus his oppression of the saints will quickly conclude. The changing of times and seasons will come to a grinding halt. His blasphemy will be put to silence, and his boasting forever stopped. Instead of him causing the uprooting of other kingdoms, he himself will be uprooted by the kingdom that has no end!

CONSUMED AND DESTROYED

“ . . . to consume and to destroy it unto the end.” Other versions read, “annihilated and destroyed forever,”^{NASB} “completely destroyed forever,”^{NIV} “to be consumed and totally destroyed,”^{NRSV} “to overcome it and send complete destruction on it,”^{BBE} “and be broken in pieces, and perish even to the end,”^{DOUAY} “to abolish it, and to destroy it utterly” Septuagint “finally destroyed and reduced to nothing,”^{NJB} and “they cause to pass away, to cut off, and to destroy - unto the end.”^{YLT} This is certainly not the language of a temporary defeat.

When the fourth beast was destroyed, the other three were “were prolonged for a season and a time” (7:12). However, no such allowance will be given to the “little horn.” It will be utterly removed. That is, it will never rise again, for there is no more life in it.

It should be apparent that this judgment has not yet occurred. First, corrupt religion is still with us. Second, the judgment has not yet been made in favor of the saints, transferring the power and dominion to them. Those who imagine this has already taken place need to read the text again. The statements are too large to be figurative, or a depiction of lesser things. There is a note of finality in it that simply cannot occur within the framework of time.

THE KINGDOM AND DOMINION GIVEN TO THE SAINTS

“²⁷ And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him.”

This is now the third time in this chapter that the kingdom is said to be given to the saints.

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

▣ “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” (Dan 7:22).

▣ “And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under

the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High” (Dan 7:27).

There is nothing here about reigning for a thousand years. Rather, this reign is “for ever, even for ever and ever.” There is no partial or introductory reign here. The kingdom itself is “possessed” by the saints.

THE KINGDOM, DOMINION, AND GREATNESS

“And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven . . . ” Other versions read, “Then the sovereignty, the dominion, and the greatness of all the kingdoms under the whole heaven,”^{NASB} “The kingship and dominion and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven,”^{NRSV} and “kingship and rule and the splendors of all the kingdoms under heaven.”^{NJB}

In this text, is any part of the kingdom withheld from the saints? Kingship will be given to them. Dominion, or authority, will be given to them. The greatness, or full expanse, of the kingdom will be given to them. All of the splendor and glory of the kingdom will be given to them. There will be no question about who has received it. There will be no kings incognito as there is now. No competing influences will exist, but all opponents will be put down by judgment!

Let others haggle about an earthly millennium. Let them argue among themselves how long it will last, and how lengthy the tribulation will be, and how extensive the reign of Antichrist will be. I do not care to become embroiled in such prognostications. They are not far-reaching enough. They are too close to time and too far from eternity!

I have a mind to consider the lot of the saints AFTER the demise of their opponents. I desire to know what will take place AFTER they have received the kingdom in its entirety, with all of its power and glory. **And if, perchance, there is some poor soul who insists all of this has happened already, I am quite willing to let that soul’s daily experience confirm it does not yet possess all of the power and glory of all the kingdoms of this**

world!

The Devil Offered this to Jesus

It is worth noting that this is precisely what the devil offered Jesus in the wilderness temptation. “And the devil, taking him up into an high mountain, showed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And the devil said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it. If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine” (Luke 4:5-7).

What a foolish offer! Jesus now possesses all of the kingdoms, and that condition will be revealed when He comes again (2 Tim 4:1). What is more, the time is coming when the saints – all those in

They never were “the people,” even though they appeared to be. Further, the saints were always “the people,” even though they did not appear to be.

Now, they are given the kingdom that was received by the “Son of man” – and it is “an everlasting kingdom,” just as they were promised. Thus will the word of Peter be fulfilled: “For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (2 Pet 1:11).

The Lord will say to all who are not in Christ, and especially to the presumptuous and boastful “little horn,” “I NEVER knew you” (Matt 7:23). But to the saints, He will speak as He did to Jeremiah, “Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee”

IN THIS TEXT, IS ANY PART OF THE KINGDOM WITHHELD FROM THE SAINTS? KINGSHIP WILL BE GIVEN TO THEM. DOMINION, OR AUTHORITY, WILL BE GIVEN TO THEM. THE GREATNESS, OR FULL EXPANSE, OF THE KINGDOM WILL BE GIVEN TO THEM. ALL OF THE SPLENDOR AND GLORY OF THE KINGDOM WILL BE GIVEN TO THEM.

Christ Jesus – will also possess it. They will “sit” with Him in His throne, just as He said (Rev 3:21). They will “inherit the earth,” just as He said (Matt 5:5). They will “inherit all things,” just as Jesus said (Rev 21:7). They will be given “power over the nations,” just as He said (Rev 2:26).

GIVEN TO THE PEOPLE OF THE SAINTS

“... shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom . . . ”

Other versions read, “the people, the saints,”^{NKJV} and “the saints, the people.”^{NIV}

“The people” are the ones recognized and honored by God. The world gave honor to the beasts and the little horn, but they were not “the people.” The “saints,” or holy ones, were “the people.” As for the rest of humanity, particularly those adversarial kingdoms, they were “not a people” (1 Pet 2:10).

(Jer 1:5). Blessed contemplation!

ALL DOMINIONS SHALL SERVE AND OBEY HIM

“... and all dominions shall serve and obey Him.” Other versions read, “and all rulers will worship and obey Him,”^{NIV} “and all dominions shall serve and obey THEM,”^{NRSV,ESV,TNK} “and all powers will be His servants and do His pleasure,”^{BBE} and “whom every empire will serve and obey.”^{NJB}

This refers to the same time as is heralded in the Revelation. “The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever” (Rev 11:15). That is, they will manifestly become His. He is ruling over them at this present time, removing kings and raising them up He wills.

Several versions (NRSV, ESV, TNK) read that all dominions will “serve

and obey *THEM* – that is, the saints. Others read they will serve “Him,” that is, the Son of man. Both statements are true, for the saints will be sitting with Him in His throne, reigning “*with*” Him, as it is written (2 Tim 2:12; Rev 3:21; 20:6). However, as the verse continues, it becomes apparent that the Son Himself is intended.

And who are the “*rulers*,” “*dominions*,” “*powers*,” and “*rulers*” that will serve Him? Are we to understand these are the inimical powers that oppressed the saints? Will ungodly nations still exist at this time? Some do believe this is the case, but they are

wrong.

Remember, the saints receive the kingdom and reign without interruption for ever, even for ever and ever. This is an eternal consequence, not a temporal one.

At this time – when judgment has been finalized and the saints come to possess the kingdom – there are no other powers. No kingdoms remain to be subdued, and there are no adversarial dominions. Judgment has been passed in favor of the saints. The kingdom, in its entirety, has been given to them, and now they possess it. The saints are the ones who will serve and obey the

Lord forever, as it stated elsewhere. “*Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in His temple: and He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them*” (Rev 7:15). “*And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and His servants shall serve Him*” (Rev 22:3).

Thus we have been projected to the end of time, when all “*rule and all authority and all power*” has been “*put down*” (1 Cor 15:24). This is the time when God will “*bruise Satan*” under our “*feet*” (Rom 16:20), and we will come into our “*eternal inheritance*” (Heb 9:15).

DANIEL PONDERES THE MATTER

²⁸ *Hitherto is the end of the matter. As for me Daniel, my cogitations much troubled me, and my countenance changed in me: but I kept the matter in my heart.*”

If we, living in the blazing light of

revelation ended,”^{NASB} “*Here the account ends,*”^{NRSV} and “*So far is the end of the matter.*”^{DARBY}

Thus the current vision concluded. It appears from the beginning of the next chapter that two years lapsed before

two-year span for another word from God.

MY COGITATIONS

“*As for me Daniel, my cogitations much troubled me . . .*” Other versions read “*thoughts.*”

There are at least two Hebrew words for “*thoughts.*” The first is “*machashabah,*” and means plans, purpose, or even imaginations. **This is a thought conceived by the person.** It is used fifty-seven times in the Old Testament Scriptures.

The other word is “*ra’yown,*” and is used only nine times, six of them by Daniel (2:29,30; 4:19; 5:6,10; 7:28). Solomon uses it three times in Ecclesiastics (1:17; 2:22; 4:16). This word means “*a grasp, mental conception, or cogitation.*” **This is not a thought conceived by the individual, but the consideration of something already made known to him, whether by circumstance or revelation.**

Thus, Daniel did not consider the vision and begin dreaming up possibilities. He did not involve himself in endless speculations or the creation of various scenarios and possibilities. Rather, he deeply pondered what he had seen in the vision, and what had been explained to him by the angel. **He thought upon what he already knew, yet did not fully understand.**

HOW MUST THIS MAN OF GOD HAVE FELT AS HE THOUGHT UPON THE VISION HE RECEIVED IN BABYLON DURING THE FIRST YEAR OF RIOTOUS BELSHAZZAR? WE ALREADY KNOW HE WAS A SENSITIVE MAN – SENSITIVE TO GOD. HOW MUST HE HAVE FELT?

the “*Sun of righteousness*” (Mal 4:2) have been arrested by this marvelous vision, how must it have impacted Daniel, about 2,500 hundred years ago? How must this man of God have felt as he thought upon the vision he received in Babylon during the first year of riotous Belshazzar? We already know he was a sensitive man – sensitive to God. How must he have felt? We are not left to conjecture on the matter. Daniel tells us.

THE END OF THE MATTER

“*Hitherto is the end of the matter . . .*” Other versions read, “*This is the end of the account,*”^{NKJV} “*At this point the*

Daniel received another vision. “*In the third year of the reign of king Belshazzar a vision appeared unto me, even unto me Daniel, after that which appeared unto me at the first*” (Dan 8:1).

How this highlights the faith of this man “*greatly beloved,*” who lived under the twilight of the Law. Although he excelled in favor, and was an old man, seasoned in the faith, God still spoke to Him “*at sundry times and in divers manners*” (Heb 1:1). What faith and consistency he had. He was alert to hear from God, whether he was in the process of receiving a vision, or waiting during a

And what was the affect of his “cogitations?” They caused him to be “much troubled.” Other versions read, “my thoughts greatly troubled me,”^{NKJV} “my thoughts were greatly alarming me,”^{NASB} “I, Daniel, was deeply troubled by my thoughts,”^{NIV} and “my thoughts greatly terrified me.”^{NRSV}

The prophet was disquieted by his thoughts – and he would not hear from God again for two years! He had seen violent kingdoms rise, trampling over men – and it troubled him. He had seen the violent displacement of kingdoms – and it troubled him. He had seen the rise of a blasphemous king who prevailed against the saints – and it troubled him. He saw this king speaking blasphemies against God – and it troubled him. He saw him attempting to change times and seasons – and it troubled him.

Blessed is the person who cannot remain indifferent when given to see the dominance of evil, even if it is a temporary situation! Such individuals can be entrusted with the truth of God.

MY COUNTENANCE CHANGED

“... and my countenance changed in me...” Other versions read, “my face grew pale,”^{NASB} “my color changed,”^{RSV} “the color went from my face,”^{BBE} and “My face was pale with fear.”^{NLT}

The truth had such a powerful

HE HAD SEEN VIOLENT KINGDOMS RISE, TRAMPLING OVER MEN – AND IT TROUBLED HIM. HE HAD SEEN THE VIOLENT DISPLACEMENT OF KINGDOMS – AND IT TROUBLED HIM. HE HAD SEEN THE RISE OF A BLASPHEMOUS KING WHO PREVAILED AGAINST THE SAINTS – AND IT TROUBLED HIM. HE SAW THIS KING SPEAKING BLASPHEMIES AGAINST GOD – AND IT TROUBLED HIM. HE SAW HIM ATTEMPTING TO CHANGE TIMES AND SEASONS – AND IT TROUBLED HIM.

impact upon Daniel that his flesh became disoriented. It was similar to the experience of Moses when the Lord’s glory was revealed at Sinai. At that time the servant of God said, “I am exceedingly afraid and trembling”^{NKJV} (Heb 12:21). John had a similar experience when he saw the glorified Christ. He wrote, “I fell at His feet as dead” (Rev 1:17) – **and he was a premier Apostle in the time of unparalleled revelation.**

I must confess that I am suspicious of those who are so casual in the presence of the Lord, who can approach him with such commonness of speech and manners. I seriously doubt they are consciously in the presence of God at all.

I KEPT THE MATTER IN MY HEART

“... but I kept the matter in my heart.” Other versions read, “I kept the matter to myself,”^{NASB} and “but I kept the matter in my mind.”^{NRSV}

Daniel did not go about sharing this vision with others. It was not his topic of conversation among any associates he might have had. This was something that was to be pondered. It was not yet time to tell it and “blaze abroad the matter.”

By cogitating on the things made known to him, Daniel would be better prepared to receive the next Divine installment – two years later, even though for the moment it was troubling.

CONCLUSION

Thus we conclude the epic of the seventh chapter of Daniel. **It has again confirmed to us that this world, with all of its inequities, pride, and injustices, is still being governed by**

God, and He is doing so with a strict regard for and interest in the destiny of His people. As He works all things together for their good, His aim is not to make us comfortable in this world,

but to bring us safely through it. The purpose is to arrive safely in glory.

THE FACT THAT GOD REVEALED THESE THINGS ABOUT FIVE HUNDRED YEARS BEFORE CHRIST CONFIRMS THEY ARE MATTERS HE WANTS HIS PEOPLE TO KNOW. THEY HAVE AN IMMEDIATE BEARING UPON THE STRENGTH AND CONSISTENCY OF BOTH FAITH AND HOPE.

The destiny of the saints of God has been affirmed, and in no uncertain words. As well, we have learned of the ultimate demise of all earthly powers, and the possession of all dominions by the saints of God. The fact that God revealed these things about five hundred years before Christ confirms they are matters He wants His people to know. **They have an immediate bearing upon the strength and consistency of both faith and hope.** Therefore, let us be up and acquainting ourselves with them.

Daniel receives further understanding concerning the fourth beast and the little horn, by Given O. Blakely

Our next Hungry Saints Meeting will be held on Friday, 11/29/2002. We will continue in our overview of Daniel, reviewing verses 1-8 of the eighth chapter. Daniel will relate another vision he had in the third year of Belshazzar's reign. The Lord elaborates on the same kingdoms revealed to Nebuchadnezzar, and to Daniel as well two years earlier, in the first year of Belshazzar's reign. Our meeting will begin at 7:00 P.M. You are invited to bring your family and friends for fellowship around the Word of God. Refreshments are served afterward, with a time of extended fellowship for everyone.

*The Blakely Family: Given, June, Benjamin, Jonathan, and Eva
406 South Sergeant Street, Joplin, MO 64801*

A place where believers can meet, fellowship, be edified, and express themselves.

Telephone: (417) 782-3063, Email: Given (GivenB@aol.com) June: (JuneE01@aol.com)

ADAH's Webpage: <http://wotruth.com/adah.htm> -- EVA's Webpage: <http://wotruth.com/Eva.htm>

Benjamin (Bensvison@aol.com), Jonathan (Jonstalk@aol.com), Eva (Evablakely@aol.com)
Adah Hutchcraft (ALHutchcraft@milligan.edu), Jason Hutchcraft (hutchcraftj@esr.edu)

WORD OF TRUTH Website: <http://wotruth.com>

WORD OF TRUTH FELLOWSHIP Website: <http://wotruth.com/wotf/wotindex.htm>

COMMENTARY on Romans: <http://wotruth.com/Romans.htm>

COMMENTARY on Daniel: <http://wotruth.com/Daniel.htm>

BROTHER LAWRENCE JIMOH, FROM WEST AFRICA, WAS SCHEDULED TO BE WITH US DURING MID-DECEMBER. THAT TRIP HAS BEEN DELAYED UNTIL JANUARY. WE WILL KEEP YOU APPRISED OF HIS ARRIVAL SO YOU CAN JOIN US. HE WILL BE GIVING AN UPDATE OF THE TRANSLATION OF BROTHER BLAKELY'S WRITINGS INTO THE FRENCH LANGUAGE.