

Daniel 07 - The Times of the Gentiles; Daniel's Vision of Four Beasts Out of the Sea; Interpretation of the Vision; Personal Impact on Daniel

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Dan 7 is very similar to Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the statue in Dan 2, which Daniel interprets for him. The difference is that Dan 2 is Gentile history through Nebuchadnezzar's eyes (man's eyes), in their outward political appearance. Dan 7 is Gentile history through God's eyes, focusing on their innermost moral and spiritual features.

In this great chapter, Daniel revealed the consecutive history of four major world empires, concluding with the coming of Jesus Christ from heaven and the establishment of His kingdom—a fifth kingdom (Cf. Dan 2). Thus it provides a framework for more detailed revelation of these kingdoms that follows in the Book of Daniel and in the NT, especially in the Book of Revelation.

Nearly all scholars (and all conservative scholars) understand the visions in Dan 2 & 7 to be interpreted the same way. "In this interpretation and opinion, all the world are agreed, and history and fact abundantly establish it." [Martin Luther]



The Times of the Gentiles [Times of the Gentiles](#)

The “Times of the Gentiles” is defined as the period when Israel no longer had a Davidic king reigning on David’s Throne (Luke 21:24; Rev 11:2). During this time, Judah would be trampled down by various Gentile powers, beginning with Nebuchadnezzar/Babylon (605-539 BC), Media-Persia (539-331 BC), Greece (331-63 BC), Rome (63 BC-70 AD), as well as the future revived Roman Empire of the Antichrist (sometimes called “Rome Phase II”). The Times of the Gentiles, which began with Nebuchadnezzar’s deposing of Zedekiah and the Babylonian Captivity in 586 BC, are marked by the following three characteristics:

1. The termination of the earthly theocracy
2. The lack of a Davidic king reigning on David’s Throne in Jerusalem
3. Judah being trampled underfoot by a successive array of Gentile powers

Following the Babylonian Captivity in 586 BC, the prophesied 70 years of national, divine discipline had run its course (Lev 25:1-7; 2 Chr 36:20-21; Jer 25:11; 29:10). The newly inaugurated Persian government allowed God’s people to return to their homeland (Ezra; Neh). Thus, by the time of Christ, the nation had been back in the Promised Land for over five centuries. However, such long residency in the land did not mean that the Times of the Gentiles had concluded. During all of this time, Israel still had no reigning king upon David’s Throne. Moreover, as Daniel predicted (Dan 2:7), Israel continued to be under the domination of various Gentile powers.

The Times of the Gentiles will run its course and eventually conclude with restoration of a rightful King reigning on David’s Throne, and the return of the *Shekinah* Glory of God to the Millennial Temple (Ezek 43:1-5).

The phrase was coined by Jesus in Luke 21:24: Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the Times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. Don’t confuse the **Times of the Gentiles** with the **Fullness of the Gentiles** term that Paul uses in Rom 11.

Intro to Interpreting Daniel 7 Niemela-Sequence in Daniel 7:1-28

Daniel 1-6 describe the life and times of Daniel; Daniel 7-12 describe various visions that Daniel had. Most of Daniel 7 focuses on the content of the vision that Daniel received. However, he also sets forth three editorial comments (that are not part of the vision): v1-2a, v15-16, v28. The locations of these editorial comments suggest a general outline:

1. Vision (v1-14)
2. Interpretation (v15-28)

However, Daniel did not receive the entire vision prior to receiving the interpretation. Rather, Daniel started receiving the interpretation when v9-10 were revealed to him. The evidence for this comes mainly from Daniel’s editorial comments and partially from a few points within the vision itself.

Daniel refers to his revelation as a "dream" in v1, as "visions of his head" in v1,15, and as a vision by night in v2. In other words, Daniel was asleep when he received this dream or vision. However, the one who interpreted the vision to Daniel was someone that Daniel saw within the vision itself. The fact that the interpretation came within the dream means that the dream continues through v27. Daniel received not only the vision, but also the interpretation, as a dream from God.

Categorization of Individual Verses					
Babylon	M-P	Greece	Rome	Time of Horn 11	Kingdom
<i>In Heaven</i>				9–10 13–14a 22a 26a	
				2–3 4 5 6 7a 12 17 19 23	ÈĀ ÈĀ 14b 18 ÈĀ 22b ÈĀ 26b–27
<i>On Earth</i>				24–25	

Categorizing of Verses (Grouped)					
Babylon	M-P	Greece	Rome	Time of Horn 11	Kingdom
<i>In Heaven</i>				9–10, 13–14a, 22a, 26a	
				2–3, 17 4 5 6 7a, 19, 23 12 7b–8, 11, 20–21, 24–25	14b, 18, 22b, 26b–27
<i>On Earth</i>					

Categorization of Verses

Daniel 7 details the first of four dream-visions or revelations God gave to Daniel. It is a dream-vision of four beasts, the Ancient of Days, and the Son of Man and His kingdom. The vision's description is in v1-14, followed by its interpretation in v15-27.

Daniel 7

(F) Vision of the four beasts (7:1-28)

(a) Setting for the vision (7:1)

1 In the **first year of Belshazzar** king of Babylon, **Daniel saw a dream and visions** in his mind as he lay on his bed; then he wrote the dream down and told the following summary of it.

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1 In the first year of the reign of King Belshazzar of Babylon, Daniel dreamed a dream, receiving visions in his mind while in bed, after which he recorded the dream, relating this summary of events.

1 In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon Daniel had a dream and visions of his head upon his bed: then he wrote the dream, and told the sum of the matters.

– "...first year of Belshazzar" – before the events of Dan 5 but after the events of Dan 4; about 553 BC, 50 years after the visions in Dan 2. This was the year the Nabonidus made Belshazzar his co-regent. It was 14 years before the fall of Babylon to Medo-Persia. Daniel is about 67 years old at this time.

— The Book of Daniel is mostly chronological, with the exception of Dan 7-8, which fall chronologically between Dan 4-5. This is because chapters 2-7 are structured chiastically, not chronologically. Daniel is not trying to develop a chronological timeline, but rather a thematic timeline.

— This is important because Daniel's vision in this chapter is prophetic, and Daniel saw things in this vision that transpired long after 553 BC. God reveals history in advance to Daniel. The Bible is the only book in history that gives you history in advance. In fact, the Bible stakes its entire reputation on the fact that it predicts future events with 100% accuracy.

— You get the impression that an omniscient God, who knows the end from the beginning, inspired this book. And if God can write history in advance, He obviously is in control of history.

— "...Daniel saw a dream and visions" – we've already read of two dreams from Nebuchadnezzar (2:1; 4:5); now God gave a dream to Daniel. It was also a vision from God, as Daniel slept.

— In referring to the experience as "a dream" (singular), Daniel was emphasizing the unity of the revelation; in referring to it as "visions" (plural), he emphasized the successive stages in which the revelation was given.

— The dream refers to him being asleep, and the visions refer to what he saw while dreaming. When Daniel woke up, he wrote down ("recorded") the dream.

— Because of the chiastic structure of the book of Daniel, his dream and visions here are linked to Nebuchadnezzar's dream in Dan 2 (Cf. 2:1)

— Nebuchadnezzar's dreams in Dan 2 describe the time period called the Times of the Gentiles from *his* point of view (Nebuchadnezzar had the dreams); Dan 7 describes the same time period of the Times of the Gentiles, but from Daniel's (or God's) perspective.

— "...he wrote the dream down" – Daniel obviously realized this was an important dream, so he wrote it down. The previous two dreams by Nebuchadnezzar weren't written down. What follows in this chapter is a summary of what he saw.

— Contrary to liberal theologians, Daniel is the author of the Book of Daniel; his authorship was confirmed by Jesus (Cf. Matt 24:15)

Daniel's Age		
CHAPTER	EVENTS	AGE
1	Taken to Babylonian captivity	15
2	Interpreting Nebuchadnezzar's 1 st dream (huge image)	17
3	Daniel's 3 friends cast into the fiery furnace	19 or 20
4	Interpreting Nebuchadnezzar's 2nd dream (huge tree)	45-50
5	Interpreting handwriting of the wall at Belshazzar's feast	Early 80's
6	Delivered from the den of lions	c.83
7-8	Daniel's visions and dreams	Mid-60's
9	Daniel's seventy "sevens" prophecy	Early-80's
10-12	Final dreams and visions	Mid-80's

- (b) The vision described (7:2-14)
 - (i) First beast (lion, Babylon) (7:2-4)

2 Daniel said, "I was looking in my vision by night, and behold, the four winds of heaven were stirring up the great sea.

2 Daniel said, "I was looking in my vision by night, and behold, the four winds of heaven were stirring up the great sea.

2 Daniel said, "I observed the vision during the night. Look! The four winds of the skies were stirring up the Mediterranean Sea.

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

— "...I was looking in my" - this is a much different style than the rest of Daniel's writings... it's in the first person singular; he often referred to himself in the third person in Dan 1-6.
 — This emphasizes that these are dreams given directly to Daniel, not him interpreting the dreams of someone else

— "...great sea" - in OT, it often refers to the Mediterranean Sea (Cf. Num 34:6-7; Joshua 1:4; 9:1; Ezek 47:10). Here, it represents the unorganized mass of humanity, the Gentile

world (v3; Cf. Is 8:6-8; 17:12-13; 57:20; 60:5; Jer 6:23; 46:7-8; 47:2; Matt 13:47-50; Luke 21:25; Rev 13:1; 17:1,15; 21:1)

— The "great sea" (unorganized mass of humanity) is troubled by the four winds (the sovereign power of God in judgment). The world is restless like a sea when it is stirred by God's sovereignty.

3 And **four great beasts** were coming up **from the sea**, different from one another.

3 And four great beasts were coming up from the sea, different from one another.

3 Four magnificent animals were rising from the sea, each different from the other.

3 And four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another.

- "...four great beasts" - represents four kings (Cf. v17), which personify the nations (kingdoms) over which they rule, as becomes clear in the following revelation

— They are anomalies, as are the other characters presented, and their abnormalities have significance

— These are the same four kingdoms described in Dan 2

- Because of this verse, it appears the correct interpretation of v2 would be that the sea is the mass of humanity (Gentiles), and the spirit of God from heaven is bringing the beasts to the forefront

- "...from the sea" - many times in Scripture, the "sea" symbolizes the great mass of humanity (Cf. Is 57:20-21). This is God's view of these Gentile powers who will trample down Israel..."refuse and mud," constantly churning.

— The Antichrist (Rev 13:1) is described as coming up out of the sea; the Great Harlot "sits on many waters" (Rev 17:1), which are "are peoples and multitudes, and nations and languages" (Rev 17:15).

- When Nebuchadnezzar had his dream, he saw it as a beautiful statue, head of gold, chest and arms of silver, etc. When Daniel saw this same time period, he saw it as four ferocious beasts.

— We can see history through different lenses...we can view it from man's point of view or from God's point of view. Historians like David Barton can go into history and extract the divine viewpoint on the history of America. If we don't see history through God's viewpoint, all we see is a bunch of seemingly unrelated events.

Is 57:20-21:

20 But the wicked are like the tossing sea, For it cannot be quiet, And its waters toss up refuse and mud.

21 "There is no peace," says my God, "for the wicked."

Comparing Daniel 2 & 7: A Matter of Perspective

	Daniel 2	Daniel 7
Receiver	Nebuchadnezzar	Daniel
Position	Oppressor	<u>Oppressee</u>
Nationality	Babylonian	Hebrew
Perspective	Gentile	Jewish
Viewpoint	Anthropocentric	Theocentric
Description	Statue	Beasts
Appearance	Beautiful	Grotesque

4 The first was like a **lion** but had *the wings of an eagle*. I kept looking until **its wings were plucked**, and it was lifted up from the ground and set up on two feet like a man; a human mind also was given to it.

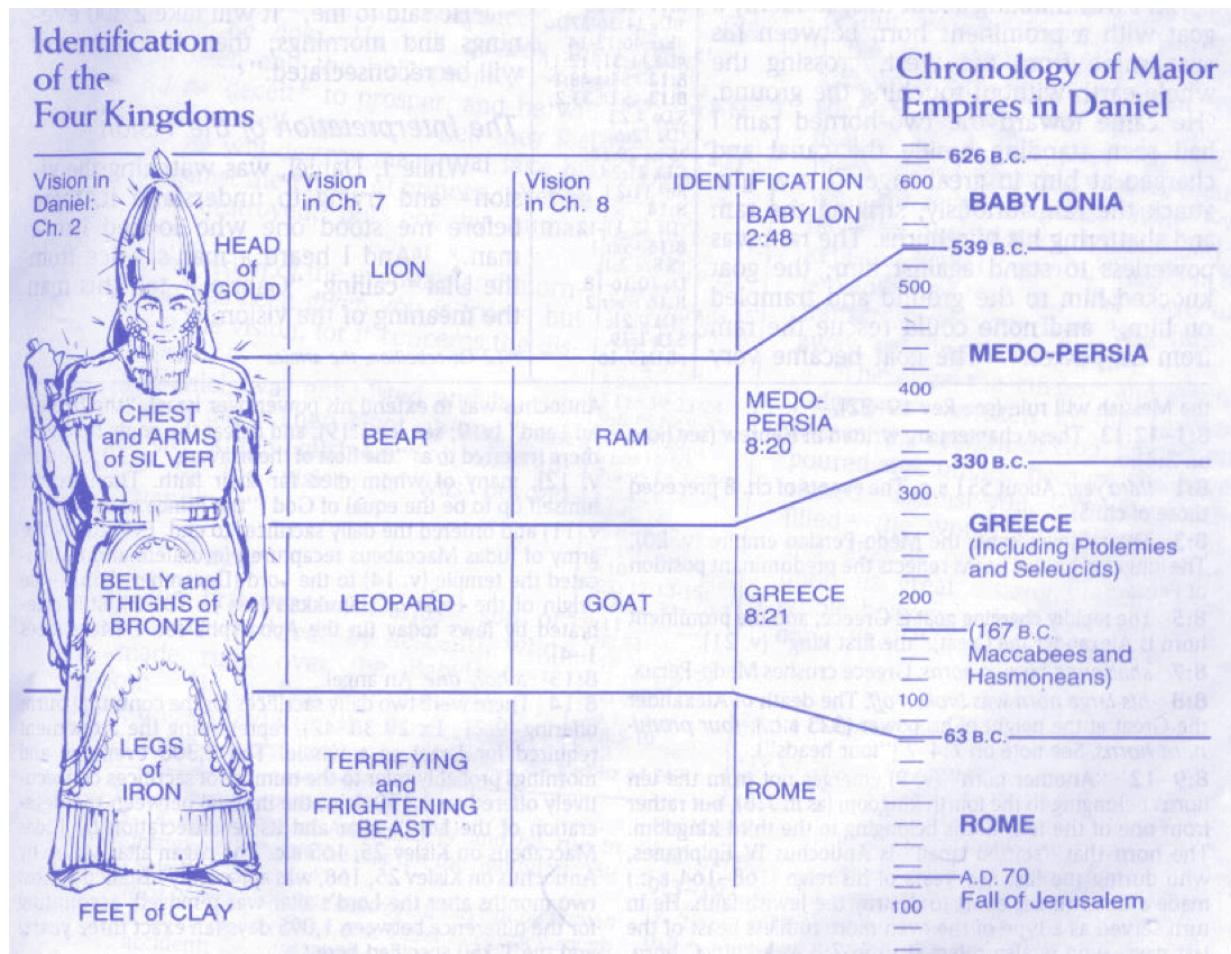
4 The first was like a lion and had *the wings of an eagle*. I kept looking until its wings were plucked, and it was lifted up from the ground and made to stand on two feet like a man; a human mind also was given to it.

4 The first resembled a lion, but it had eagles' wings. I continued to watch until its wings were plucked off, it was lifted up off the ground, and it was forced to stand on two feet like a man. A human soul was imparted to it.

4 The first was like a lion, and had eagle's wings: I beheld till the wings thereof were plucked, and it was lifted up from the earth, and made stand upon the feet as a man, and a man's heart was given to it.

- It was common in Ancient Near Eastern art to combine notable features of various animals into one composite animal figure to stress outstanding features in a symbol
- Often animals represented nations, as they still do (Cf. the eagle as a symbol of America, the bear for Russia, the dragon for China, etc.)

- Almost all interpreters, of every stripe, believe the first beast represents the Babylonian Empire
- Other biblical writers compared Nebuchadnezzar to a lion and an eagle (Cf. Jer 4:7; 49:19; 50:17,44; 49:22; Lam 4:19; Ezek 17:3,12; Hab 1:8)
- "...lion" - matches the head of gold in Nebuchadnezzar's dream; represents Babylon (Cf. 2:38). Babylon trampled down Israel from 605 BC to 539 BC.
- The insignia for the city of Babylon is a winged lion, which guarded the gates of the royal Babylonian palaces—you can see this in the British Museum
- "...wings of an eagle" - a reference to the rapid conquest of Israel in 605 BC
- "...wings were plucked" - as Daniel watched, something plucked this beast's wings off, made it stand on two feet like a man, and gave it a human mind or nature
- This may allude to the humiliation of Nebuchadnezzar in Dan 4, or the deterioration of his kingdom after his death (4:28-33)





(ii) Second beast (bear, Medo-Persia) (7:5)

5 And behold, another beast, a second one, resembling a **bear**. And it was **raised up on one side**, and **three ribs were in its mouth** between its teeth; and they said this to it: 'Arise, devour much meat!'

5 And behold, another beast, a second one, resembling a bear. And it was raised up on one side, and three ribs were in its mouth between its teeth; and thus they said to it, 'Arise, devour much meat!'

5 "Then look!—a second animal resembling a bear followed it. It was raised up on one side, with three ribs held between the teeth in its mouth. Therefore people kept telling it, 'Get up and devour lots of meat!'

5 And behold another beast, a second, like to a bear, and it raised up itself on one side, and it had three ribs in the mouth of it between the teeth of it: and they said thus unto it, Arise, devour much flesh.

— "...bear" - represents Medo-Persia, as this is the empire that followed Babylon (Cf. 5:28; 8:20; 10:13,20)

— The "bear" parallels the chest and arms of silver on the statue in Nebuchadnezzar's dream (Cf. 2:39a). This empire would come to power during Daniel's lifetime (539 BC, Cf. Dan 5:26-31); it would last until 331 BC.

- A bear is less regal or majestic than a lion, but has great strength. It is bulky and weighty. Cyrus conquered most of his subjects just by his appearance with sheer force of numbers, without even a battle, as in Babylon.
- "...raised up on one side" - the Medo-Persian Empire was made up of a "partnership" between Media and Persia. Persia was "raised up" because it was a more powerful "partner" than Media.
- "...three ribs were in its mouth" - Persia had three conquests that established itself as an empire: Babylon, Egypt and Lydia (Cf. Is 13)
- "...Arise, devour much meat!" - Daniel heard voices encouraging the bear to devour much meat
- This probably indicates that it would continue to subdue many nations. Persia devoured more territory and people than Babylon; it was voracious. Persia ruled for 208 years before Alexander the Great toppled it in 331 BC, and its geographic extent was far-reaching.
- Leadership in the ancient Near East passed from Assyria to Babylon in 612 BC, from Babylon to Persia in 539 BC, and from Persia to Greece in 331 BC.
- Persia was changed to Iran in 1935, then changed to the Islamic Republic of Iran in 1979.



(iii) Third beast (leopard, Greece) (7:6)

6 After this I kept looking, and behold, another one, like a **leopard**, which had on its back **fourwings of a bird**; the beast also had **fourheads**, and **dominion was given to it**.

6 After this I kept looking, and behold, another one, like a leopard, which had on its back four wings of a bird; the beast also had four heads, and dominion was given to it.

6 "After this, I continued to watch—and look!—there was another one, resembling a leopard with four birds' wings on its back. The animal also had four heads, and authority was imparted to it.

6 After this I beheld, and lo another, like a leopard, which had upon the back of it four wings of a fowl; the beast had also four heads; and dominion was given to it.

— "...leopard" - represents Greece, the empire that followed Medo-Persia (Cf. 8:21; 10:20). Greece would rise to power in 331 BC and conquer the known world under Alexander the Great; this time period encompassed most of the inter-testament period.

— The "leopard" parallels the belly and thighs of bronze

— "...four wings of a bird" - speaks to the rapid manner in which Alexander the Great conquered the entire known world

— It is said that Alexander the Great conquered the known world, then wept because he had nothing left to conquer. He died in his early 30s of sexually transmitted diseases. He could conquer the world, but he couldn't conquer his own lusts. He will become the focus of Daniel's prophecies in Dan 8; 11.

— The Greek Empire lasted from 331 BC to 63 BC; Daniel's prophecy here was in 553 BC, 222 years before it happened

— "...four heads" - represents Alexander the Great's four generals; he died young and left his empire to his four generals: Cassander, Lysimachus, Seleucus and Ptolemy

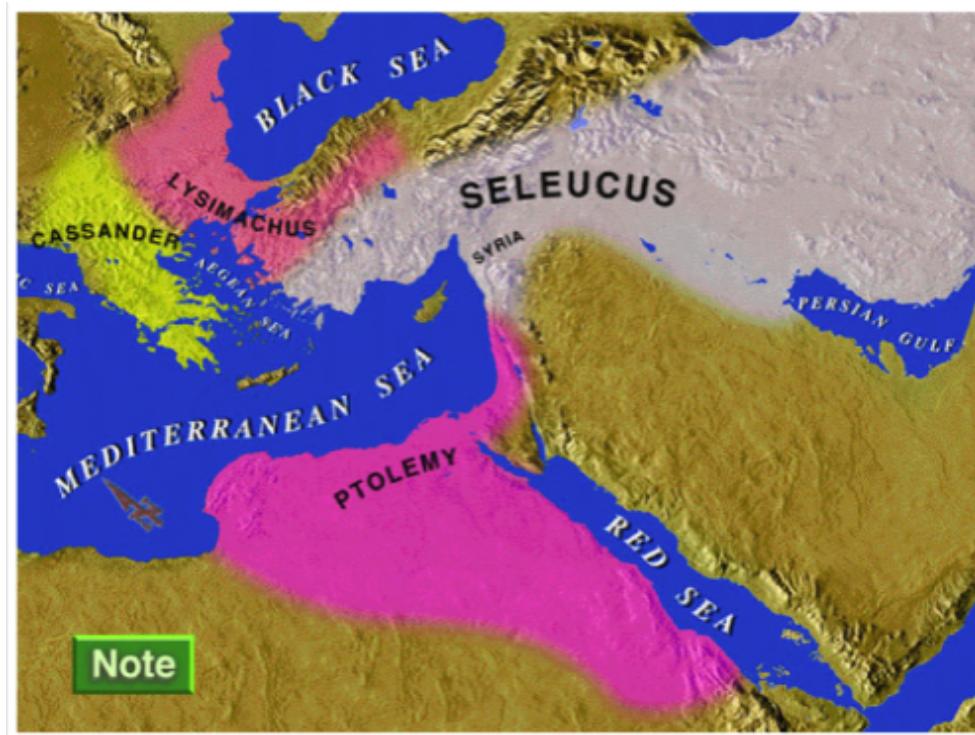
— In Daniel's prophecies in Dan 8, Cassander and Lysimachus begin to fall off the radar and Daniel begins to focus on Seleucus and Ptolemy, who begin to war with each other in the land of Israel. In Dan 11, Daniel gives specific detail about this time period long before it happened.

— From the Seleucid dynasty will come Antiochus IV (Epiphanes), who desecrated the temple in 167 BC. From that, God performed a great liberation of the temple, from which we get the Jewish holiday Hanukkah. Jesus celebrated Hanukkah (Cf. John 10:22).

— "...dominion was given to it" - Greece overthrew Persia and it bore the characteristics of the animal described here. Leopards are less majestic and ponderous than lions and bears. Their outstanding characteristics are their speed, strength, and cunning (Cf. Jer 5:6; Hosea 13:7; Hab 1:8).

— The speed at which Alexander the Great conquered was astonishing. He started his attacks against Persia in 334 BC; the Persian empire ceased to exist by 331 BC. Eight years later, Alexander was dead.

- He conquered everything within just a few years; at age 29, he's said to have fallen on his bed crying that there were no more empires to conquer
- When you close the last chapter of Malachi, Medo-Persia is in power and everyone is speaking Hebrew (or Aramaic); when you open Matthew, Rome is in power and everyone is speaking Greek.



With the swiftness of a leopard, Alexander the Great conquered most of the civilized world all the way from Macedonia to Africa and eastward to India (334-323 BC). The lightning character of his conquests is without precedent in the ancient world, and this is fully in keeping with the image of speed embodied in the leopard itself and the four wings on its back.

Alexander was 20-years-old when he began his wars. When he was 26 he conquered Darius, and became master of the whole Persian empire; but when he was 32 years of age, in his full strength, he was broken. He died of a drunker surfeit, or, as some suspect, by poison, and left no child living.

...when the book of Daniel was showed him [Alexander], wherein Daniel declared that one of the Greeks should destroy the empire of the Persians, he supposed that himself was the person intended... [Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, 11:8:5]

(iv) Fourth beast (Rome) (7:7-8; Cf. 2:40-43; 7:7-12,19-27; 9:27; 11:36-45)

(a) Generically described (7:7)

7 After this I kept looking in the night visions, and behold, a **fourth beast, dreadful and terrible**, and extremely strong; and it had large **iron teeth**. It **devoured and crushed**, and trampled down the remainder with its feet; and **it was different** from all the beasts that were before it, and it had **ten horns**.

7 After this I kept looking in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast, dreadful and terrifying and extremely strong; and it had large iron teeth. It devoured and crushed and trampled down the remainder with its feet; and it was different from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns.

7 "After this, I continued to observe the night visions. And look!—there was a fourth awe-inspiring, terrifying, and viciously strong animal! It had large, iron teeth. It devoured and crushed things, and trampled under its feet whatever remained. Different from all of the other previous animals, it had ten horns.

7 After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it: and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns.

- "After this" - after Daniel saw the three beasts (v4-6)...

- "...fourth beast" - represents Rome, which we know from secular history is the empire that followed Greece. Rome isn't mentioned by name in Scripture like Persia or Greece, but we know this information from secular history.

— This beast parallels the legs of iron in Nebuchadnezzar's statue, each representing the eastern and western divisions of the empire

— Rome would rise to power in 63 BC when Pompei subjugated the land of Israel, and it continued to trample down Israel until 70 AD when it pushed Israel out of the land and completely destroyed the city of Jerusalem and the temple. The Roman Empire continued on into the 5th century AD.

— It's interesting that no animal was used as a simile for this beast; Daniel can't come up with a relevant and applicable animal idiom for it

- "...dreadful and terrible" - Rome was one of the most wicked empires in world history

— It was the empire responsible for the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. Crucifixion is one of the grizzliest means of death the human mind in its depravity has ever come up with.

- "...iron teeth" - the Roman empire was ruthless in its destruction of civilizations and peoples, killing captives by the thousands and selling them into slavery by the hundreds of thousands

— These "teeth" correspond with the iron legs of Nebuchadnezzar's statue (2:33)

- "...it" - another empire, this one different than the previous four (Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome)

— It corresponds with the feet of iron and clay of Nebuchadnezzar's dream, an empire future to us (the Antichrist's empire during the Tribulation)

— Many times the Holy Spirit will present events back to back, but He does not reveal the timing of these events (see Dispensational Gaps)

— Daniel is frustrated at times in this book about his lack of understanding of some of the prophecies that he was given, yet he is told to "go his way" as these weren't meant to be understood until a future generation.

— Today we're able to put these prophecies together in a meaningful way, which Daniel, Isaiah, Ezekiel and the others could not because we now have the full canon of Scripture

- "...was different" - the fourth empire was emphatically different from the three previous empires; it completely subdued and broke into pieces all that preceded it

— This diversity is emphasized over and over (v7,19,23,24)

— It destroyed instead of just took advantage of; it was far more ferocious than the previous three empires. Nebuchadnezzar, when he conquered Jerusalem, took the best young men and sent them to graduate school. The Persians did same thing; there were many Jewish leaders in the history of Persia; Cyrus took pride in honoring the religion of the people he conquered and even helped rebuild the temple. The Greeks enforced their language, but did the same thing.

— Rome was much different—they took pride in what they destroyed. When you enlisted in the Roman army, you enlisted for 25 years; at the end you got land and citizenship, but you had to serve for the entire 25 years. The Romans completely succeeded Greece in 63 BC when it crushed the last Seleucid stronghold and took Jerusalem.

- If you woke up and saw the Roman army surrounding your town, you knew you were done. They would dig a trench around your town, build a wall, and be prepared to sit there for 25 years to starve you out.

— They were ruthless and brutal...the movie Gladiator communicates their ferocity pretty well

- "...ten horns" - the last phrase of this verse jumps ahead to describe events during the Tribulation; these 10 horns are the same as the 10 toes in Dan 2

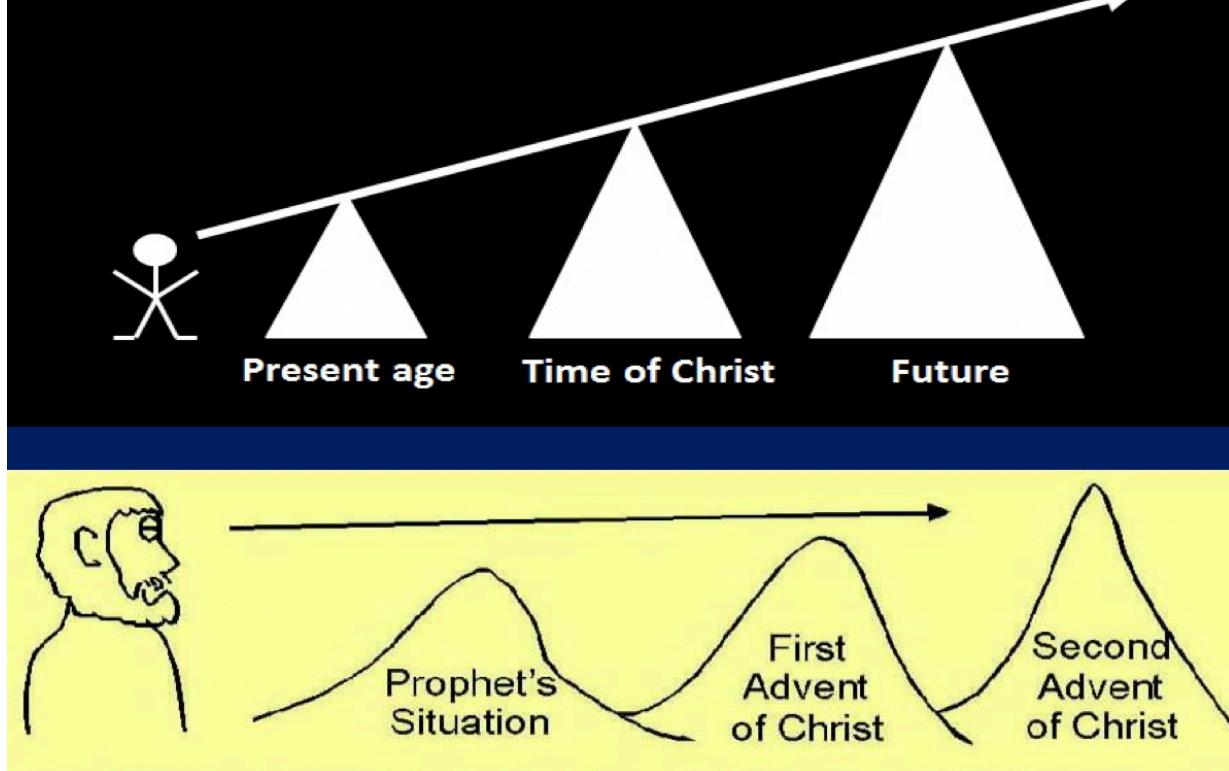
— These horns will be explained to us later in this chapter (v24) as a 10-king confederacy that will rule over the entire earth

— Most premillennialists believe 10 to be a literal number describing 10 rulers who will arise in the future and reign simultaneously (Cf. v17)

- "...devoured and crushed" - one example is that during the siege of Jerusalem in 70 AD, over 1M Jews were killed. The Roman soldiers cut open the wombs of pregnant Jewish women to kill the infant baby in order to snuff out the Jewish race altogether.

Mountain Peaks of Prophecy

Multiple fulfilments in one prophecy



Rev 13:2: And the **beast** that I saw was like a **leopard**, and his feet were like those of a **bear**, and his mouth like the mouth of a **lion**. And the dragon gave him his power and his throne, and great authority.

- In the 1st century AD, John is seeing the same thing that Daniel saw in the 6th century BC
- The order in John's vision is changed: beast, leopard, bear, lion; Daniel saw a lion, bear, leopard, beast. The reversal in order is because John is looking backward in history; Daniel was looking forward in the future.
- Based on Dan 7:12, the Antichrist's empire is an amalgamation of each of the four previous empires (Babylon, Media-Persia, Greece and Rome)

It's interesting that the same empires presented in Nebuchadnezzar's dream are of bright, shiny metals, showing a sense of unity and value. In Daniel's dream, these same empires are presented from God's view as consuming, voracious beasts, and Daniel can't even describe the last one...he's at a loss for words for how brutal and ruthless it is.

(b) The little horn (7:8)

8 While I was thinking about **the horns**, behold, **another horn, a little one**, came up among them, and **three of the previous horns were plucked out** before it; and behold, this horn possessed **eyes like human eyes**, and **a mouth uttering great boasts**.

8 While I was contemplating the horns, behold, another horn, a little one, came up among them, and three of the first horns were pulled out by the roots before it; and behold, this horn possessed eyes like the eyes of a man and a mouth uttering great *boasts*.

8 "While I was thinking about the horns—look—another horn, this time a little one, grew up among them. Three of the first horns were yanked up by their roots right in front of it. Look! It had eyes like those of a human being and a mouth that boasted with audacious claims."

8 I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things.

— "...the horns" - the 10 horns from v7, a 10-king confederacy who will rule the entire earth during the future Tribulation period

— "...another horn, a little one" - the Antichrist (Is 27:1; Matt 24:5,15; 2 Thess 2:3-4; 1 John 2:18; 4:3; Rev 13; 17; 19)

— "horn" - an idiom for power or authority

— "little" - refers to his lowly political origin; it describes him before he attains governmental supremacy. In the beginning, he'll be just another human king, but he will become greater than the "horns" before him (v20) and will be uniquely different from the other horns (v20,24), running an absolute dictatorship.

— Through his keen intelligence (v8,20), he will conquer three kings and will boastfully represent himself as the ultimate lawless one (2 Thess 2:9-10)

— His ultimate enemy is not any of his contemporary kings, but the people of God and, therefore, God Himself

— There are 33 names for this guy in the OT; 13 in the NT; see [Allusions to the Antichrist](#).

There's even a physical description of him (Zech 11:17). This is the first time he's mentioned in Daniel; v9-11,21-26; 8:9-12,23-25 speak a lot more about him.

— Dan 11:21 tells us that at first they will not give him the honor of the kingdom, but "he shall come in peaceably, and obtain the kingdom by flatteries." Once he ascends the political ladder, none will challenge his authority.

— Daniel saw a different "little horn" in a later vision (8:9-11). However, the differences between these two little horns argue for their being different rulers (see notes at 8:9-11).

— "...three of the previous horns were plucked out" - three of the original 10 horns evidently don't go along with his program, so he explains things to them a little more clearly—by plucking them up by the roots

- While this verse does not state directly that the 11th horn defeated the three kings, v24 does. With the uprooting of three horns, seven of the original horns remain and the "little horn" is now an 8th horn rather than an 11th.
- "...eyes like human eyes" - this horn is a person...he is described with human qualities
- "...a mouth uttering great *boasts*" - "Mr. Big Mouth"; Scripture over and over emphasizes what the Antichrist says (Cf. v11,25; 11:36-38; 2 Thess 2:4; Rev 13:5)

(v) The Ancient of Days (7:9-12)

This 3rd vision, which takes place in Heaven, is of God the Father ready to move out in judgment against the Fourth Empire. He is viewed as a judge and the books of judgment are opened. He is surrounded by myriads of angels who will be responsible to carry out these judgments.

(a) Generically described (7:9-10)

9 "I kept looking Until **thrones** were set up, And the **Ancient of Days** took *His* seat; His garment **was white as snow**, And the **hair of His head like pure wool**. His throne was ablaze with **flames**, **Its wheels were a burning fire**.

9 "I kept looking Until thrones were set up, And the Ancient of Days took *His* seat; His vesture **was** like white snow And the hair of His head like pure wool. His throne was ablaze with flames, **Its wheels were a burning fire**.

9 "I kept on watching until the Ancient of Days was seated. His clothes were white, like snow, and the hair on his head was like pure wool. His throne burned with flaming fire, and its wheels burned with fire.

9 I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire.

- Meanwhile, back in heaven...

- "...thrones" - plural; given the fact that this verse is a description of God setting up His kingdom on the earth, you'd expect throne to be singular, referring to God's throne of judgment.

— Rev 20:4 also mentions "thrones" (plural); both references refer to the fact that believers will rule and reign under Christ's delegated authority during the millennial kingdom (Cf. 7:28)

— This is why Paul is so frustrated with the Corinthians (1 Cor 6) who were suing each other before unbelieving judges rather than working out their own legal issues between themselves. Paul tells them, Don't you know that one day you will judge the angels? (Cf. 1 Cor 6:2-3).

- "...Ancient of Days" - "days without beginning"; 3x in the OT, all in this chapter (v9,13,22). This

- "...white as snow" - pictures His purity and holiness
- "...hair of His head like pure wool" - suggests His purity and His mature judgment
- "...flames" - symbolic of knowledge, purity and judgment in Scripture (Cf. Ex 3:2; Deut 4:24; 1 Tim 6:16; Heb 12:29; Rev 1:14-15)
- "...Its wheels were a burning fire" - the throne of God is mobile, it has wheels (Ezek 1:15-22)
 - Daniel and Ezekiel are the only two prophets who reveal that God's throne has wheels; they are also the only two prophets who received their prophetic visions outside the land of Israel. This is significant because where God's people go, God's throne goes (Heb 13:5).
 - As a child of God, you can never get beyond the reach or impact of God. Even in your sin, God follows. This is why Paul scolded the Corinthians who were shacking up with the temple prostitutes for "religious reasons" (1 Cor 6:12-20), telling them that their body is the temple of the Holy Spirit (v19). When they indulged with these prostitutes, they brought the Holy Spirit along with them into their sin.
 - When God is following me it gives me hope in my circumstances, but it also is accountability to always be on my best behavior. The wheels represent hope and holiness.

Acts 17:31: because He has set a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all people by raising Him from the dead."

10 "A **river of fire** was flowing And coming out from before Him; **Thousands upon thousands** were serving Him, And myriads upon myriads were standing before Him; **The court convened**, And **the books** were opened.

10 "A river of fire was flowing And coming out from before Him; Thousands upon thousands were attending Him, And myriads upon myriads were standing before Him; The court sat, And the books were opened.

10 A river of fire flowed out from before him. Thousands upon thousands were serving him, with millions upon millions waiting before him. The court sat in judgment, and record books were unsealed.

10 A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened.

- "...river of fire" - a river of fire was flowing out from before the throne of God, symbolizing judgment proceeding from Him

- "...Thousands upon thousands...myriads upon myriads" - a description of the innumerable angels (Cf. Rev 5:11)

— This is why angels are analogized to stars in Scripture...there are too many to be counted

- "...The court" - the heavenly venue from which God renders judgment on rulers and their nations based on their deeds (Job 1-2; Is 65:6; Mal 3:16; Rev 20:12; Cf. Matt 25:31-46)
- "...convened" - the KJV translates as "judgment was set"; **the judgment referred to is likely Sheep & Goat Judgment (Judgment of the Nations/Gentiles, Matt 25:31-46)** because Matthew relates the Judgment of the Gentiles to the Second Coming (Matt 24:27,30,37,39,33,25:31-32), just as Daniel does (v13,26-27)
- "...the books were opened" - multiple books, plus a book (singular), the Book of Life, were opened (Cf. Rev 20:12)
- The dead (unbelievers) were judged by the things written in the books (plural), according to their deeds
- If your name is not written in "the book" then you're judged by the books (your deeds)

(b) His judgment upon the fourth beast (7:11)

11 Then I kept looking because of the sound of the **boastful words** which **the horn** was speaking; I kept looking until **the beast** was killed, and its body was destroyed and **given to the burning fire**.

11 Then I kept looking because of the sound of the boastful words which the horn was speaking; I kept looking until the beast was slain, and its body was destroyed and given to the burning fire.

11 "I continued watching because of the audacious words that the horn was speaking. I kept observing until the animal was killed and its body destroyed and given over to burning fire.

11 I beheld then because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake: I beheld even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame.

- "...boastful words" - another reference to the words of the Antichrist (Cf. v8,11,25; 11:36-38; 2 Thess 2:4; Rev 13:5)

- Daniel now shifts from "the court" of judgment in heaven, to the earth and the boastful words of the "horn" (Antichrist)

- The "audacious" [ISV] words of the Antichrist riveted Daniel's attention; this is the second mention of the pompous words of the "horn" (as a continuation of v8; Cf. v20,25; 11:36-37; Matt 24:15; 2 Thess 2:4; Rev 13:5-6)

- The heavenly court is convened after the 11th horn started his pompous speaking. He kept speaking, oblivious to what was happening in the heavenly court. However, these pompous words caused Daniel to look back to planet earth.

- Daniel saw the life of the Antichrist in this vision...until God's judgment of him

- "...the horn...the beast" - references to the Antichrist

- "...given to the burning fire" - the Antichrist and False Prophet will be thrown into the Lake of Fire as its first inhabitants (Cf. Rev 19:20)

- Scripture covers the rise of the Antichrist, as well as his ultimate demise and assignment to the Lake of Fire for eternity. This gives us reassurance that while there is evil in the world, it is temporary. God has placed limits on evil.

In Heaven

9–10

I watched till thrones were put in place, And the Ancient of Days was seated; His garment *was* white as snow, And the hair of His head *was* like pure wool. His throne *was* a fiery flame, Its wheels a burning fire; A fiery stream issued And came forth from before Him. A thousand thousands ministered to Him; Ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him. The court was seated, And the books were opened.

On Earth

8

And there, in this horn, *were* eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking pompous words.

11

I watched then because of the sound of the pompous words which the horn was speaking; I watched till the beast was slain, and its body destroyed and given to the burning flame.

(c) His judgment upon the first three beasts (7:12)

- 12 As for the rest of the beasts, their dominion was taken away, but an extension of life was granted to them for an appointed period of time.
- 12 As for the rest of the beasts, their dominion was taken away, but an extension of life was granted to them for an appointed period of time.
- 12 Now as to the other animals, their authority was removed, but they were granted a reprieve from execution for an appointed period of time."
- 12 As concerning the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away: yet their lives were prolonged for a season and time.
- This verse refers to events that precede v11. In light of the destruction of the fourth beast, Daniel mentioned the destiny of the first three beasts.
- As each empire (Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome) comes to an end in history, it's really just a political end, not a cultural end; each empire continues on into the next empire culturally
 - When Medo-Persia overthrew Babylon, the Babylonian culture was swallowed up and incorporated into the culture of Medo-Persia. When Medo-Persia came to power, the spirit of Babylon continued to live in Persia.
 - Any historian will tell you that Rome conquered Greece politically, but Greece conquered Rome culturally
 - This cycle continued through the Roman Empire and even into the empire of the Antichrist (Rome Part II, the feet of iron and clay). This is why John sees all four beasts in the 1st century AD (Rev 13:2). John sees the empire of the Antichrist and says that it's an amalgamation of all of the previous empires.

(vi) Son of Man (7:13-14)

(a) Presented to the Ancient of Days (7:13)

13 "I kept looking in the night visions, And behold, **with the clouds of heaven** One like a **son of man** was coming, And He came up to the Ancient of Days And was presented before Him.

13 "I kept looking in the night visions, And behold, with the clouds of heaven One like a Son of Man was coming, And He came up to the Ancient of Days And was presented before Him.

13 "I continued to observe the night vision—and look!—someone like the Son of Man was coming, accompanied by heavenly clouds. He approached the Ancient of Days and was presented before him.

13 I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him.

- Daniel again saw something happening in heaven (Cf. Rev 5:1-10)

— The "Son of man" came before the Ancient of Days, who proceeded to give this Person authority to rule on earth (Cf. Ps 2:2,6-12; 110:1-2; Matt 24-25; Heb 2:5-11; 10:12-13; Rev 1:13; 5:1-14; 14:14)

- "...like a son of man" - *Kebar 'enash*, refers to Jesus Christ; Jesus adopts this name for Himself in the NT, 27x in Luke alone. This is the most frequently quoted verse from Daniel in the NT. It is very significant that Jesus used this title above all others when describing Himself, 31x in Matthew alone.

— The focus is upon His human appearance, in contrast with the four beasts. This qualitative usage is in keeping with the simile introduced by *like*. Son of Man looks like He descended from man, not like the four descendants of beasts.

— Although Messiah had already been named as God's "Son" in previous prophetic utterances (Cf. 2 Sam 7:14; Ps 2:7,12; Prov 30:4), He is now given a name that emphasizes His true and total identification with mankind.

- "...with the clouds of heaven" - many interpret this phrase to imply Jesus' Second Coming, mainly because of its similarity with Acts 1:9 (coming on the clouds)

— However, it's likely this is a reference to Jesus returning to the heavenly court, apparently just after the pronouncement of judgment on the fourth beast, where He receives the kingdom from the Ancient of Days (v14)

— "clouds" - cloud imagery is prevalent throughout Scripture (Ex 13:21-22; 19:9,16; 1 Kings 8:10-11; Is 19:1; Ezek 10:4; Matt 24:30; 26:64; Mark 13:26; 1 Thess 4:17; Rev 1:7)

Son of Man

Jesus' contemporaries used the title "Messiah" to describe a merely human leader who they believed would provide military liberation from their Roman oppressors. This limited understanding of Messiah's role made that title undesirable from Jesus' viewpoint, so He did not normally refer to himself as the Messiah. The title "Son of Man" should have taken Jesus' hearers back to Dan 7:13, where clearly a God-man is in view. Many of Jesus' contemporaries were willing to trust Him as their Messiah, but few were willing to acknowledge Him as the divine Son of Man (Cf. Matt 16:16; John 6:69). Jesus wanted them to believe that He was God—as well as man—and so preferred the title "Son of Man."

The NT development of the term "Son of Man" completes the picture begun by Daniel:

1. Jesus progressively revealed His messianic understanding of the term.
2. The messianic significance of the term for Jesus is eventually directly revealed by Jesus to the disciples after Peter's confession at Caesarea Philippi.
3. Jesus fuses the term with other OT descriptions of His mission, specifically the Servant, and thus is able to speak of the Son of Man's necessity to suffer in the suffering sayings which dominate the middle portions of the gospels.
4. As Jesus faces the cross, He begins to reveal to His disciples the background and significance of the term Son of Man in terms of Dan 7 with the apocalyptic sayings.
5. This same background is revealed publicly at His trial before the Sanhedrin.
6. Thus the term is a convenient vehicle for revealing Himself to those who believe, while avoiding the immediate political connotations of the term, Messiah.
7. The usage in John's gospel parallels that of the Synoptics while reflecting a development of themes implicit in both the Synoptics and Dan 7.
8. The term in its NT usage has in view His ultimate victory and apocalyptic return, a significant fact in view of His approaching Passion.
9. Therefore, the term is most appropriate for summarizing Christ's Christology, for in it one like a man who is more than a man exercises dominion and authority to such an extent that he can also be considered divine. As such, He will be the center of a new kingdom, king in a new age when all men will recognize His authority and worship His person. God's sovereign plan of history will culminate in the completion of the Son of Man's mission in eternal victory. His future return in vindication makes this certain, even as He heads for the cross. In the promise of His victory, disciples can walk in hope and expectation even though He went to the cross. His rule will cause all men to pause at the marvelous grace of God as it is observed that Jesus the Christ, the Son of Man, is truly the greatest One who ever walked the earth.

[Darrell L. Bock, "The Son of Man in Daniel and the Messiah" (unpublished Th.M. thesis; Dallas: Dallas Theological Seminary, 1979) 97-100.]

(b) Inauguration of the kingdom (7:14)

14 "And to **Him** was given dominion, Honor, and a kingdom, So **that all the peoples, nations, and populations of all languages** Might **serve** Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion Which will not pass away; And His kingdom is one Which will not be destroyed.

14 "And to Him was given dominion, Glory and a kingdom, That all the peoples, nations and *men of every language* Might serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion Which will not pass away; And His kingdom is one Which will not be destroyed.

14 To him dominion was bestowed, along with glory and a kingdom, so that all nations, nations, and languages are to serve him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion—it will never pass away—and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed."

14 And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.

- This passage describes the Ancient of Days turning over the messianic kingdom to Jesus Christ This extends the basis for the NT interpretation of the kingdom. The messianic kingdom is just the beginning of the eternal kingdom.

— All these earthly kingdoms were scheduled for destruction, but this one does not have an end date...it lasts forever

- "...Him" - the Son of Man, Jesus Christ

- Daniel is seeing the inauguration of the messianic kingdom upon the earth by the Son of Man

— God's great plan has finally come to fruition: to rule planet earth through a Man and His wife (His bride, the Church)

- "...that" - the article in Aramaic introduces a purpose clause. The purpose for giving the Son of Man dominion, glory, and a kingdom is in order that those on earth would serve (worship) Him.

- "...all the peoples, nations, and *populations of all languages*" - God's kingdom will be worldwide, as opposed to the Antichrist's cheap imitation

— Satan is currently in the midst of setting up his New World Order, but it will be short-lived; then God will set up His New World Order where Jesus Christ rules and reigns over planet Earth.

— If you're working today to set up a kingdom, and the next kingdom on the horizon is the kingdom of the Antichrist, aren't you working to set up the Antichrist's kingdom? Pastors and churches spend a lot of time talking about a kingdom today, but we're not told to set up a kingdom. Jesus will take care of that after the Antichrist's kingdom is deposed. What we're supposed to be doing now is recruiting citizens for that kingdom, so when it comes, more saints will be able to rule and reign with Christ.

- All of our human efforts will not bring the kingdom of God to the earth
- "...serve" - *pelah*, a term of worship; the fact that the world will worship the Son of Man demonstrates His deity
- Many passages in Daniel show that *pelah* has a sense of worship, which leads one to the conclusion that "Son of Man" (v13) is a reference to deity (Jesus Christ), not the nation of Israel as some argue (3:12,14,17-18,28; 6:16,20; 7:14,27)
- In Satan's temptation of Christ (Matt 4; Luke 4), he offers Him the kingdom. In His response, Jesus did not dispute Satan's implied ownership of the kingdom of the earth. If that was an empty boast, it wouldn't have been a temptation. The nations, languages and peoples of this earth belong to Satan.
- Christ didn't challenge his ownership, but He challenged his proposition. That proposition that Satan offered Christ will be offered to another who is to come...the Coming World Leader (Antichrist).

Verses 13-14 describes an interface between two members of the Trinity. As Jesus himself and the NT writers make clear, Jesus is the "Son of Man" figure of Daniel. Thus, this section presents the Son of Man, who we now know as Jesus the Messiah, coming before God the Father to receive "dominion, glory and a kingdom." The result is that all peoples and nations will serve Him and His dominion will last forever. Echoes of this passage may be seen in Matt 28:18-19 and Acts 1.

Just prior to His ascension, Jesus said, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth" (Matt 28:18). On His day of ascension, Acts 1:9 states that "a cloud received Him out of their sight." There may be a connection, then, between Jesus' ascension into Heaven on the clouds and Dan 7:13. Dan 7:14 indicates that the presentation of the Son of Man before the Ancient of Days is linked with "peoples, nations and men of every language" serving God. With Matt 28:18-19 Jesus links the authority He has been given with His command to the disciples that they "Go...and make disciples of all the nations." Thus, the ascension may be linked with Jesus' universal authority.

Yet, the full and final fulfillment of Dan 7:13-14 is future and coincides with the events of Rev 4-5 which describes a heavenly scene between Jesus and the Father just prior to the unleashing of the wrath of the Lamb upon the entire earth (Rev 6-19).

The last days of the church on the earth may be largely wasted seeking to accomplish a task that only the Lord Himself can and will do directly. [Hal Lindsay]

- (c) The interpretation (7:15-27)
 - (i) Times of the Gentiles and the messianic kingdom (7:15-18)

15 "As for me, Daniel, my spirit was distressed within me, and the visions in my mind kept alarming me.

15 "As for me, Daniel, my spirit was distressed within me, and the visions in my mind kept alarming me.

15 "Now as for me, Daniel, I was emotionally troubled, and what I had seen in the visions kept alarming me.

15 I Daniel was grieved in my spirit in the midst of my body, and the visions of my head troubled me.

- His prophetic dream touched Daniel's heart, not just his mind or intellect; it touched him at a personal level

— This is the great purpose that God has given to prophecy. Often we get into charts and other information, but the Word of God never penetrates our minds. God's purpose for prophecy is to impact our daily lives...learning biblical prophecy should impact our attitude and behavior.

— If prophecy stays in our mind and never impacts how we live, when it's just an academic exercise, we miss the purpose for why the Holy Spirit gave us these prophecies

— Prophecy isn't given to us to tantalize our intellect, but to encourage us toward holiness as God's people (Titus 2:13; 2 Peter 3:11; 1 John 3:2-3)

— Daniel's interpretation here is going to focus on the Fourth Empire

16 I approached **one of those who were standing by** and began requesting of him the **exact meaning** of all this. So he told me and made known to me the **interpretation** of these things:

16 I approached one of those who were standing by and began asking him the exact meaning of all this. So he told me and made known to me the interpretation of these things:

16 So I approached one of those who was standing nearby and began to ask the meaning of all of this. He spoke to me and caused me to understand the interpretation of these things.

16 I came near unto one of them that stood by, and asked him the truth of all this. So he told me, and made me know the interpretation of the things.

- "...one of those who were standing by" - Gabriel? Gabriel seems to be the angel responsible for disclosing new truth (Cf. Dan 9:24-27; Luke 1:19,26).

— Michael, also an archangel, has the responsibility for protecting Israel during times of distress

- "...exact meaning" - notice that Daniel asked for the "exact meaning"; many times, people will read the visions and come up with an interpretation from their own sanctified imaginations, attaching bizarre and strange meanings to the things they read in the Bible as if the Holy Spirit has given us the freedom to do that.

— In reality, we should look to Scripture to interpret Scripture because the Bible is its own best interpreter. God doesn't tell Daniel to figure out the "exact meaning" of these things

on his own.

— It was evidently the fourth beast and the little horn that Daniel was most interested in but could not understand

— There are 26 symbols in the Book of Revelation that are defined in the same context (same chapter). Daniel understands this, which is why he seeks to not understand the "meaning" but rather the "exact meaning" of his visions.

- "...interpretation" - often we don't have the patience for God to explain Himself; we don't read far enough or look close enough to determine the interpretation from Scripture

— Instead we look to YouTube or Google to interpret Scripture and are easily derailed into false doctrine and beliefs

17 'These great beasts, which are four *in number*, are four kings *who will arise from the earth*.

17 'These great beasts, which are four *in number*, are four kings *who will arise from the earth*.

17 He said, 'These four great animals are four kings who will rise to power from the earth.

17 These great beasts, which are four, are four kings, which shall arise out of the earth.

- What Daniel saw were various kingdoms of man, which are ultimately Satanically controlled, who will trample down the nation of Israel right up through the Tribulation period up to the Second Coming

— The conditions of this world will not improve until Jesus Christ comes and overthrows these beasts, who will manifest themselves in the final kingdom of man (the Antichrist's kingdom)

— Essentially, the interpretation is that this world will not reform itself, it will not get better, in fact it will get perpetually worse right up until "the saints of the Highest One" will receive God's kingdom and the kingdoms of mankind will be vanquished forever.

- "...arise from the earth" - earlier the four beasts arise out of the sea...here, they arise out of the earth. This is why we should see the sea as idiomatic, not literal.

— Coming out of the sea emphasizes their Gentile identity; arising out of the earth emphasizes their humanity; these are human kingdoms, not divine kingdoms

18 But the **saints of the Highest One** will receive the kingdom and take possession of the kingdom forever, for all ages to come.'

18 But the saints of the Highest One will receive the kingdom and possess the kingdom forever, for all ages to come.'

18 But the saints of the Highest will receive the kingdom forever, inheriting it forever and ever.'

18 But the saints of the most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever.

- Summary statement: when the smoke clears, the saints will take the kingdom for ever and ever. Whatever is possessed by these four Gentile empires is only temporary.

- "...saints of the Highest One" - probably refers to believers of all ages (v27) who will rule and reign in the (5th) kingdom, under Jesus' delegated authority

- "...receive the kingdom" - *qebal*, refers to ascending to a position of rule. The degree of authority that we will wield during that time directly correlates to the choices we make today.

— The same phrase appears in 5:31

The reception of the kingdom by the saints of the Most High is quite compatible with Christ's position as King. Faithful believers receive positions of administration within the kingdom as a reward for faithfulness. Compare the Parable of the Talents; Rom 8:17; 2 Tim 2:11-13; Rev 3:21. The prospect of co-reigning with Christ motivates faithful service.

Believers will have a share in the Son of Man's everlasting kingdom after He establishes it. This will involve reigning with Christ (Cf. Matt 25:14-30; Luke 19:11-27; 2 Tim 2:12; Rev 5:10; 20:4,6; 22:5). This kingdom will begin with the return of Christ to the earth, continue for 1,000 years on the earth, and then continue in the New Heavens and New Earth forever. This scenario corrects the objection of some that this kingdom cannot be millennial since the angel said it would last forever.

The reason for emphasizing the participation of God's people in the final kingdom seems to be that it is a literal, earthly kingdom, replacing the previous empires of men, rather than a spiritual domain, a sort of ideal kingdom of God consisting only of the Lord himself.

(ii) The fourth beast (7:19-26)

(a) Daniel's question (7:19-22)

19 "Then I desired to know the exact meaning of the fourth beast, which was **different from all the others**, exceedingly dreadful, with its teeth of iron and its **claws of bronze**, *and which* devoured, crushed, and trampled down the remainder with its feet,

19 "Then I desired to know the exact meaning of the fourth beast, which was different from all the others, exceedingly dreadful, with its teeth of iron and its claws of bronze, *and which* devoured, crushed and trampled down the remainder with its feet,

19 "I wanted to learn the precise significance of the fourth animal that was different from all the others, extremely awe-inspiring, with iron teeth and bronze claws, and that had devoured and crushed things, trampling under its feet whatever remained.

19 Then I would know the truth of the fourth beast, which was diverse from all the others, exceeding dreadful, whose teeth were of iron, and his nails of brass; which devoured, brake

in pieces, and stamped the residue with his feet;

- Daniel doesn't ask about the first three beasts...however, he's very curious about the fourth beast, both the time before the 11th horn as well as his time

- "...different from all the others" - the diversity of the fourth kingdom (Rome phase 2) is continually emphasized (Cf. v7,23,24); Daniel seeks to understand the meaning of this diversity; he's inquiring specifically about the empire of the Antichrist, the last empire of the Times of the Gentiles.

- "...claws of bronze" - stresses its fierce nature

20 and *the meaning of the ten horns that were on its head*, and the other *horn* which came up, and before which three *of the horns* fell, namely, that horn which had eyes and **a mouth uttering great *boasts***, and which was larger in appearance than its associates.

20 and *the meaning of the ten horns that were on its head* and the other *horn* which came up, and before which three *of them* fell, namely, that horn which had eyes and a mouth uttering great *boasts* and which was larger in appearance than its associates.

20 Also, I wanted to learn the significance of the ten horns on its head and the other horn that had arisen, before which three of them had fallen—that is, the horn with eyes and a mouth that uttered magnificent things and which was greater in appearance than its fellows.

20 And of the ten horns that were in his head, and of the other which came up, and before whom three fell; even of that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spake very great things, whose look was more stout than his fellows.

- In addition to understanding the diversity of the fourth kingdom, Daniel also wishes to know the meaning of the ten horns and the "little horn." In requesting this, Daniel gives further information regarding the activity of the "little horn" in v20b-22:

- He causes three horns to fall (v20b)
- He speaks great things (v20c)
- He wars against the saints and is allowed to prevail over them (v21)
- Finally, he is personally defeated by the coming of the Ancient of Days (v20b-22)

- "...ten horns that were on its head" - the 10 kings are pictured as reigning simultaneously, and three of them are subdued by the "little horn" (Antichrist)

— This is a refutation of the postmillennial and amillennial interpretation that the 10 kingdoms were successive kingdoms in the latter phase of the Roman Empire or, as some believe, fulfilled during the Seleucid empire

— Instead, it is clear that the 10 kingdoms are simultaneous as three of them are subdued by the "little horn" and the other seven apparently capitulate

— The fourth kingdom under the domination of the "little horn" becomes a world empire described in the phrase: "Shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it

in pieces" (v23).

- "...a mouth uttering great *boasts*" - this is the third mention of the 11th horn (the Antichrist) speaking pompously (v8,11,20,25; Rev 13:5-6)

21 I kept looking, and **that horn** was waging war with the **saints** and **prevailing against them**,

21 I kept looking, and that horn was waging war with the saints and overpowering them

21 "As I continued to watch, that same horn waged war against the saints, and was prevailing against them

21 I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them;

- This is a pre-Tribulational Rapture passage...

- "...that horn" - the future Antichrist

- "...saints" - a non-technical term generically describing the people of God; here, it describes Tribulation Saints

— OT saints are called "saints" (Ps 149:1); Church Age believers are also called "saints" (Rom 1:7); the term can apply to OT believers, Jewish believers, Israel, Gentile believers, etc.

— Many people use this verse as a proof text that the Church will go through the Tribulation period. However, the Church is not referenced in the OT because it was a "mystery" during that time (Eph 3:3-6,9), so Daniel could not be referring to the Church with his use of the generic term "saints."

— The saints that Daniel is referring to are Tribulation Saints, who come to Christ after the Rapture from the witness of the 144,000 Jews (Cf. Matt 24:14; Rev 7:1-8); many of these new saints are killed (overcome) by the Antichrist during the Tribulation period (Cf. Rev 7:14).

— What the Church leaves incomplete in evangelism at the Rapture, God will see to it that all the evangelical work will be completed during the Tribulation

- "...prevailing against them" - overpowering them; Daniel saw the Antichrist winning over the Tribulation Saints

— If "saints" here refers to Church Age believers, then what do we do with Jesus' words in Matt 16:18, when He says, "the gates of hell will not overpower (*katischyō*) it (the Church)"?

22 **until** the Ancient of Days came and judgment was passed in favor of the saints of the Highest One, and the time arrived when the saints took possession of the kingdom.

22 until the Ancient of Days came and judgment was passed in favor of the saints of the Highest One, and the time arrived when the saints took possession of the kingdom.

22 until the Ancient of Days arrived to pass judgment in favor of the saints of the Highest One and the time came for the saints to take possession of the kingdom.

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.

- "until" - *ád*, an important chronological indicator: the 11th horn will prevail in war over the saints "until" the Ancient of Days come (a reference to the heavenly courtroom scene in v9-10, 13-14a, 21, 26a)

— Only after the verdict is given in favor of the saints, will the saints possess the kingdom

In this passage (v19-22), Daniel repeats the descriptions of the fourth beast and little horn, and mentions four previously undisclosed details about them:

1. The beast had claws of bronze, describing its fierce nature (v19)
2. The "little horn" was more prominent than the other horns, accounting for its ability to rise in the place of the other three horns (v20)
3. The "little horn" waged war with the saints and overcame them, which explains one reason for God's final judgment on him (v21; Rev 11:7; 12:13-17; 13:7; 17:17)
4. God passes judgment in favor of His saints, indicating the importance of the saints in God's actions (v22)

(b) Angelic explanation (7:23-26)

As in Dan 2, the Fourth Empire is seen as going through several stages, though not always the same stages found in Dan 2. The Fourth Empire is first seen in its "United Stage" (2:40; 7:23a) and it is in this first stage that its diverseness from the other three empires is seen. This is followed by a second stage, the "Two Division Stage" (2:41).

This will be followed by the "One World Government" stage (7:23), then the "Ten-Division Stage" (2:42-43; 7:24) which will be followed by the final stage, the "Antichrist Stage" (7:25-26; Rev 13:3-10). These verses state that he will arise after the Ten-Division Stage (2:42-43; 7:24). While the Fourth Empire is diverse from the previous three, the little horn is diverse from the other ten (7:24c). He eventually puts down three of these kings (7:24d). See notes at the end of this chapter for a full explanation or chronology of the five stages.

4. The Fourth Empire, The Empire of Imperialism

- a. The United Stage, The Roman Empire
- b. The Two-Division Stage, The East-West Balance of Power
- c. The One-World Government Stage
- d. The Ten-Division Stage, The Ten Kingdoms
- e. The Antichrist Stage, Absolute Imperialism

"The United Stage" (The Roman Empire)

"The One World Government Stage" ("devour the whole earth")

23 "This is what **he said**: 'The fourth beast will be a **fourth kingdom** on the earth which will be **different** from all the *other* kingdoms, and will **devour the whole earth** and trample it down and crush it.

23 "Thus he said: 'The fourth beast will be a fourth kingdom on the earth, which will be different from all the *other* kingdoms and will devour the whole earth and tread it down and crush it.

23 So he said: 'The fourth animal will be a fourth kingdom on the earth, different from all the kingdoms. It will devour the entire earth, trampling it down and crushing it.

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.

- "...he said" - this is still Daniel's interpreter talking

- "...fourth kingdom" - the final empire on planet earth before Jesus returns to set up His eternal kingdom; this is the Antichrist's kingdom

— This is the "United Stage": the first stage of the revived Roman Empire ended in the 4th century; see notes at the end of this chapter. In this first "United Stage," the diverseness from the other previous three empires is seen.

— Here the dual identification of the beasts with kings and kingdoms becomes transparent. The fourth beast represents both a king and a kingdom.

- The "Two Division Stage" (Cf. 2:41), which falls between the "United Stage" and the "One World Government Stage" is currently in place today, since the fall of the Roman Empire

— It will give way to the One World Government stage ("devour the whole earth") sometime in the future, before the start of the Tribulation

- "...different" - it's this difference that Daniel is seeking more information about; he is curious about why this empire is different than the other empires

— The angel will explain (v24) that this beast will have 10 horns (which mirror the 10 toes in Nebuchadnezzar's statue, 2:40-43); the angel will go on to explain further detail, including the divine time limit on this kingdom of 3-1/2 years (v24ff).

- "...devour the whole earth" - this kingdom will encompass the entire earth. This is something the Roman Empire never did; it is a global kingdom, not a regional or national kingdom.

— Other usages of the term in the OT clearly teach universality (Gen 8:9; 9:19; 11:1; Is 6:3; 14:26; 28:22; 54:5; Jer 15:10; Zech 4:10,14)

— This is one of the clearest verses in all of Scripture depicting a global one-world government during the end times (see notes at end of this chapter)

— Globalism is a rejection of the different nations that God has established. God set up nations, borders and various languages as a check and balance against evil. If an evil nation arises, good nations can rise up against them.

See [Daniel 24_ World Governments on the Horizon - Part 1 \(Dan 7:23-24\)](#) for additional detail on the current stage setting for globalism.

"The Ten Division Stage" (Dan 2:42-43; Dan 7:24)

This stage will come out of the "One World Government" stage, occur some time before the Tribulation, and will continue until the middle of the Tribulation.

24 As for the **ten horns, out of this kingdom ten kings** will arise; and **another will arise after them**, and he will be **different from the previous ones** and will **humble three kings**.

24 As for the ten horns, out of this kingdom ten kings will arise; and another will arise after them, and he will be different from the previous ones and will subdue three kings.

24 Now as to the ten horns, ten kings will rise to power from this kingdom, and another king will rise to power after them. He will be different from the previous kings, and will defeat three kings.

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.

— "...ten horns, out of this kingdom ten kings" - the 10 horns = 10 kings, but it doesn't say that there are 10 kingdoms, just 10 kings (rulers or in authority)

— These are the same as the 10 toes (Dan 2:42) and 10 horns (Rev 17:12-18)

— "ten horns" - for a reason not given in the text, the One World Government will divide into 10 kingdoms that will cover the entire world

— It is important to understand the chronology: only after the One World Government rules the entire world does it split into 10 kingdoms

— "...another will arise after them" - this is an 11th horn (king), who comes after the 10; this is the Antichrist

— According to 2 Thess 2, the Rapture of the Church is a precondition to knowing who the Antichrist is

— "...different from the previous ones" - the "little horn" will be different from the 10 kings (Cf. Rev 13:1; 17:12)

— "...humble three kings" - evidently, 3 of the 10 will be subdued somehow, by the Antichrist, maybe militarily, so there will only be 7 remaining, with the little horn (Antichrist) as the 8th (Cf. v8)

"The Antichrist Stage" (Dan 7:25-26; Rev 13:3-10)

During the "Ten Division Stage," the Antichrist will begin to rise to power. Eventually, he will be powerful enough to uproot three of the ten kings (v24), and the other seven kings will simply submit to his authority. He will rule the entire world for the second half of the Tribulation, a period of 3-1/2 years.

25 And he will **speak against the Most High** and **wear down the saints** of the Highest One, and he will **intend to make alterations in times and in law**; and they will be handed over to him for **a time, times, and half a time**.

25 He will speak out against the Most High and wear down the saints of the Highest One, and he will intend to make alterations in times and in law; and they will be given into his hand for a time, times, and half a time.

25 He'll speak out against the Most High and wear down the saints of the Highest One. He'll attempt to alter times and laws, and they'll be given into his control for a time, times, and half a time.

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.

- "...speak against the Most High" - again, Mr. Big Mouth (Cf. v8,11,20); same expression found in Rev 13:6 (see below)

- "...wear down" - "waging war" against the saints and "prevailing against" them (Cf. v21); the Antichrist overcomes the Tribulation Saints

— This one-world government, led by the Antichrist, will persecute Tribulation believers (Rev 6:9-11; 13:7; 17:6; Matt 24:9). He obviously uses persecution to rid the earth of believers in Jesus Christ (Cf. 2 Thess 2:8-9; Rev 12:13-17; 13:1-10,16-17).

- "...the saints" - a non-technical term generically describing the people of God (see note on v21); this does not represent the Church, thus cannot be used to argue against a pre-Tribulational Rapture

- "...intend to make alterations in times and in law" - another way of saying that the Antichrist will create (reimagine) a world without God

— He will attempt to erase from planet earth every vestige of Christian thought. His "New World Order" will be a one-world system of economics, politics and religion that excludes God and His perspective.

— A couple of ways he might do this is to change the calendar to something other than a 7-day week. A 10-day week was briefly implemented during the French Revolution, with terrible results. They eventually had to revert to the 7-day week.

— Another thing the attempted during the French Revolution was to remove the BC/AD split in the calendar, since it was Jesus Christ who originally split the calendar. They attempted to identify "year 0" or "year 1" and reorganize the year count.

- God is the One who originally created the "times and seasons" on Day 4 of Creation (Cf. Gen 1:14). The Antichrist will attempt to erase all vestige of things that God originally created.
- Before the "papa" Antichrist shows up, there are and always have been "baby" Antichrists, people who have attempted to erase God from history and culture on a less-than-global scale (1 John 2:18).
- "...a time, times, and half a time" - three and a half years (Dan 9:27; 12:7; Rev 12:6,14; 13:5)
 - "a time" - one Jewish year
 - "times" - two Jewish years
 - "half a time" - half of a Jewish year
- This time period refers to the last half (3-1/2 years) of the seven year Tribulation period, when all hell breaks loose on the Jewish population
- It's referred to elsewhere in Scripture as "42 months" (Rev 13:5) or "1,260 days" (Rev 12:6). Each of these references refer to the period and length of time, the Holy Spirit just expresses that same time period in different measures:
 - 3-1/2 years (Dan 9:27; 12:7)
 - 42 months (Rev 11:2-3; 13:5)
 - 1,260 days (Dan 12:6; Rev 11:3; 12:6)
 - 1/2 "week" (Dan 9:27)
- The Holy Spirit has gone out of His way to nail this down to a literal time period. This is the most documented period of time in Scripture.

DAN 9:27 OVERVIEW OF TRIBULATION PERIOD



26 But the court will convene *for judgment*, and **his** dominion will be **taken away, annihilated and destroyed forever**.

26 But the court will sit *for judgment*, and his dominion will be taken away, annihilated and destroyed forever.

26 Nevertheless, the court will convene, and his authority will be removed, annulled, and destroyed forever.

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

- This verse begins the description of events after the "time, times, and half a time" (3-1/2 years) of the Antichrist's kingdom has run its course...

— It's tempting to think that the corrupt leaders of our world are getting away with something, and we're incapable of holding them accountable. But if you understand prophetic Scripture, you know that these people aren't getting away with anything, they are just self-deceived thinking they are getting away with something when really they are not. Payday someday.

- "...his" - the "little horn" — the Antichrist

- "...taken away, annihilated and destroyed forever" - Jesus Christ will overtake the Antichrist and his kingdom (Dan 9:27; 2 Thess 2:8) and throw him "alive" into the Lake of Fire (*Gehenna*) (Rev 19:20)
- Every person in all of history has an appointment to meet their Maker, and there are only two ways you can meet Him: either you can meet Him as your Savior, bowing your knee to Him now, or you will meet Him in stiffened pride against Him, as your Judge. The meeting time is not negotiable.
- The Antichrist has chosen the latter option, thus is violently and aggressively overthrown by Jesus Christ at the end of the Tribulation
- "destroyed forever" - the wrath of God against unbelievers is something that never ends...it continues to eternity. When Satan is thrown into the Lake of Fire at the end of the millennial kingdom, 1000 years after the Antichrist and False Prophet, they are still there in torment (Cf. Rev 14:11; 20:10).

This verse adds an important chronological item: The seating of the court is what leads to taking the 11th horn's dominion from him. Since neither the 10 horns nor the 11th horn have yet appeared in history, the seating of the court must also be future. This is a *crux interpretum*, because it not only affects v26a, but also v9-10,13-14a,22a. The heavenly courtroom, in its entirety, is future. Everything points to the seating of the court occurring just prior to the Second Advent. The court decrees that the little horn must lose his dominion. Then Christ returns in the Second Advent to take it by military conquest. From this perspective, when Jesus called Himself the Son of Man, it was not because the heavenly court had already convened. It had not. However, when it is seated, Christ will be the Son of Man coming with the clouds.

(iii) The messianic kingdom (7:27)

27 **Then** the sovereignty, the dominion, and the greatness of *all* the kingdoms **under the whole heaven** will be **given to the people of the saints** of the Highest One; His kingdom **will be an everlasting kingdom**, and all the empires will serve and obey Him.'

27 Then the sovereignty, the dominion and the greatness of *all* the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be given to the people of the saints of the Highest One; His kingdom **will be an everlasting kingdom**, and all the dominions will serve and obey Him.'

27 Then the kingdom, authority, and magnificence of all nations of the earth will be given to the people who are the saints of the Highest One. His kingdom will endure forever, and all authorities will serve him and obey him.'

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.

- "Then" - once the Antichrist has been destroyed, the kingdom will be established on the earth (Rev 11:15; Dan 2:44-45)
- "...under the whole heaven" - shows that it is a kingdom on earth, not in heaven
- "...given to the people of the saints" - refers to Church Age believers ruling and reigning with Christ, under His delegated authority, for 1000 years
- The Antichrist will have 10 kings ruling over 10 regions of the earth; the Lord will have millions of Christians ruling and reigning with Him (Rev 5:10)
- Our daily trials and tribulations today, financial or health scares, etc., are what God is using to prepare us for the authority we will be given during the kingdom
- This was Paul's frustration with the Corinthians, who couldn't get along with each other. Paul tells them that someday, they will judge the angels!
- He goes on to reason from the greater to the lesser as he tries to navigate the Corinthians through their problems that they thought were so big, asking, Do you not understand your destiny? Do you not understand your authority? Do you not understand your future? Can't you work out your minor differences on your own, given the fact that you will one day reign under the delegated authority of Jesus Christ? Paul tells them that they are living outside of their identity.
- Our adversities will either make us better or bitter...
- "...an everlasting kingdom" - the Son of Man's kingdom will be endless and worldwide
- So is the kingdom 1000 years or is it eternal? It's both. The earthly kingdom lasts 1000 years, but then the earth is dissolved and the kingdom continues into the Eternal State, the New Heavens and New Earth (2 Peter 3:7,10; Rev 21:1).
- If the eternal kingdom that Daniel sees, that we as Christians are citizens of, should that not shape or change the way we live today? Why live for the fleeting and passing pleasures of this world when it's all going to burn (2 Cor 4:18)?
- It's amazing how quickly the empire of the Antichrist will come to power, then be destroyed...a total of 3-1/2 years. Compare that with the "forever" kingdom of Christ that will follow it.

He is no fool who gives up what he cannot keep to gain that which he cannot lose.

(d) Impact upon Daniel (7:28)

28 "At this point the revelation ended. As for me, Daniel, my thoughts were **greatly alarming** me and my face became pale, but I kept the matter to myself."

28 "At this point the revelation ended. As for me, Daniel, my thoughts were greatly alarming me and my face grew pale, but I kept the matter to myself."

28 "At this point the vision ended. As for me, Daniel, my thoughts continued to alarm me, and I lost my natural color, but I kept quiet about 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.

- This concludes the sentence that began in v23

- This is Daniel's reaction to what he has just seen and heard

- "...greatly alarming" - why was Daniel greatly alarmed (Cf. v15)? Because he saw the kingdom that is on the horizon and the suffering of His people Israel prior to the establishment of God's kingdom on the earth (Cf. v15,19,21,25; 8:27).

— Daniel has a heart for the people of God, even though these events wouldn't come to pass until well after Daniel had passed away from the scene. Daniel's heart ached for his people. We should have the same heart for our fellow believers (Cf. 1 Cor 12:26).

— To Daniel, prophecy was more than a chart or timeline, more than academic thought, more than a system of theology...to Daniel. Prophecy was not given to just touch the intellect, but to touch the heart. Studying biblical prophecy should have such an impact on us that it should control the decisions that I make moment by moment in my daily life.

The Sequence of Future Events from Dan 7 [Niemela-Sequence in Daniel 7:1-28](#)

Bold verses are the ones which demonstrate the chronological link.

1. A kingdom (recognizable as the Roman Empire) will have 10 kings simultaneously (v7b,20,**24**)
2. The 11th/little horn who speaks pompously against God defeats three of the 10 kings (v8,11,20,**24**)
3. The 11th horn prevails against the saints for three and a-half years (v21,**25**)
4. The heavenly court is seated near the close of the three and a-half years (v9-10,**25-26a**)
5. Christ comes to the court and is presented to the seated Ancient of Days (**v13**)
6. The court takes away the 11th horn's dominion (**v26a**), which is also a decision in favor of the saints (**v22a**), and is the decision to give the kingdom to Christ (14a)
7. Second Advent and total destruction of the fourth beast (**v11b,26b**)
8. Christ is worshipped and reigns forever on earth with an administration composed of saints (v14b,18,22b,**27**)

Dan 7 further develops what was given in Dan 2, especially in relation to the Fourth Empire. The information found in Dan 7 could be viewed in chart form as follows:

Daniel 2

1. The Babylonian Empire
2. The Medo-Persian Empire
3. The Greek Empire

Daniel 7

1. The Babylonian Empire
2. The Medo-Persian Empire
3. The Greek Empire

- 4. The Fourth Gentile Empire
 - a. The United Stage
 - b. **The Two-Division Stage**
 - c. The Ten-Division Stage
- 5. The Messianic Kingdom

- a. **The United Stage**
- b. **The Four-Division Stage**

- 4. The Fourth Empire
 - a. The United Stage
 - b. **The One-World Government Stage**
 - c. The Ten-Division Stage
 - d. **The Antichrist Stage**
- 5. The Messianic Kingdom

In most of the features, the two passages present the same thing. Both agree that there are to be four Gentile empires, one following the other, culminating with the destruction of the Fourth Empire by the Messiah and the setting up of the Messianic Kingdom. Both passages point out the diverseness of the Fourth Empire and the fact that it goes through several stages. It is in these stages that there is a slight difference between the two texts. Dan 2 shows three stages of the Fourth Empire, two of which are mentioned in Dan 7. Dan 7 mentions four stages of the Fourth Empire, two of which are mentioned in Dan 2.

Combining the two outlines together, they would be viewed as follows:

- 1. The Babylonian Empire
- 2. The Medo-Persian Empire
- 3. The Hellenistic Empire
 - a. The United Stage
 - b. The Four-Division Stage
- 4. The Fourth Empire
 - a. The United Stage
 - b. The Two-Division Stage
 - c. The One-World Government Stage
 - d. The Ten-Division Stage
 - e. The Antichrist Stage
- 5. The Messianic Kingdom

Summary of the First 3 Empires

The First Empire is the Babylonian Empire, which included the head of gold and the lion-like beast. Different aspects of this empire are depicted by Dan 1:1–5:30 and 7:4.

The Second Empire is the Medo-Persian Empire, represented by the arms and breast of silver and the bear like beast. Different aspects of this empire are described in Dan 2:9; 5:31–6:28; 7:5; 8:1-7; 10:1–11:2.

This is followed by the Third Empire, the Greek/Hellenistic Empire, represented by the belly of brass and the leopard-like beast. The Third Empire started out as a unit under Alexander

the Great but split into four divisions at his death. This empire is subject to considerable revelation in Dan 2:39b; 7:6; 8:7-27; 11:3-35.

Summary of the Fourth Empire (“Imperialism”)

This is followed by the Fourth Empire, which is emphasized as being “diverse” from all the others. Daniel describes this empire in 2:40-43; 7:7-12,19-27; 9:27; 11:36-45. It goes through five different stages, with Rome being merely the first of these five stages, for Rome cannot be viewed as the entire Fourth Empire. What made the Fourth Empire, beginning with Rome, different from all the previous empires? The key difference was in the type of government initiated by Rome, which was a government of “Imperialism.” When the Babylonians conquered an area, they did not set up Babylonian rulers, but set up nationals to rule. In its conquest of Judah, Babylon first set up Zedekiah; later Gedaliah was appointed to rule. Under Medo-Persia the same thing was done, and Jewish governors such as Zerubbabel and Nehemiah ruled. The Greeks/Hellenists worked in the same way. Instead of sending in Greeks to rule, they allowed the Jewish high priests to rule throughout the period of Greek domination.

But Rome began a new system called “imperialism.” This is what made the Fourth Empire diverse from all the others. When Rome conquered, Romans were sent in to rule; for example, Pontius Pilate, Felix, and Festus. This was the policy of imperialism. Thus, a better name for the Fourth Empire would be imperialism, rather than Rome; Rome was merely the first of five stages of the Fourth Empire of Imperialism. Hence, the Fourth Empire will be referred to as the Imperialistic Empire.

Both Daniel passages make it clear that the Fourth Gentile Empire begins with the end of the Third Empire and continues until the Messiah comes to set up His Kingdom. The long, continuous existence of the Imperialistic Empire is to go through five successive stages, and it is now necessary to study the stages individually in order to see where history fits into this development.

1. The United Stage (Dan 2:40; 7:23)

While it has been common to call the Fourth Gentile Empire by that name, it is true only of the first stage of the Gentile Empire of Imperialism. It is customary to think in terms of a revival of the Old Roman Empire, but no such concept is warranted. It is more consistent to simply follow through the five stages, with the Roman Empire being the first stage or the United Stage, which lasted from 63 BC (the formal start of the Roman Empire) to 364 AD. Neither of the Daniel passages allows for gaps or for a revival of the Old Roman Empire.

2. The Two Division Stage (Dan 2:41)

The second stage of the Empire of Imperialism was the Two Division Stage. This stage was foreseen in Dan 2, but not in Dan 7. It is a stage that began in 364 AD

when Emperor Valentinian divided the Roman Empire into an east and west division. From that point on, the Empire of Imperialism was divided into an East-West balance of power. Since then, history continued to develop essentially on the axis of an East-West balance of power. When it began in 364 AD, the Western Roman Empire was headquartered in Rome and the Eastern Roman Empire was headquartered in Constantinople. Since then, the centers of the balance of power have shifted, but it has remained an East-West division.

The eastern division of power remained in Constantinople until 1453, when it collapsed in the Turkish invasion. When Constantinople fell, the political rulers, scribes, and scholars fled northward into Russia and infiltrated the government there, setting up a Roman type of government of imperialism. Eventually, the eastern balance of power was centered in the Soviet Union and included the Communist block of nations. With the collapse of European communism, the eastern balance shifted to Russia and the Commonwealth of Independent States. Today, things are still shifting with Islam becoming a major eastern power.

The western division of power remained in Rome from 364 to 476, when Rome fell. From there it shifted to France, especially with the power gained by Charlemagne in 800. In 962, Otto I of Germany defeated the Franks. Since then, especially after World War I, the western balance of power has been centered in the democratic nations of the West.

So then, in 364 the Two-Division Stage began and continues to the present day. The centers of the balance of power may shift again, but it will remain essentially an East-West balance until it gives way to the third stage.

3. The One-World Government Stage

The next three stages of the Empire of Imperialism are all future. At some point, the East-West balance of power will break down, leading to a one-world government. This stage is seen by Dan 7, but not by Dan 2.

Dan 7:23 clearly states that at some point the Fourth Empire *devours the whole earth*. This is something that Rome never did. Some attempt to make this expression mean the “then-known world,” but it cannot be said that Rome even conquered the then-known world. Furthermore, other usages of the term in the OT clearly teach universality (Gen 8:9; 9:19; 11:1; Is 6:3; 14:26; 28:22; 54:5; Jer 15:10; Zech 4:10,14). **Although in Dan 2:39 the term is used of the Hellenistic Empire, it only states that such authority was given to it as it was to Babylon in Dan 2:37-38, but neither of these two empires chose to exercise this authority.** In the case of the Fourth Empire, the wording states that it will *devour* the whole earth. The text demands that the Fourth Empire will at some time control the whole world and will devour it.

For this reason, Rome must not be seen as the totality Fourth Empire, but only as the first stage of the Empire of Imperialism. The One-World Government Stage will happen at some point when the Two-Division, East-West Division Stage, collapses.

How the East-West balance of power collapses to allow for the development of a one-world government, I believe, is what Ezek 38-39 is all about. At some point, according to Ezek 38:1—39:16, a confederation of Russia and her Muslim, non-Arab allies will invade the Land of Israel. Ezekiel describes a massive destruction of these forces in two ways. First of all, all of the invading armies that enter the Land of Israel will suffer a total destruction. Furthermore, Ezekiel points out that the land of Russia, the leader of the confederation, itself will suffer massive destruction as God rains brimstone upon her land. With both her armies and land destroyed, Russia will cease to be a political force in world affairs. That is going to bring about a collapse of the eastern balance of power, allowing for the development of a one-world government of some kind. This one-world government will arise some time before the Tribulation starts, but not necessarily before the Rapture, since the Rapture could come any day. Some time before the Tribulation, there will be this third stage, a One-World Government Stage.

4. The 10 Division Stage

This stage was seen by both Dan 2 in the ten toes and by Dan 7 in the ten horns. The Ten-Division Stage is clearly stated to come out of the One-World Government Stage. For some reason not given by the text, the One-World Government will divide into ten kingdoms that will cover the whole world, not merely Europe. A careful reading of the Daniel passage states that once the Fourth Empire rules the whole world, then this One-World Government will split into ten kingdoms, which will cover the entire world. The Ten-Division Stage will also occur some time before the Tribulation and will continue until the middle of the Tribulation.

5. The Antichrist Stage

During the Ten-Kingdom Stage, the Antichrist will begin to rise to power. Eventually, he will be strong enough to uproot three of the ten kings, and the other seven will simply submit to his authority. Once the other seven submit their authority to the Antichrist, this will begin the fifth and final stage of the Fourth Gentile Empire, the Antichrist Stage, which is the stage of Absolute Imperialism. In this sense he is *diverse* from the other ten. He will rule the entire world for the second half of the Tribulation, for a total period of time of 3½ years.

The combined chart seen earlier on the two chapters in Daniel can now be redone with the added information as follows:

1. The Babylonian Empire
2. The Medo-Persian Empire
3. The Greek/Hellenistic Empire
 - a. The United Stage
 - b. The Four-Division Stage
4. The Fourth Empire, The Empire of Imperialism
 - a. The United Stage, The Roman Empire
 - b. The Two-Division Stage, The East-West Balance of Power
 - c. The One-World Government Stage
 - d. The Ten-Division Stage, The Ten Kingdoms (Horns)
 - e. The Antichrist Stage, Absolute Imperialism (the Little Horn becomes the 8th Horn)
5. The Messianic Kingdom

From this point on, Daniel reverts back to Hebrew because the focus on prophecies is in regard to Israel.