

CHAPTER FOUR

WORLD HISTORY {REVISITED}

(Eph 1:10 NNAS)

with a view to an administration suitable to the fullness of the times, *that is*, the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things on the earth. In Him

(Phil 2:10-11 NNAS)

so that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, *{11}* and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

We must understand as we study World History that there is one and only one purpose of all that has happened and all that will happen. The purpose of God is to provide redemption and pursue the course of world history until God establishes His Kingdom, rule and will upon this earth. It is this purpose that God instructs us to pray for when in his pattern prayer he instructs us to pray, "Thy kingdom come thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

As we study Bible prophecy there is only one purpose and that is the establishment of the Kingdom of God. God is the sovereign of the universe His purpose will be fulfilled.

God's instrument of revelation is once again His servant Daniel. Daniel had a vision while sleeping and this vision was from God so that we might better understand God's plan and purpose for this world.

As we study chapter seven (7) we will see that it divides into these separate portions:

1. The vision of three beasts (vv. 1-6)
2. The vision of the fourth beast (vv. 7,8)
3. The vision of the heavenly judgment scene (vv. 9-12)
4. The vision of the coming of the Son of Man (vv. 13,14)
5. General interpretation of the visions (vv. 15-18)
6. Detailed interpretation (vv. 19-28)

Before we can begin a study of Revelation we must have a basic understanding of Daniel's prophecies concerning the nations of this world.

THE SETTING

(Dan 7:2-3 NNAS)

Daniel said, "I was looking in my vision by night, and behold, the four winds of heaven were stirring up the great sea. {3} "And four great beasts were coming up from the sea, different from one another.

Normally the wind blows in just one direction at a time. That which is indicated in Daniel's vision is of a great turmoil or storm such as a great hurricane or cyclone. There are those who believe the *Great Sea* to be the Mediterranean sea, but I feel the better interpretation is that the sea represents the people of this world lost in sin and under attack from all sides by Satan and his forces. We certainly know from the interpretation given in verse 17 that the beasts come from the earth.

(Dan 7:17 NNAS)

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

This verse also indicated that what we are to see are kingdoms of this earth. We were given our first tour of world history in Daniel 2. There in the form of a great image we saw the nations of the world in their outward manifestation. God desired that Daniel, and we, should have greater knowledge as to the nature of these nations. It seems the major purpose of this vision is to inform us concerning the last and final world system.

THE FIRST BEAST

(Dan 7:4 NNAS)

"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.

God has already given us the framework into which all prophecies will and must be placed. We should not attempt to twist, distort or force types. Types in scripture flow from a natural source. There are things in the type that correspond to actual characteristics of the item represented. These types give us a good exercise in the interpretation of types.

Looking at our framework of prophecy, what can we find to help us understand the type of a "Lion with wings of an eagle." Since there is order in all that God does, let us assume that the first beast, which is a kingdom (v. 17), represents the Babylonian Kingdom. If that is the case there must be something about that kingdom that the type represents. We know from our image vision that God stated that Nebuchadnezzar was set up by God as the king of kings. His kingdom is represented by the head of gold. His kingdom was to include the beasts of the earth and the birds of the air. In this type we have the king of beasts, the lion, and the king of the birds, the eagle. This alone is not enough to support the type. We must look further to find the interpretation. In Daniel chapter four (4) we find the record of the tree vision. Nebuchadnezzar was lifted up with pride as he surveyed his kingdom, because of his pride his mind was taken from him and he became as a beast of the field when repentance was granted him. Nebuchadnezzar was restored to his sanity and walked once again as a man.

(Dan 4:33-34 NNAS)

"Immediately the word concerning Nebuchadnezzar was fulfilled; and he was driven away from mankind

and began eating grass like cattle, and his body was drenched with the dew of heaven until his hair had grown like eagles' *feathers* and his nails like birds' *claws*.
{34} "But at the end of that period, I, Nebuchadnezzar, raised my eyes toward heaven and my reason returned to me, and I blessed the Most High and praised and honored Him who lives forever; For His dominion is an everlasting dominion, And His kingdom *endures* from generation to generation.

THE SECOND BEAST

(Dan 7:5 NNAS)

"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!'

The second beast, described in verse 5, has been generally regarded as the kingdom of the Medes and Persians, particularly as to the expression "It was raised up on one of its sides." This has been somewhat more literally translated, "it made for itself one dominion," which of course the two kingdoms literally did. The three ribs in the bear's mouth are taken to represent the kingdoms of Babylon, Lydia, and Egypt, which Medo-Persia overcame in its rise to world dominion. The vast Persian armies and naval forces seem implied in the command to "arise, devour much flesh"--which both did, on an unprecedented scale.

In following our image framework we see, "the breast and arms of silver." One nation made of two nations. Silver a lessor metal than gold and a bear a lessor animal than a lion. I think with all these likeness we can be sure that the bear represents the Medo-Persian Empire.

THE THIRD BEAST

(Dan 7:6 NNAS)

"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.

We are dealing with kingdoms of this world, and our time frame indicates that this beast must be a representation of the Grececian Empire. We once again have an animal of lessor power. This beast like a leopard has four wings like a bird. This no doubt speaks of the swiftness with which the armies under Alexander the Great conquered the nations.

In fact there were internal divisions within the Grecian Empire. Note that the Beast is "given authority to rule." After the death of Alexander the Grecian Empire degenerated into four separate kingdoms.

THE FOURTH BEAST

(Dan 7:7-8 NNAS)

"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.

{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*.

This fourth beast is a strange beast, its likeness is not named. In a strange way it seems to contain all the characteristics of the previous kingdoms and yet the scripture states it is a different kingdom than all the others. Daniel desired to know the interpretation of this fourth beast and asked for an interpretation.

(Dan 7:19-25 NNAS)

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

This beast is a strange beast not like any other. The wording indicates a progressive development. The text also indicates that the beast continues until the "Ancient of Days" comes in judgment.

In the order of things this beast compares with the legs of iron and the feet of iron and clay. This is the Roman Empire and we are dealing with the events that are yet to be. I feel it would be helpful to list in order the characteristics of this beast.

1. Teeth of iron
2. Claws of Bronze
3. Ten horns
4. The other horn (the small horn)
5. The disposing of three horns
6. The growth of the small horn
7. The horn had eyes and a mouth
8. The horn spoke boastfully (against the Most High)
9. The horn made war against the saints (Israel)
10. The horn oppresses the saints for a time, times and half time.
11. The horn will try to change set times and the laws

The "ten horns" upon the fourth beast v. 7 are declared to be "ten kings that shall arise" answering to the ten toes of the image vision of Dan. 2. For a discussion of that I refer you to Lesson 3. New detail is added in this vision that is important that we consider:

THE SMALL OR OTHER HORN

This horn makes its presence known after the ten nation configuration is in place. As this horn rises in ascendancy he topples three of the ten kings. This horn is different than all the others. This horn has eyes and a mouth. This horn which begins rather insignificantly gains importance rapidly. He exceeds all the others and becomes the spokesman for the ten king confederation. I do not want to go into a study of the Anti-Christ at this point, so I trust you will accept the fact that this horn represents the man of sin the Anti-Christ which we will learn more about in future studies.

This small horn speaks boastfully against the Most High. We know from other Scripture that he blasphemes the Most High. Those things that he says are intended to convince others that he is god. This small horn will try to change all things that were established by God. He will try to change all laws even those of nature. He will try to change time which was created by God. He will try to eradicate every vestige of God in this world even the "Saints." The "Saints" are to be handed over to him for a time, times and a half time. We will find that this period of time is three and one half years the second half of the tribulation period.

JUDGMENT OF THE LITTLE HORN

(Dan 7:9-12 NNAS)

"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.
{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. {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. {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.

Daniel like John is granted a vision of God in all his majesty and glory.

(Rev 4:1-4 NNAS)

After these things I looked, and behold, a door *standing* open in heaven, and the first voice which I had heard, like *the sound* of a trumpet speaking with me, said, "Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after these things." {2} Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a throne was standing in heaven, and One sitting on the throne. {3} And He who was sitting *was* like a jasper stone and a sardius in appearance; and *there was* a rainbow around the throne, like an emerald in appearance. {4} Around the throne *were* twenty-four thrones; and upon the thrones *I saw* twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white garments, and golden crowns on their heads.

There can be no question as to what we are allowed to see. While man goes about his sinful ways, our sovereign God sets in heavenly councils and judges both man and nations. Around the throne of God are twenty four thrones and around these are thousands of thousands (a throng that cannot be numbered).

Those who set upon the thrones are not identified here or in Revelation. There has been much speculation. Some think they are the twelve patriarchs (fathers of the twelve tribes of Israel) and the twelve apostles. In Rev. 5:9-10 they declare the redemption of Man but do not include themselves in that number.

(Rev 5:9-10 NNAS)

And they sang^ a new song, saying, "Worthy are You to take the book and to break its seals; for You were slain, and purchased for God with Your blood *men* from every tribe and tongue and people and nation. {10} "You have made them *to be* a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth."

(Rev 11:16-18 NNAS)

And the twenty-four elders, who sit on their thrones before God, fell on their faces and worshiped God, {17} saying, "We give You thanks, O Lord God, the Almighty, who are and who were, because You have taken Your great power and have begun to reign. {18} "And

the nations were enraged, and Your wrath came,
and the time *came* for the dead to be judged, and
the time to reward Your bond-servants the prophets
and the saints and those who fear Your name, the
small and the great, and to destroy those who
destroy the earth."

In Rev. 11:16-18 the Elders are distinguished from "thy servants...prophets,...saints,...and them that fear thy name, small and great. It seems to me that those who set upon the Thrones are a select group of God's messengers or angels given the assignment to pronounce judgment upon the nations. Although we have reference to the "books" (Daniel 7:10) these like those in Revelation 20:11-15 are simply the detailed record of human history.

This august body is called into session because of the boastful words of the "Little Horn." Because of the actions of this "Man of Sin"--the "Anti Christ" God calls the councils of heaven together to pronounce judgment upon this individual. Daniel watches (indicating the passing of time) until the time for this evil one to be destroyed. It is most interesting that this individual is destroyed and his *body* immediately thrown into the *burning flame*. At the conclusion of the Great Tribulation the Anti Christ is destroyed. There seems to be a special punishment for him different from the other wicked dead. We defiantly know that there is a set time of judgment. Satan in all his power and might can not overcome our God. He will lift himself up but he will be cast down.

THE FINAL KINGDOM

(Dan 7:13-14 NNAS)

"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. {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.

(Dan 7:27 NNAS)

'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.'

Once again we come to a description of that last and final kingdom of the world. It is the kingdom of the "Ancient of Days" it is the kingdom of the "Son of Man" it is the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. He will rule over all nations and kingdoms and all will serve and obey Him.