

Chapter Four

The Four Beasts

Let's turn to **Daniel 7:1-3**: *"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. Daniel spake and said, I saw in my vision by night, and, behold, the four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea. And four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another."* Here are beasts appearing in a dream or vision to the prophet Daniel. Going on in **verse 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 to stand upon the feet as a man, and a man's heart was given to it "*

To save time I will tell you what these beasts are in brief, as it would take far too much space to prove my point. This first beast is ancient Babylon. Some of you students of archaeology know that the gates of the ancient city of Babylon were guarded by monstrous stone lions, with eagle's wings coming out of their sides. That was the symbol of Babylon.

Daniel 7:5, *"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."* This is the Medo-Persian Empire and it had three ribs in its mouth. If you remember your history, the Medo-Persian Empire conquered Babylon, Egypt, and Libya; IN FACT, it conquered Babylon while Daniel was there, as is shown in Daniel 5 concerning the handwriting on the wall; and then Babylon fell to the Medo-Persian

Empire. The three ribs represent the three empires that the Medes and Persians devoured.

Daniel 7:6, *"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."* This beast represents the Grecian Empire which, under Alexander the Great, conquered and ruled over or ate up the Medo-Persian Empire, including its conquered nations of Babylon, Egypt, and Libya. Alexander, then, conquered all of the known civilized world. Tradition tells us that, after conquering Egypt and Libya, he wept, for he had no more nations to conquer! This verse says that this beast had four heads; and, strangely enough, shortly after Alexander completed these conquests, he died, and his empire was divided among his four top generals. Each of them became the head of a part of the Grecian Empire.

In Daniel 8, two of these beasts are named: Medo-Persia in verse 20, and Greece in verse 21. Greece's four kingdoms formed (verse 22) after Alexander's death. These visions were fulfilled exactly as written in God's Word.

Daniel 7:7, *"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."* In other words, this fourth beast then devoured the third one, just as each had been devoured in turn.

This fourth one is, obviously, the Roman Empire, which did conquer Greece, Persia, Babylon, Egypt, and Libya, along with all of the other territories over which they had ruled. Each successive beast or empire being made up of all of the others and becoming larger with each successive change. This beast, also, has ten horns, just like the beast of Revelation, chapter 17, which carries Mystery Babylon.

You should begin to see how the phrase in **Revelation 17:8**, "*the beast that was, and is not, and yet is*" fits the visions of Daniel. Each beast was, and then it was not, and then it was; in other words, although each beast kingdom existed and was then taken over, it never really ceased to exist. It just became a part of another beast kingdom. The Grecian Empire was not just Greece; it was, actually, Greece, Medo-Persia, and Babylon, acquiring and keeping all of the characteristics of all of the beasts or previous empires. The same occurred, when Rome ascended to power after Greece.

This makes more sense if you will recall the image vision in **Daniel 2**. It had a head of gold, breasts of silver, belly and thighs of brass and legs of iron extending into feet of partly clay and partly iron. In **verse 38**, Daniel said to Nebuchadnezzar, "*Thou art this head of gold.*" In other words, Babylon was the beginning or the head of this image. This image was then destroyed by the stone cut out without hands. However, **Daniel 2:35** tells us what happened, after the feet were struck by the stone: "*Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together.*" In other words, all of these kingdoms continued to exist as a part of a greater beast kingdom, until their final destruction.

The beast that was, and is not, and yet is — all three forms still exist today. Many

churchgoers do not see this, having been fooled by their preachers into thinking the beast system is something which will rise in the future. No! These beast systems have been here since before Daniel's time and will remain until all of Revelation chapters 17 and 18. are fulfilled. As we go on in Daniel 7, you will see that God's Christian people will be here on earth during the reign of the last beast system, and that we will be instrumental in its destruction. We will not be off up in heaven, but will be here on the earth doing the work of our Redeemer, Jesus Christ.

I am going, to quote Daniel 7:8-14; without making any comment, because Daniel did not understand the things he was seeing and asked the angel for an interpretation. It is given in Daniel 7:17-27, on which I WILL comment. We are concerned with the interpretation, as this chapter makes it quite plain that the followers of Jesus Christ will be right here on earth as this age draws to a close.

Daniel 7:8-14, "*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. 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. 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. 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. As concerning the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away: yet their lives were prolonged for a season and time. 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. 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 is what Daniel saw, and here is his reaction in **Daniel 7:15**: *"I Daniel was grieved in my spirit in the midst of my body, and the visions of my head troubled me."* Apparently, Daniel was troubled, but did not understand the dream, for **Daniel 7:16** says, *"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."*

In **Daniel 7:17-18**, the angel then gives a very short interpretation of Daniel's entire dream: *"These great beasts, which are four, are four kings, which shall arise out of the earth. But the saints of the most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever."*

The word "kings" could have been translated as "kingdoms," which makes more sense, for, as we will see, their existence extends over many centuries, much longer than four mortal kings would live. These are four kingdoms which would arise out of the earth.

This phrase, "out of the earth" and the previous one, "out of the sea," implies that

they are of the earth, not of God. Jesus told his enemies in his day, "Ye are from beneath, I am from above." He, also, told them, "My Kingdom is not of this world." Some take that statement by Jesus to mean that His Kingdom will not be ON the world; but that isn't what He said at all. He said it was not OF, or originating from, this world. Jesus, in effect, said the same thing of His disciples in **John 17:16**: *"They are not of the world even as I am not of the world"* Jesus' Kingdom is not of the world. It is OF or FROM Heaven. Christians have prayed for 1,900 years *"Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven"* (**Matthew 6:10**). That prayer will be answered; Jesus' Kingdom will be established on the earth; but first, these earthly systems must be destroyed!

In these two verses, the angel told Daniel what the whole vision was about. Four beast kingdoms would rise from the earth; but, in spite of that, the saints of God would take the kingdom for ever, even for ever. We, also, see that same sequence of events in Revelation, chapters 17 and 18, where we read of the destruction of Mystery Babylon. Then, in Revelation chapter 19, the next event is the return of Jesus Christ, which is followed by the establishment of His Kingdom upon the earth.

Daniel wasn't satisfied that he understood all he wanted to know about the fourth beast (the one that had the ten horns); so he asked a longer question in **Daniel 7:19-22**: *"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; 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. I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, [Christians] and prevailed against them; 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."

Before going on with the angel's answer in the next verses, I should point out how Daniel's vision of the fourth beast and Daniel's question about the fourth beast prove that the saints will be on the earth until Christ's Kingdom. The "little horn" made war and prevailed against the saints (verse 21), which continued until the Ancient of days came (verse 22).

The so-called "rapture" theologians identify that little horn as the great antiChrist who, they say, is supposed to rule the world at the end of this age; hastening to add, that it won't be until after the rapture when the Christians are all gone. However, Daniel said that he saw that little horn "make war with the saints and he prevailed against them." An example of this kind of teaching follows.

A widely-known American evangelist was in Phoenix several years ago preaching on our local Christian television station about the rapture and the antiChrist, out of the book of Daniel. He was on TV every night for a week. He read MOST of Daniel 7, but in reading it, he skipped verses 21 and 22 and verses 25 and 26. WHY? He did this in an effort to convince his hearers that the Christians would be removed from the earth prior to the rule of this little horn, which he called antiChrist. But, verses 21, 22, 25, and 26 make it plain that he was wrong and that the Christians would be here and would

be warred against by this little horn. He skipped those verses, knowing that 90 percent or better of his listeners would not be following him in their Bibles and they would not know that he skipped certain verses. He could lie to them, telling them they will be raptured, and most of them would never know that Daniel's vision of the fourth beast showed the eleventh horn which was on it, actually at war with the saints and prevailing against them. The angel said in **verse 25, "and they [the saints] shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time."** Yes, the saints of the most high God would come under the hand and under the control of what the fundamentalists call the great antiChrist. These men deny it and skip the reading of verses in God's Word which would prove them wrong.

Daniel 7, other visions in Daniel, and Revelation 17, show that much of this has already come to pass. Christians have been warred against in the past, as well as the present, and we are under the control of a great anti-Christian, world dictatorship. Except for the direct intervention of Jesus Christ, we should be destroyed. Instead, the enemies of Christ will be destroyed and the kingdoms of this world will become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ or — Christian nations.

As to Daniel's question of Daniel 7:19-22, let's study the angel's answer, which verifies what I have just said about no removal of the saints from the earth, and then compare it to Daniel 2 and Revelation 17 and 18.

Daniel 7:23 says, *"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."* The fourth. beast is the last of the beast

systems and it shall devour the whole earth. Mystery Babylon, described by the angel in Revelation 17 and 18, was that great city which reigns over the kings of the earth. The fourth beast of Daniel 7 reigns over the whole earth and so does Mystery Babylon.

Now I have identified the fourth beast as the Roman Empire; but Imperial Rome never did rule over all of the earth. Let's read on in **Daniel 7:24**: *"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."*

In **Revelation 17: 12** we read, *"And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast."* The ten horns or ten kings are part of the beast system.

In Revelation there is no specific mention of the three kings which are overcome by the one horn or the one king. Instead, the three are presented in a negative way in that, instead of the three being spoken of, the remaining seven are mentioned in **Revelation 17:10**: *"And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space."* These ten kings or kingdoms are presented both as having existence at one time and, also, as being successive. This is confusing, unless one sees that the same thing is true of the four beasts; they are successive, yet they all exist at the same time as well.

In Daniel 2, the image is described as having the head of gold (Babylon), the breast and arms of silver (second kingdom), the belly and thighs of brass (third kingdom), the legs of iron (fourth king-

dom), and the feet of part iron and part clay. The whole image stood intact until the stone cut out without hands struck it on the feet; and, from Daniel 2:34-35, we see that not just the feet, but the entire image was destroyed by the smiting of this stone. All of the kingdoms which made up the whole image, even the head or Babylon, continued to exist right up until the feet were struck by the stone, resulting in the destruction of all of the empires together. Although there are ten kingdoms, and at one time seven and even yet one was, and one was yet to come, they are all considered as making up the whole world ruling system called, Mystery Babylon. With the destruction of Mystery Babylon in Revelation 17 and 18, we learn of the end of the entire series of beast systems, and not of some single system which has not yet appeared upon the world scene.

In Daniel 2, the only part of the image given a name was the head of gold, which was called Babylon, which was the same name used in Revelation 17 and 18. In Daniel 7, none of the beasts are given names. However, in Daniel 8, we, also have another vision involving three beasts. The first one, the ram with two horns, is named in verse 20, as Media and Persia or the Medo-Persian Empire. The second one is named Grecia or Greece. In verses 3 and 4, the first one, the ram with two horns, is seen by Daniel as pushing westward and northward and southward; so that no beast might stand before him, neither was there any that could deliver out of his hand, but he did according to his will and became great. Since the angel, Gabriel, identified that ram as Medo-Persia, it is obviously the second beast of Daniel 7. Daniel 8:4 refers to the conquest of Babylon, for that is exactly what happened while Daniel was in Babylon, as Daniel 5 relates.

Medo-Persia was, in turn, conquered by Alexander the Great of Greece, and all of these kingdoms were, in turn, conquered by Imperial Rome. It is quite logical and Scripturally-correct to name the four beast empires of Daniel 7 in that order: Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and then, Rome. For the same reason, it is logical and Scriptural to name the four parts of the image of Daniel 2 with the same names: Babylon, the golden head; Medo-Persia, the silver breast and arms; Greece, the belly and thighs of brass; and Rome, the iron legs.

Now, many people think that the feet, part of iron and part of clay, are a fifth empire or kingdom. The answer is NO to this teaching. The feet of part iron and part clay are not a fifth kingdom, but a continuation of the fourth kingdom, represented by the iron legs. This is what Daniel explains to Nebuchadnezzar in **Daniel 2:38**, *"thou art this head of gold,"* and in **Daniel 2:39**, *"And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth."* The third empire would be Greece, which did bear rule over all the earth, from India to Spain. Going on in **verse 40**, Daniel says, *"And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things: and as iron that breaketh all these shall it break in pieces and bruise."* Rome did conquer all of the third empire and more; eventually, bringing all of Europe under her dominion.

The next three verses make it plain that the feet of clay and iron are not another kingdom, or fifth beast kingdom, but a continuance of the fourth. **Daniel 2:41.43**: *"And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potter's clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be*

divided; but there will be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay. And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken. And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay." The iron is, of course, the legs of iron or the original fourth beast's kingdom—the Roman Empire. The clay is described as potter's clay, also miry clay, and in verse 43, as the seed of men.

Think with me of the history since the time of Imperial Rome — the fourth beast—which seemed to be destroyed. (I say "seemed" because a strict interpretation of all of these interpretations of Daniel makes it plain that each succeeding beast empire did not disappear, but only reappeared in another city, called by another name; but still part of the same Babylonian succession of beast empires.) After Imperial Rome fell, and the city of Rome was sacked by the Vandals and the Goths, it seemed as if central control over Europe and the Mediterranean areas ceased to exist.

But did it? Not quite. The final fall of Imperial Rome came about in the fifth and sixth centuries. The date of its loss of power is hard to pinpoint because its final convulsions lasted over a hundred years. While Imperial Rome was losing power over the nations, another source of control was rising from the same empire. It seemed to be religious, even Christian; and by the fifth century after Christ, it exerted total religious control over the once political and military Roman Empire. We know it as the Roman Catholic Church. By 600 A.D., he who had been known as the Bishop of Rome was

crowned the "Pope of the World," and claimed to be the vicar of Christ upon the earth. In another 200 years, by 800 A.D., Charlemagne was crowned Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire by the Pope, and given authority to rule, amazingly enough, over ten nations in Europe. The feet and ten toes, part of iron and part of clay, replaced in the pages of history the legs of iron. It was not another beast, but only a continuance of the fourth one in a slightly different form. From the time of Charlemagne and on, Papal Rome and its allies, both political and military, ruled over most of the nations which were once a part of Imperial Rome.

If we are to believe Daniel's vision, the feet and toe empire would continue in existence until it was destroyed by the stone. That stone kingdom is identified in Daniel 2:44,45, along with what it will do and become. **Daniel 2:44: *"And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever."*** Here it is made plain that it is the kingdom, set up by the God of Heaven, which will break in pieces the other kingdoms. This is, then, made plainer in **verse 45: *"Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it break in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure."***

Now I know that this doesn't fit modern theology to any large extent. Many ministers, today, tell us that the great antiChrist kingdom is yet future. However, Daniel's interpretation of

Nebuchadnezzar's dream leaves little room to doubt that these four successive empire systems would reign upon the earth, and that they would continue their reign right up until God's kingdom smote them and destroyed them. In verse 45, as in verse 35, the breaking by the stone is not confined to the ten toes and the feet, but is to include the entire image.

It seems a great thing, today, to talk of the revival of the Holy Roman Empire. Many claim the ten nations of the European Common Market are the ten nations of the Roman Empire, which are represented by the ten toes in these verses and the ten horns of Revelation 17. They say that this is in the future and it will serve as the seat for the rule of the future antiChrist, which will come after the removal of the Christians from the earth. However, that doctrine doesn't make any sense at all if you try to fit it in with Daniel 2, 7, and 8, or Revelation 17 and 18, or any other Bible prophecy.

Some say that the antiChrist will reign until Christ returns from Heaven and destroys him and that Christ is the stone of Daniel 2. Christ is NOT the stone of Daniel 2, for Daniel made it plain that the stone was the Heavenly kingdom set up by God and he said it was set up while these other kingdoms existed! He did not say that the stone was the Messiah, or the Redeemer, or even God Himself. He said it was the kingdom which would break in pieces and consume all these other kingdoms and shall stand forever. Compare that to **Daniel 7**, where we are told of the interpretation of that vision of the four beasts in **verses 25 and 26, *"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."***

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

Who will consume and destroy the great beast kingdom of the end of the age? It will be the saints of the most High God. Who in this world of those who profess to love and obey Jesus Christ and who want to serve Him with their whole heart, mind, and body would look forward to leaving the earth in some sort of a "rapture," when the Bible itself (God's Word to us) tells us we are the ones who will destroy the kingdoms of the antiChrist! That is what Daniel writes and that is what the angel told John in **Revelation 18**, when he described the destruction of Mystery, Babylon the Great in **verses 4 and 5**: *"And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities."*

Many ministers do read that and exhort their people to come out of Babylon, without ever telling them that Babylon is, actually, the ruling system on the earth today. However, very few of them read the very next phrase in **Revelation 18:6**: *"Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works: in*

the cup which she hath filled fill to her double." Who is commanded, yea, ordered to fight against and destroy Mystery, Babylon the Great? God's people are the ones so ordered!

Are you a child of God? Do you claim to be a disciple of Jesus Christ? What are you doing about coming out of Babylon and preparing to reward her double according to her works? How much torment and sorrow have you provided to Mystery, Babylon the Great? Some of you must admit to not doing very much. Regardless of that, God says that she will be destroyed.

Reading on in **Revelation 18:7 and 8**: *"How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her: for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow. Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her."* It is God who is doing the judging; but it is God's people who are called upon to bring about Mystery Babylon's destruction. How in the world can they do that if they are all up in Heaven where they are supposed to sit on clouds and play harps of gold, while the great antiChrist rules the earth?
