

THE HEAVENLY CALLING

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The Time of the End

Part XXIII

The Beast — In Daniel

The Book of Daniel is about *the kingdom of this world during the Times of the Gentiles, to be succeeded by the kingdom of Christ at the end of the Times of the Gentiles*. In this respect, Daniel deals with the last 2,600 years of Man's Day, and then projects matters into the following 1,000-year Lord's Day.

The Times of the Gentiles exists for two basic reasons: 1) *because of Jewish transgression* and 2) *to bring the Jewish people to the place of repentance, through Gentile persecution*.

The Times of the Gentiles began about 605 B.C. with Nebuchadnezzar's invasion of the southern kingdom of Judah (completing that which began over one hundred years earlier by the Assyrian invasion of the northern kingdom of Israel). At this time the Jewish people began to be uprooted from their land and transported to Babylon in the Mesopotamian Valley. The sceptre was removed from Israel's hands and placed in the hands of the Gentiles at this time, and the sceptre has remained and will continue to remain in the hands of the Gentiles until the appearance and destruction of the Beast's kingdom, Antichrist's kingdom, yet future.

Antichrist's kingdom, as Nebuchadnezzar's, will be centered back in the Mesopotamian Valley. He will be *the last king of Babylon*. And once the Jewish people have been removed from his kingdom and placed back in their own land, the sceptre will be taken from the hands of the Gentiles and placed back in Israel's hands. At this time, Gentile world power will be destroyed, and Israel will be elevated to the head of the nations, within a theocracy. Then, with the destruction of Antichrist's kingdom, the Times of the Gentiles will

be brought to a close.

The Book of Daniel is the one book in Scripture which deals with *this complete sequence of events, and the whole book is given over to revelation having to do, after some fashion, with this subject*. That depicted by the "great image" in chapter two and the four "great beasts" in chapter seven deal with *the same thing from two different vantage points*. These two sections of Scripture deal with *Gentile world power throughout the Times of the Gentiles (throughout that time when the sceptre is held by the Gentiles), and the overthrow of Gentile world power at the end of the Times of the Gentiles*. And these two sections of Scripture, together, form *the foundation upon which the remainder of the book rests*.

The Great Image The Four Great Beasts

The "great image" in Daniel chapter two (divided into four parts [2:31-43]), and the "four great beasts" in chapter seven (7:1-8), are viewed by most pre-millennial students of the Word as representing *four successive world kingdoms*. These four kingdoms, as seen by most, begin with Babylon under Nebuchadnezzar and end with a revived Roman Empire under Antichrist. But, is this the correct way to view the matter?

Note a summary view of the four parts of the "great image" and the four "great beasts" in the preceding respect:

1) *The head of gold* (2:32, 38) and *the first great beast* (7:4) have to do with *the kingdom of Babylon* under Nebuchadnezzar and his immediate successors, extending to Belshazzar (605 B.C. to 538 B.C.)

2) *The breast and arms of silver* (2:32, 39) and *the second great beast* (7:5) have to do with *the Medo-Persian kingdom*, beginning with Darius and Cyrus, rulers of Media and Persia at the time of the conquest (538 B.C. to 330 B.C.).

3) *The belly and thighs of brass* (2:32, 39) and *the third great beast* (7:6) have to do with *the Grecian kingdom* (330 B.C. to 323 B.C. and beyond), beginning with a conquest of the Medo-Persian kingdom by Alexander the Great, who died seven years later (323 B.C.). The kingdom was then divided into four parts, with Alexander the Great's four generals each commanding a part. And the kingdom, over time, gradually faded from existence as a world power.

4) *The legs of iron and feet part of iron and part of clay* (2:33, 40-43) and *the fourth great beast* (7:7, 8) have to do with *the Roman Empire, forming a Roman kingdom* (27 B.C. to 476 A.D.), followed by a revived Roman Empire, forming a future Roman kingdom.

This would be the position set forth in the Scofield Reference Bible footnotes for example, a position followed by most pre-millennial commentators.

The only part of the prophecy where the interpretation is really in question, aside from understanding that there is an inseparable connection with Babylon throughout, would be *the fourth part of the image and the corresponding fourth beast*. Viewing the great image and the great beasts together, Daniel identifies the first three parts of the image and the corresponding first three beasts as particular nations which either began in Babylon (Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom) or later came in and conquered the nation(s) ruling in Babylon (the Medes

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and the Persians, and then Greece). And this part of the prophecy has been fulfilled and is a matter of history (*cf.* Dan. 2:38; 5:18, 22-31; 8:3-8, 20-22).

But should the fourth part of the image (or the fourth beast) be identified as *Rome*? There are two main reasons why people interpret the prophecy after this fashion: 1) *Rome* was the next world power following Greece; and 2) the words, “and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary,” in Dan. 9:26, are usually associated with a *Roman destruction in history (under Titus in 70 A.D.)* and a *Roman prince (Antichrist) in prophecy*—both connected with the fourth part of the image or the fourth beast.

Greece was the third kingdom (represented by the belly and thighs of brass on the image, or by the third beast), and the fourth kingdom (represented by the legs of iron, and in its final form by the feet part of iron and part of clay, or by the fourth beast) would, from history, appear to be *Rome*, with the final form looked upon as a *revived Roman Empire*.

Then, this interpretation would appear to be substantiated by Dan. 9:26. In this verse, “the prince that shall come” is *Antichrist*, and “the people of the prince” are said to be *the Romans destroying Jerusalem and the Temple in 70 A.D.* Following this sequence, Antichrist is said to be a *latter-day Roman prince (“his people” being the Romans in history) who would rule a revived Roman Empire*.

Thus, understanding the interpretation of the fourth part of Daniel’s image in this respect, all of the image except the feet would have a historical fulfillment. The legs would represent the Roman Empire in history, and the feet would represent the revived Roman Empire during the Tribulation.

And the same would hold true for the corresponding description set forth by the “four great beasts” in Daniel chapter seven. The first three beasts would have a historical fulfillment, and the fourth would have a partial fulfillment in history. The fourth beast would represent the Roman Empire in both history and prophecy, corresponding to the legs and feet of the image.

Is the preceding though the way Scrip-

ture sets forth that represented by the fourth part of the image and the fourth beast? Or is this an attempt to interpret Biblical prophecy through events in secular history rather than interpreting prophecy by comparing Scripture with Scripture? The answer is easy to ascertain if one remains solely within that which Daniel and related Scripture elsewhere reveal about the matter.

1) *One Kingdom of This World in Babylon*

Rather than the four parts of the great image and the four great beasts representing four world kingdoms, they actually represent *one world kingdom (Babylon) under different national powers, over time*. As previously seen, “the head of gold” has to do with *the kingdom of Babylon under Nebuchadnezzar and his successors* prior to the conquest of the kingdom by the two nations represented by “the breast and arms of silver” (2:37, 38). “The breast and arms of silver” have to do with *the Medes and the Persians* coming in and conquering this Babylonian kingdom (2:39; 5:28, 31). And “the belly and thighs of brass” have to do with *the Grecians* coming in and conquering the kingdom ruled by the Medes and the Persians (2:39; 8:5-7, 20, 21).

The mechanics of the preceding, of course, is the interpretation held in common by anyone reading Daniel. This is simply what the record in Daniel states, along with secular history.

But note something often overlooked about the preceding. Daniel’s image is seen *standing in Babylon* (2:31). *One kingdom is in view, and the kingdom represented by the image is Babylonian throughout all four parts of the image*. The powers represented by the head of gold, the breast and arms of silver, and the belly and thighs of brass *all reigned from Babylon*. Nebuchadnezzar and his immediate successors *reigned from Babylon*. Then, when the Medes and the Persians came in and took the kingdom in 538 B.C., *they reigned from Babylon* and were still there when Alexander the Great came over in 330 B.C., 208 years later. Then, when Alexander the Great took the kingdom, *he also reigned from Babylon*. In other words, the image is not seen lying down, with the head of gold in Babylon, the breast and arms of silver in Media and Persia, and the belly and thighs of brass

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in Greece. That’s not the picture at all. The image is seen *standing in Babylon*. It is *Babylonian in its entirety*.

This is one place where those who view a Roman Empire next in the prophecy go astray. Rome had *nothing* to do with a reign from Babylon in history. The capital of the Roman Empire was Rome, not Babylon. And Rome is not Babylon. If there were such a thing as a revived Roman Empire though, there could possibly be room for the final form of the Roman Empire to be associated with Babylon, for Babylon, back in the Mesopotamian Valley, will be the capital of the earth during the last half of the Tribulation. Such though will not be the case, for this prophecy has nothing to do with either a Roman Empire in history or a revived Roman Empire yet future.

Those viewing Rome as representing the fourth part of the image try to press secular history into Biblical prophecy at a place where it seems to possibly fit, but really doesn’t. Then they further complicate the matter by a misunderstanding of the timing surrounding the destruction of Jerusalem in Dan. 9:26 (to be discussed later in this article).

The most interesting thing about the whole matter is the fact that *Daniel identifies all four parts of the image*, and he identifies the fourth part as being *other than the Roman Empire*. Daniel, in his identity, has Antichrist coming into power following a four-way division of the kingdom after the death of Alexander the Great; and he arises out of a part of this Greco-Babylonian kingdom, not a succeeding Roman kingdom. The kingdom under Antichrist follows the Grecian kingdom and is represented first by the legs of iron, and then by the feet part of iron and part of clay in its final form.

As previously noted, the first part of the

image is identified in Dan. 2:37, 38. Then, following this, the remaining three parts of the image are given, though not identified. The identities of the other three parts are then given in the vision of the “four great beasts” and the interpretation of this vision in chapters seven and eight. The four beasts are said to represent four kingdoms (four sequential kingdoms forming *the one Babylonian kingdom* [7:17; cf. v. 23]), and beginning with the second beast, the last three are identified in chapter eight.

For the identity of *the second*, compare verses three and four with verse twenty (cf. Dan. 5:28, 31); for the identity of *the third*, compare verses five through eight with verses twenty-one and twenty-two; and for the identity of *the fourth*, compare verses nine through fourteen with verses twenty-three through twenty-six.

Note that the identity of the second is *Media and Persia* (corresponding to the breast and arms of silver on the image), the identity of the third is *Greece* (corresponding to the belly and thighs of brass on the image), and the identity of the fourth is the *kingdom under Antichrist* (corresponding to the legs of iron and the feet part of iron and part of clay on the image). Rome is simply not in the prophecy!

Following Alexander the Great’s death, the kingdom was divided among his four generals (8:8, 22). The prophecy in Daniel though does not cover events during the reign of these four generals following this division. Rather, the vision goes immediately into the days of Antichrist yet future (the “little horn” in 8:9 is not Antiochus Epiphanes [as often taught], but *Antichrist* [see parallel verses, 8:23-26]); and, though Alexander the Great’s kingdom will have long since ceased to exist, Antichrist is seen coming out of one of the four divisions of this kingdom.

A couple of hundred years following Alexander the Great’s death and the four way division of his kingdom, Rome appeared on the scene as a world power, but not as a world power connected with Babylon or fulfilling any part of Daniel’s prophecy. This prophecy will not again continue to be fulfilled until Antichrist appears during Daniel’s Seventieth Week. Then, and only then, will the fourth part of the image in Daniel chapter two and the fourth beast in Daniel chapters seven and eight come into existence.

Now, what about “the people of

the prince that shall come” destroying Jerusalem and the Temple in Dan. 9:26? Doesn’t that refer to a past destruction in 70 A.D. and to the Romans being Antichrist’s people in history?

Not at all! First note the expression, “the people of the prince that shall come,” and compare this with a similar expression in Dan. 7:27 — “the people of the saints of the most High.” *Who* will take the kingdom according to Dan. 7:18-27? Note in verse eighteen that it is “the saints of the most High,” and in verse twenty-seven it is “the people of the saints of the most High.” The latter is the translation of a Hebrew idiom which is equivalent to the former. And it is the same in Dan. 9:26. “The people of the prince” in Dan. 9:26 is a reference to *the prince himself*. Failure to recognize this idiom and properly interpret its usage in Dan. 9:26 has resulted in confusion.

The destruction of Jerusalem in Dan. 9:26 is not a reference to the destruction which occurred in 70 A.D. but rather a reference to a future destruction under Antichrist in the middle of the Tribulation. This is the same destruction referred to in Luke 21:20-24 (cf. Rev. 11:2). The destruction in Dan. 9:26 *must occur during time covered by the Seventy-Week prophecy*, and contextually it occurs in connection with Antichrist breaking his covenant with Israel in verse twenty-seven. Both the text and context in Luke 21:20-24 show that this section also has to do with the same time as Dan. 9:26 — the coming Tribulation, rather than with events in 70 A.D.

(Ref. Part XI in this series, “Daniel’s Seventy Weeks,” for additional information on Dan. 9:26.)

2) *Emphasis on the Fourth Part of the Great Image and the Fourth Great Beast*

The emphasis in Daniel is exactly where it is seen in all other parts of Scripture where the subject is dealt with. It is upon *the final form of the kingdom* seen depicted by the fourth part of the great image in chapter two and the fourth great beast in chapter seven.

And, in a respect, all of the remainder of Daniel forms commentary on that depicted by the great image and the great beasts in chapters two and seven, with the book, particularly from chapter seven forward, centering on *the final form*

and destruction of this Babylonian kingdom.

The types in Scripture having to do with this Babylonian kingdom deal with the final form of the kingdom and center on the Jewish people, the last king of Babylon, and the utter destruction of this kingdom (ref. Part XXI of this series).

The Psalms and the Prophets, when referring to this kingdom, do the same. Their message, as well, deals with the final form of the kingdom and centers on the Jewish people, the last king of Babylon, and the utter destruction of this kingdom (ref. Part XXII of this series).

And *the Book of Revelation*, providing summary Scripture, as well, deals with exactly the same thing — the final form of the kingdom, the Jewish people, the last king of Babylon, and the utter destruction of this kingdom (chs. 6-19).

The Book of Daniel is the one book in Scripture providing a complete, overall view of the kingdom of Babylon, dealing with all four parts, showing the complete picture of *the kingdom of this world, from beginning to end*. But, as elsewhere in Scripture, the emphasis in Daniel is on *the final form of this kingdom*.

In Daniel’s reiteration of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream about the great image in chapter two, Scripture devotes four verses to the dream itself — two verses describing the image (vv. 32, 33) and two more verses stating that which would happen when the final form of that depicted by the image appeared (vv. 34, 35).

Then, in the interpretation of that depicted by the great image, Scripture devotes one verse to the head of gold (v. 38), one verse to both the breast and arms of silver and the belly and thighs of brass (v. 39), but three verses to the legs of iron and the feet part of iron and part of clay (vv. 40-43). Then the image is seen struck at this final form (in both the dream and the interpretation) by a “Stone cut out of the mountain without hands.” The complete image is destroyed, and the Stone then becomes a great mountain and fills the whole earth (vv. 44, 45; cf. vv. 34, 35).

Years later, in Daniel’s reiteration of his own subsequent dreams and visions about the four great beasts in chapter seven, Scripture devotes one verse each to the first three great beasts (vv. 4-6). Then, beginning with verse seven and

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continuing through the remainder of the chapter (vv. 7-28), Scripture deals with things surrounding the fourth great beast, the Stone from chapter two, and the destruction of the kingdom represented by this fourth great beast.

Then, in the interpretation of that depicted by these four great beasts, the first beast is passed over without mention because that part of the image was about to become history. Though Belshazzar still ruled at the time of this vision (v. 1), the Medes and Persians would shortly conquer the kingdom (5:30, 31). Thus, the interpretation begins with the second great beast, by picturing *a ram with two horns* in chapter eight (vv. 3, 4, 20). Then the third great beast is depicted by *a male goat* (vv. 5-8, 21, 22). And quite a bit of space is devoted to information concerning this male goat, apparently because the ruler associated with the fourth great beast (“the little horn” [7:8]) is seen coming out of a part of his kingdom (Alexander the Great’s kingdom).

Then, along with the latter part of chapter seven, the remainder of the book has to do with different aspects of revelation which mainly center around or have something to do with this man and his kingdom.

The Little Horn The Prince of the Covenant

The little horn in Dan. 7:8, 20; 8:9 is none other than the future world ruler when the final form of the great image or the great beasts is seen — the Antichrist, the man of sin, the Beast. This is the man whom the Lord will raise up, place in the highest of regal positions, and use to bring the Jewish people *into such dire straits that they will have nowhere to turn other than to the God of their fathers* (cf. Ex. 3:1ff; 9:16; Dan. 4:17, 25, 26).

This is the man whom God will use to

bring Israel to *the place of repentance*. The Caesars during the time Rome ruled the world *couldn’t do it*, the different Pogroms, Crusades, and Inquisitions during the Middle Ages *couldn’t do it*, The Third Reich during modern times *couldn’t do it*, but the man about to appear on the scene *will be able to do it*. Jewish persecution under this man will far exceed anything which has ever occurred in the past, resulting in the actions of the wandering and persecuted Jewish people closing out 2,600 years of a human drama in which *no Jewish person* has wanted to participate but in which *all Jewish individuals* had to participate.

As previously seen, this little horn will arise from one of the four divisions of Alexander the Great’s kingdom — the northern division, which covered what is today northern Iraq and parts of Iran, Syria, and Turkey (Dan. 8:9). This is the part of the world from which this man will arise, not from Europe but from the Middle East.

This man’s ten-kingdom federation is referenced through the use of “ten horns,” referring to “ten kings,” in Dan. 7:7, 24. And he is said to subdue three horns, three kings (7:8). But these subdued horns, kings, couldn’t be three of the ten, for these ten horns, ten kings, are to reign with this man (Rev. 12:3; 13:1; 17:12). Rather, let Scripture interpret Scripture, and the matter becomes clear.

Note the parallel verse in Dan. 8:9, referring to the four parts into which Alexander the Great’s kingdom was divided. The three horns, three kings, which he subdues can only be those who ruled the other three parts of the kingdom (the matter is viewed as if this kingdom still existed when the little horn comes into power [cf. Dan. 2:44, 45; 7:12], else he couldn’t be seen coming out of one part of the kingdom, then subduing those ruling the three other parts [Dan. 8:9, 10]).

Then *the covenant* which this man will make with “many” in Israel, along with his breaking this covenant, occupies a central place in these latter chapters in

Daniel. This covenant lies at the center of Daniel’s Seventy-Week prophecy in chapter nine, and it is seen again through a large part of chapter eleven (vv. 21-45).

(The word “covenant” appears seven times in Daniel, all in chapters nine and eleven [9:4, 27; 11:22, 28, 30 (twice), 32].)

From that revealed, this future covenant will undoubtedly center around the Mosaic Economy with its Temple. The Jewish people will be allowed to live in some type semblance of peace in the midst of their Moslem neighbors, with a rebuilt Temple on the Temple Mount (a major feat in itself, one which is unattainable today) and the entire Mosaic Economy reinstated.

Once the covenant is broken by this man entering into the rebuilt Temple and declaring himself to be God (II Thess. 2:4; cf. Dan. 9:26, 27; 11:30-39), the most horrific time this earth has ever seen will break out overnight. It is at this moment in time that the Jewish people living in the land are told to not take time to pick up anything but to run for their lives, with only that which they have on their person (Matt. 24:15-22).

This man is going to have *an affiliation with those who forsake the covenant, he will pollute the sanctuary, take away the daily sacrifice, and make it desolate*. He will “corrupt by flatteries” those who side with him against the covenant. He will “do according to his will,” *exalting and magnifying himself “above every god”* (Dan. 11:30-32, 36; cf. Dan. 9:27; Matt. 23:37-39). He will not regard *any God* [the true God, or false deities of the Gentiles]. Rather, he will “honor the god of forces [power]” (Dan. 11:36-38).

But, after all has been said and done — *following this man’s reign of terror, with the nations in ruin, and millions on top of millions slain* — this man is going to “come to his end, and none shall help him” (Dan. 11:45; cf. Isa. 14:15-17; Jer. 4:23-28).

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