



The "Beasts" in Bible prophecy

Part 1

(Daniel chapter 7:1-14)

(Revelation 13:1-4, 11) " And I saw a beast coming out of the sea. He had ten horns and seven heads, with ten crowns on his horns, and on each head a blasphemous name... Then I saw another beast, coming out of the earth. He had two horns like a lamb, but he spoke like a dragon."

In the book of Revelation John saw the emergence of the last empire that would expand the globe before Jesus comes back. This empire would be like nothing else that had ever been. It would have the combined powers of Ancient Babylon-Persia-Greece and Rome. Daniel also saw the same vision of four beasts or empires that described four successive world empires that would dominate the history of the world. These nations were Babylon, Persia, Greece and Rome. History of course has shown Daniel to be a 100% accurate.

The prophet Daniel not only described Ancient Rome but also saw the final global empire that would have its roots in ancient Rome and come out from that Empire.

(Daniel 7:7-8) "After that, in my vision at night I looked, and there before me was a fourth beast—terrifying and frightening and very powerful. It had large iron teeth; it crushed and devoured its victims and trampled underfoot whatever was left. It was different from all the former beasts, and it had ten horns. While I was thinking about the horns, there before me was another horn, a little one, which came up among them; and three of the first horns were uprooted before it. This horn had eyes like the eyes of a

man and a mouth that spoke boastfully."

This last empire Daniel described had ten horns and this empire was the same one that John saw. These 10 horns represent 10 kings and their empires. In Daniels vision a little horn sprang up and uprooted three of the existing horns. This horn would be the Antichrist.

In the O.T. we see that behind the rulers of these ancient empires there was a principality or powerful demonic spirit controlling them. This principality or power was Satan himself and both Persia and Greece are specifically mentioned. *(Daniel 10:13,20)*

In the book of Revelation John saw the immergence of another beast empire consisting of two "horns" or rulers who would give their support and allegiance to the first beast empire. *(Revelation 13:11-12)* Together the two beasts of Revelation form the last global political and religious empire that will exist just prior to Jesus' return. Also within this second beast lies the great harlot called "Babylon the Great" *(Revelation 18:2)* *(Revelation 17&18)*

Now to be consistent with the way we interpret Biblical prophecy in the Old Testament "beasts" represent global empires while "Horns" represent the rulers over those empires. Both John & Daniel used the same method of Biblical interpretation because they were both Jewish and interpreted the Word of God with a Jewish understanding and not with a western mindset. Beasts in Jewish apocalyptic literature always signify empires. Of course Biblical Prophecy to

make any sense must always be connected to history. God Himself is the God of history. (Isaiah 46:10) *"I make known the end from the beginning, from ancient times, what is still to come."*

One of the most exciting things about God's Word is to see just how accurate Daniel was in giving us a panoramic overview of history leading up to and including the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. These beasts described in Daniels vision are directly connected to the same beast empires John saw. So lets begin by looking at the book of Daniel. In this study we will cover Daniel chapter seven verses 1-14.

The Four Beasts in Daniel.

(Daniel 7:1-14)

(A Panoramic overview of history)

(Vs 1-3) "In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon, Daniel had a dream, and visions passed through his mind as he was lying on his bed. He wrote down the substance of his dream. Daniel said: "In my vision at night I looked, and there before me were the four winds of heaven churning up the great sea. Four great beasts, each different from the others, came up out of the sea."

In these verses we are told that Daniel had a dream from the Lord and that visions passed through his mind. He saw the four winds of heaven churning up the great sea. In other words the Lord of Heaven was stirring up the nations from the four corners of the globe to bring forth certain nations that would serve His prophetic purposes for history and for the world. The Bible uses the idea of the "tossing seas" to represent the nations in turmoil. (Luke 21:25)

1. The 'Beast Empire' of Babylon.

(Vs 4) "The first was like a lion, and it had the wings of an eagle. I watched until its wings were torn off and it was lifted from the ground so that it stood on two feet like a man,

and the heart of a man was given to it."

The first beast to come out of the tossing sea of humanity was the empire of Babylon. We know this because in this verse we have a description of how the Lord humbled the heart of king Nebuchadnezzar because of his pride after he had spent seven years with the wild beasts. While there were empires before Babylon the Lord singles out Babylon because the first type of the Antichrist was Nimrod the original founder of Babylon and Assyria. Nimrod of course precedes all of the global empires to come. Like Egypt and Assyria before it the nation of Babylon had its roots going all the way back to Nimrod and the tower of Babel.

In the book of Genesis we see that the first great empire organized against the Lord was headed up by Nimrod whom the Bible describes as, *"A mighty hunter before the Lord."* However in the Hebrew language it reads, *"A mighty hunter in the face of God."* Nimrod was in fact a rebel against God and one who sought to deify himself and create a global empire.

In the book of Revelation when John describes the last global empire he describes the same beasts Daniel describes, however, John reverses the order ending with the lion. (Revelation 13:2) In other words Just before Jesus comes back their will be another ruler in the character of Nimrod who will seek to establish a global empire in the face of God and he will be the Antichrist. His power will come directly from Satan himself. In fact he will be the incarnation of Satan in a human being. He will be *"the son of perdition"* the same title given to Judas Iscariot of whom it is said, *"and Satan entered him."*

Remember that the Bible is a Jewish book and that the prophetic purpose of God is centered in the Middle East. It would seem that the last great empire to expand the globe will not in fact be a European empire at all but a Middle

Eastern empire. The only one that is sweeping the globe today is the empire of Islam. Nimrod, the first type of the Antichrist, came from the Babylonian region and the last Antichrist will also come from that same geographical area of the world. This first beast Babylon also corresponds to the **head of pure gold** on the statue described in Daniel chapter two.

2. The 'Beats Empire' of Persia.

(Vs 5) "And there before me was a second beast, which looked like a bear. It was raised up on one of its sides, and it had three ribs in its mouth between its teeth. It was told, 'Get up and eat your fill of flesh!' "

This second beast to immerge was the Medo-Persian Empire. This beast corresponds to the **chest and arms of silver** on the statue described in Daniel chapter two. The two arms represent the dual nature of this empire.

3. The 'Beast Empire' of Greece.

(Vs 6) "After that, I looked, and there before me was another beast, one that looked like a leopard. And on its back it had four wings like those of a bird. This beast had four heads, and it was given authority to rule."

This third beast described the Empire of Greece and Alexander the Great who conquered the known world in a very short time with the swiftness of a leopard. The four heads were his four generals. This beast corresponds to the **belly and thigh of Bronze** on the statue described in Daniel chapter two.

On this part of the statue were the reproductive organs. Greece would become the source of knowledge, religion and culture of the future Western civilizations. The ancient gods of Egypt, Assyria and Babylon going all the way back to Nimrod, would find their way into Greek civilization and ultimately into the

Western nations even up until this present time. When you look at the culture and philosophy of the west today it reflects the character of the ancient Greco Roman culture that traces its roots all the way back to Nimrod and the tower of Babel.

4. The 'Beast Empire' of Rome foreshadowing the empire of the Antichrist.

(Vs 7-8) "After that, in my vision at night I looked, and there before me was a fourth beast—terrifying and frightening and very powerful. It had large iron teeth; it crushed and devoured its victims and trampled under-foot whatever was left. It was different from all the former beasts, and it had ten horns. While I was thinking about the horns, there before me was another horn, a little one, which came up among them; and three of the first horns were uprooted before it. This horn had eyes like the eyes of a man and a mouth that spoke boastfully. "

This Fourth beast corresponding to the legs, feet and toes of the statue in Daniel chapter two not only describe the ancient Roman Empire but also the last world empire, "the beast that was wounded by the sword and yet lived." (Revelation 13:3) Daniel changes the time frame half way through verse seven and begins to describe the 10 nations and their rulers or global regions who will form the core of the last global empire at the end of the age. The "**little horn**" that plucks up three horns is the Antichrist. "*This horn had eyes like the eyes of a man and a mouth that spoke boastfully.*"

In Daniel chapter eleven from verse thirty-six following the same character is described, "*The king will do as he pleases. He will exult and magnify himself above every god and will say unheard of things against the God of gods. He will be successful until the time of wrath is completed, for what has been determined must take place*"(Daniel 11:36) The New Testament also bears witness to this man when it says concerning

him, "He opposes and exults himself over everything that is called God or is worshipped, and even sets himself up in God's temple, proclaiming himself to be God" (2 Thessalonians 3:18) The Lord Jesus Himself also referred to this man when he said, "So when you see standing in the Holy Place 'the abomination that causes desolation,' spoken of through the prophet Daniel-let the reader understand"(Matthew 24:15).

Today on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem there is an, 'abomination of desolation' that has stood there since the year 688 AD. Of course it is the Dome of the Rock Mosque. However, the ultimate desolation will be the coming of the Antichrist himself who will stand in "the Holy Place" proclaiming himself God. You could say in a very real sense that the current temple awaits its god as it were. The final Antichrist will actually set up his headquarters in Jerusalem. (Daniel 11:45)

Today the whole Muslim world is waiting on the coming of the Mahdi who will lead a vast army against the west, against Israel and bring about a global Islamic Empire. In the light of the present world conditions in the Middle East and the ongoing disputes over Jerusalem this Islamic empire is a strong possibility and at its head will be the Antichrist himself. In fact when you read Daniel chapter eleven from verse thirty-six onwards you see the Antichrist and his invasion of the Middle East described. In Ezekiel chapters 38-39 we see the same scenario and a careful examination of those nations attacking Jerusalem that Ezekiel describes geographically today are almost all Muslim nations. Ezekiel also tells us that many other nations will join the invasion of Israel and the siege of Jerusalem.

Ultimately all of the armies of the nations will surround Jerusalem and when it looks as if Israel will be destroyed and the world about to annihilate itself the Lord Jesus Christ will come again to overthrow the Antichrist and his armies and to inaugurate the Millennial kingdom. Lets continue.

(Vs9) "As I looked. "thrones were set in place, and the Ancient of Days took His seat.

Here Daniel describes the Lord preparing to bring down His wrath and judgment on the Antichrist and his empire as the thrones of judgment were set in place. It is a picture of a heavenly law court where the Divine Judge is about to pronounce His sentence on the offender.

"His clothing was as white as snow; the hair of His head was white like snow. His throne was flaming with fire, and its wheels were all ablaze.

Here Daniel describes the righteous nature and eternal being of God and also describes His matchless and divine eternal wisdom. His fiery throne depicts His absolute purity and His right and authority to judge. No matter how bad things will be before Jesus comes back the Lord will have the final say and ultimate victory!

(Vs 10) "A river of fire was flowing, coming out from before Him. Thousands upon thousands attended Him; ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him. The court was seated and the books were opened."

When you read this description of the throng surrounding God's throne you have the same picture revealed in the book of Revelation chapter five where the Lord is worshipped and adored by the angels and the redeemed from the earth. Then in Revelation chapter six the seven seals were opened inaugurating the final judgments upon a Christ hating, Christ rejecting world.

Now when the Antichrist comes the whole world will be plunged into a nightmare like nothing that has ever happened before. Jeremiah calls this period of history, "the Time of Jacob's Trouble." Daniel himself describes it for, "a time, times and half a time" and as, "a time of distress such as has not happened from the beginning of nations until then." The Lord Jesus Himself described the same period when He said,

“For then there will be great distress, unequalled from the beginning of the world until now-and never to be equaled again.” John in Revelation tells us the same thing when he said; *“The beast was given a mouth to utter proud words and blasphemies and to exercise his authority for forty-two months.”* (Three and a half years)

For three and a half years the Antichrist's empire and religion will sweep the globe but the for the sake of God's elect those days will be cut short, the court will be seated and the books opened and God Himself will have the final word!

(Vs11) “Then I continued to watch because of the boastful words the horn was speaking. I kept looking until the beast was slain and its body destroyed and thrown into the blazing fire.”

The prophet Zechariah described this judgment on the 'Beast.' *“This is the plague with which the Lord will strike all the nations that fought against Jerusalem: Their flesh will rot while they are still standing on their feet, their eyes will rot (melt) in their sockets, and their tongues will rot in their mouths.”*(Zechariah 14:12a) The apostle Peter also describes this judgment when he said, *“But the Day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be burned up.... That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire and the elements will melt in the heat.”* In the Greek language Peter actually describes the splitting of the atom or what we would describe today as a nuclear explosion. How could a first century fisherman know about such things? Of course he would not have known this but the Holy Spirit did and revealed it through God's servant Peter.

Paul the apostle spoke of it in this way when he said; *“God is just: He will pay back trouble to those who trouble you and give relief to you who are troubled, and to us as well. This will happen when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with His powerful angels”*(2 Thessalonians 1:7)

At the Second Coming of Christ all those who have followed the Antichrist along with him will be cast alive into the Lake of Fire. Ultimately at the end of the Millennium when the unbelieving dead are raised to life they will also be thrown alive into the Lake of fire along with Satan himself. (Revelation 14:9-11) (Revelation 19:20) (Revelation 20:9-10)(Revelation 21:8)

(Vs 12) “(The other beasts had been stripped of their authority, but were allowed to live for a period of time.”

After the battle of Armageddon there will be nations that have survived God's fiery judgment. (Zechariah 14:16ff) They will go into the Millennium to be ruled with a rod of Iron. (Revelation 12:5,19:15) Faithful believers who have overcome the Antichrist will rule the nations with the same rod of Divine authority that Jesus Himself has. (Revelation 2:27)

(Vs 13-14) “In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like the Son of Man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into His presence. He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all peoples, nations and men of every language worshipped Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and His kingdom is one that will never be destroyed.”

This first part of Daniel chapter seven ends with a picture of the Lord Jesus Christ coming in the clouds of heaven, being led into the Father's presence declaring His victory over Satan at the cross and having supreme power and authority over all things. (Matthew 24:30 26:64)(Philippians 2:9-10)

In the next study we will look closely at the fourth beast or empire as it directly relates to and foreshadows the last global empire ruled over by the Antichrist. This will be the subject of the next study in “The 'Beasts' in Bible Prophecy” Part two.