

Babylon, particularly Nebuchadnezzar, since he was already dead at the time of the vision. The history of the four empires, however, is taken as a unit, which is incomplete until the last empire is destroyed, and the form of the verb can only be imperfect, even though one aspect of the history has begun well before. “From the earth” does not contradict “from the sea” of verse three, but supplements its thought; indicating that, in its symbolic meaning (cf. v. 3), the latter phrase included the overall concept that these kingdoms were of earthly origin.

- *saints of the Highest One*: The word for “saints” (*qaddish'in*) means holy ones, the same term as used in 4: 13, 23, though there in reference to an angel. The term has not been used in this vision before, which suggests that those designated have played no part until this point. Now introduced, they are said to receive the kingdom, which must be the kingdom just given to the Son of Man, since an evident contrast is intended with the four kingdoms of the beasts. Because the Son of Man is King of this realm, these must be the subjects. From the rest of Scripture, they may be identified as of two groups: those from the world at large who have been made holy by faith in Christ as Savior, and the God-fearing Jews who will have been refined by suffering at the hands of the Antichrist (cf. Zech. 13: 8, 9) and thus made ready to receive Yeshua as their true Messiah-King as he is coming to deliver them. The word for “Most High” is a plural form, in contrast to several employments of the singular (cf. 3: 26; 4:2, 17, 24, etc.), but it should be taken as merely a plural of excellence, for the reference is unquestionably to God, just as in the singular instances.
- *will receive the kingdom*: These saints receive the kingdom, not in the sense of kings (true only for the Son of Man), but in being permitted to enter into and enjoy the time of perfect rule. Those who are not saints, according to Matthew 25:31-46, will not be given this privilege.
- *Possess the kingdom*: The word for “possess” (*חָסַן, chasan*) carries the thought of authority of ownership. The kingdom will be owned by the saints. The significant thought is that, rather than the wicked being in places of leadership, with Satan at large to guide and inspire (cf. 2 Cor. 4:4; Eph. 2:2; 1 Pet. 5:8; Rev. 12 : 9), the saints of God will be in the ascendancy, while “the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord” (Isa. 11:9), and Satan is bound in the “bottomless pit” (Rev. 20: 3). Implied is the fact that during the time of the prior kingdoms, the opposite will have been true.
- *forever, for all ages to come*: Literally, “for an age, even for an age of ages.” This combination of the preposition “for” (*עַד, 'ad*) and “age” (*עָלָם, 'alam*) is unique, not only for the Aramaic portions of the Tanach, but also for the Hebrew. The thought of the phrase obviously is superlative, and it is accordingly often translated “for ever, even for ever and ever.” Since it is here applied to Yeshua’s millennial rule, however, a problem arises for this translation, because that period is of finite duration, though very long. Young, in fact, uses this as an argument against the idea of the kingdom here in view being the future dominion of Christ on earth.¹³ That it can be translated as above, however, indicating only a long finite period, is well evidenced by the fact that its nearest Hebrew equivalent, “unto ages of perpetuity” (*עַד-עוֹלָמֵי עַד, 'a 'olemai 'a*), is used in reference to God’s people Israel in a finite context (Isa. 45: 17).¹⁴ The reason for using the superlative form of expression is to stress the length of the saints’ kingdom, with no destruction having to be feared, in contrast to that of the wicked during the prior empires.

19-20 *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, 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.*

- *I desired to know the exact meaning of the fourth beast*: Literally, “I desired the certainty.” Daniel had already (v. 16) asked for “certainty” in general, and the angel had told him concerning the beasts. Daniel apparently had been satisfied, even though the explanation regarding the first three beasts was brief. But here he asked for “certainty” regarding the fourth beast in particular, on which greater stress had fallen and concerning which his interest was more intense.
- *claws of bronze*: In identifying this beast, Daniel repeats much of the description given earlier, but this one item is now added. It fits well into the general idea of strength possessed by the beast (v. 7), and fills out the

¹³ Young, *The Prophecy of Daniel*, p. 157.

¹⁴ Another superlative Hebrew equivalent is “from an age, unto an age” (*min-'olam ve-ad-'olam*), and it is used likewise in reference to man in time (Jer 7:7; 25:5), as well as to eternal matters.

overall idea of the beast stamping the residue.

- *Concerning the ten horns... and the other one:* Daniel asked in particular also in respect to the horns and the little horn that came up later.
- *horn which ... was larger in appearance than its associates.* The phrase for “larger than” is the adjective “great” (גב, *raḅ*) followed by the preposition מן (*min*) to express the comparative degree. The meaning is that the “other” or “little” horn looked greater or sturdier than the earlier horns. Though this horn appeared later and was smaller at first, it did not remain inferior in size, but became even more imposing than the other horns. The last king of the restored Roman empire, the Antichrist, will become the leading king of that time, having displaced three kings and gaining leadership thereby over the rest.

21–22 *I kept looking, and that horn was waging war with the saints and overpowering them 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.*

- *I kept looking:* This is the tenth use of the expression. This time, however, it carries a backward reference to that point in the vision when the little horn still ruled (v. 8), prior to his destruction (v. 11). A paraphrase would be: “As I was looking at the little horn in his time of power, I saw him make war with the saints and prevail over them.”
- *waging war with the saints:* For some reason this detail was omitted earlier in the account when the little horn was first introduced (v. 8). There his appearance was set forth, but without indicating much as to his activity. Now the indication is that he makes war with the saints, said as well of the “beast” in Revelation 13:7, which also represents the Antichrist. The thought is that saints will be opposed by this person so symbolized, and will be made to suffer. Since the Antichrist will oppose especially the Jews in Palestine during the latter half of the Tribulation (Dan. 9: 26, 27; Rev. 12:1-6, 13-17), the primary reference must be to them, but because of the kind of person he will be, all saints of God clearly will experience this opposition to some degree. While the Antichrist rules, life will not be easy for those who love God.
- *and overpowering them:* The word for “overpowering” (יָצָל, *yācal*) carries the basic idea of “capability.” The thought is that the little horn will be able to make good in his war with the saints. In respect to the Jews during the Tribulation, he will be able to do away with two-thirds of their number (Zech. 13 : 8, 9) and to cause Jerusalem to fall to his army (Zech. 14:1, 2). In respect to Gentiles, he will be able to kill many of them also (Rev. 13:7-10) and cause economic hardship (Rev. 13:16, 17).
- *until the Ancient of Days came:* The little horn had his way and continued to prevail over saints until the appearance of the Ancient of Days, God the Father.
- *Judgment was given:* As indicated in verses ten to twelve, the Ancient of Days, when He came, pronounced and executed the sentence of death upon the little horn. Judgment was meted out in behalf of those persecuted. The little horn will be assigned to the Lake of Fire (Rev. 19:20).
- *Saints possessed the kingdom:* In contrast to the horrible end of the Antichrist, the saints will be ushered into the glorious kingdom age (cf. v. 18).

23–24 *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. 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.*

- *Thus he said:* The angel spoke again. Daniel’s question continued through four verses (19-22) and the angel here gave answer. Only Daniel and this one angel were active in this part of the vision.
- *Will be a fourth kingdom:* As has been noted, the ideas of “king” and “kingdom” are used interchangeably in the vision. Here “kingdom” is used, whereas “king” was in verse seventeen, in regard to what was symbolized by the beasts. “Kingdom” is the more appropriate term for the fourth kingdom, because Rome did not have any one outstanding ruler, such as Nebuchadnezzar had been for Babylonia. As has been noted, this fourth kingdom was unique in having two periods of existence : the one of early history, and the one of future time. It is well at this point, in view of coming discussion, to show reasons for identifying this kingdom, whether as to its first or second aspects, with that symbolized by the beasts of Revelation 13:1-10 and 17:1-18. First, that the two beasts of Revelation 13 and 17 are the same is argued by the facts that: (a) they both have

seven heads and ten horns (13: 1; 17: 3); (b) they both are violently opposed to God (13:1, 6; 17:14); and (c) they both effect persecution on God's saints (13 : 7; 17: 6). Second, that the kingdom represented in Daniel 7 is the same as the kingdom represented by the beasts of either Revelation 13 or 17 is argued by: (a) that the symbolism of the lion, bear, and leopard is repeated in the beast of Revelation 13 (v. 2), as though this beast, like the fourth of Daniel 7, recapitulated, in some real sense, the Babylonian, Medo-Persian, and Greek empires; (b) that all three are opposed to God, blaspheming His name (Dan. 7:25; Rev. 13 : 1, 6; 17:3); (c) that all three beasts have ten horns; (d) that both the beast of Revelation 13 (vv. 5, 6) and Daniel 7 (vv. 7, 25) speak great things against God; (e) that all three wear out the saints (Dan. 7:25; Rev. 13:7; 17:6); and (f) that both the beast of Revelation 13 (v. 5) and of Daniel 7 (v. 25) maintain great power for three and one-half years. Because these three beasts all symbolize the same person, inter-reference can be made among them in the following discussions.

- *Devour the whole earth:* The fourth beast was said in its earlier description to devour (v. 7), but now the extent of this activity is added: "the whole earth." In the time of the first phase of Rome, this was fulfilled in that the significant, culturally-advanced portion of the earth did come under its control, but it will be fulfilled in greater degree in future Rome in that indeed all the world will, in some sense,¹⁵ come under its domination (Rev. 13: 8).

- *Out of this kingdom ten kings shall arise:* Now the direct symbolism of the horns is made . They represent ten kings of this Roman kingdom. Since they all grow at the same time, with the little horn emerging from among them, it must be that these kings all rule at the same time and while the Roman empire still exists. This is indicated also by the ten kings of Revelation 17 (v. 12), who rule for one hour with the beast. Since no period from early Rome reveals this to have occurred, it must be that the empire will be restored (cf. v. 7). Young¹⁶ argues against this idea of a restored empire, stating that it is not true to the symbolism of the vision. He says that to symbolize this, the beast should die and be revived, whereas in actual fact the horns grow from the beast's head while he is still alive, not having died. In response, three matters may be noted. First, Young's explanation does not fit the symbolism either. As a matter of fact, no explanation fits in every respect, for the reason that symbolic illustrations normally do not intend to represent all details of the greater truth being symbolized. Young believes that the horns represent countries which develop after the demise of the Roman empire, but the symbolism shows the horns growing from the beast's head while it is still a live, with the beast being finally judged and killed only after the little horn has had his day. Second, though Young's contention that this beast does not experience a restoration himself is correct, the parallel beast of Revelation 17 does, verse eight including the words "the beast that was, and is not, and yet is" (given twice, in fact). The same thought seems to be implied regarding the beast of Revelation 13, for there one of the beast's heads is "wounded to death" and then healed (v. 2). Third, this restoration idea is involved also in the remaining three visions of Daniel, as will appear (cf. especially 8: 23; 9 :26, 27; 11 : 36), and, consequently, it should not be thought strange if it is implied in this first one. It was implied as well in Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the image; cf. discussion under 2:42.

- *Another shall arise ... and shall be different:* Reference is to the little horn, with the notation that he "shall be different from the former" horns. This difference consists in matters now to be cited, the first of which is included in this verse; namely, that he shall put down three kings on coming to power (cf. v. 8) .

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.*

- *Against the Most High:* The little horn's differences continue. The word for "against" is literally "at the side of" (מָלַל, *mālāl*), indicating that the little horn will seek to raise himself as high as God and make pronouncements accordingly, which implies making them contrary to what God would make (cf. 11 :36, 37; 2 Thess. 2:4) . The thought is an enlargement of the closing element of verse seven.

- *Wear out the saints:* The word for "wear out" (בִּלְיָ, *belā'*) means literally just that, being used in its corresponding Hebrew form in reference to the wearing out of garments (Deut. 8:4) , sacks, wine skins, and sandals (Josh. 9:4, 5). To wear out saints means to harass them continually so that life becomes a wretched existence. Injustice, seizure of property, and outright physical persecution could well be some specific measures in view. These saints are the same as those of verses eighteen and twenty two.

- *Change times and law:* With no indication to the contrary, it is logical to take the words for "times" (זְמַנֵּי, *zēmanī*),

¹⁵ The degree of the Antichrist's authority that will be attained throughout the world is not clear. This authority, whatever its degree, will only be achieved after his victories set forth in Dan. 11:40-45.

¹⁶ YPD, pp. 148-50

zimnin) and “law” (תִּדְּ, *dāt*) in a general sense, referring to God’s laws of the universe, both moral and natural (Gen. 1:14; 17:21; 18:14). A desire to interfere with and change these laws will be one way in which the Antichrist will seek to oppose God. As an illustration of the type of change that might be tried, Leupold points to attempts made, during the time of the French Revolution, to establish a ten-day work week in place of God’s seven-day week.¹⁷ Note, however, that the Antichrist will only “intend” (root, סָבַר, *sebar*) to make this change, indicating that he will not succeed, any more than the men mentioned by Leupold did. It should be added, however, that he will be able, through his helper, the False Prophet (Rev. 13:11-15; 19:20), to perform many other remarkable feats, which will be enough to convince people of his alleged divinity (2Thess. 2:9-11; Rev. 13:15). The view that these “times” and “law” refer specifically to the Mosaic Law and special time-designations therein must be rejected. That view is normally based on the erroneous assumption that the little horn is to be identified with Antiochus Epiphanes (making the fourth beast to be the Syrian division of Alexander’s empire; cf. discussion under verse seven), who did seek to change Mosaic regulations (cf. 8:9-12). [But it is quite possible that Antiochus Epiphanes is seen as a “foreshadow” of the Anti-Messiah.]

- *They shall be given into his hand for a time, times, and half a time:* The antecedent of “they” is best taken to be the saints of the Most High, who, then, will be given into this wicked king’s hand for a period called “time, times, and half a time.” The duration of this period is much disputed; but several reasons favor the idea of three and one-half years. First, the placing of a singular (time), a plural (times), and a half (half a time) together makes sense only if these refer to a total of three and one-half of some unit of time (day, week, month, year), a conclusion to which most expositors agree. Second, that this unit of time must be a year follows from a comparison with parallel passages, of which there are several. (1) It has been seen that seven “times” in 4:16 (cf. 4: 23, 25) means seven years, and the word for “year” there is the same as here. (2) The Hebrew equivalent of the same phrase, “ time , times, and half a time ,” is used in 12:7 and is best taken to be approximately equal to the 1,290 days of 12:11 and the 1,335 days of 12: 12, both of which are just over three and one-half years. (3) The beast of Revelation 13:1-10 , which is correctly identified with this fourth beast of Daniel’s vision (cf. discussion at v. 23), and particularly with the “little horn” phase of its dominion, is said definitely to have maintained great power for forty-two months (v. 5), which is the same as three and one-half years. (4) The same phrase, “ time, and times, and half a time,” is used in Revelation 12:14, relative to the “woman” (best understood to symbolize Israel) who was persecuted by the “dragon” (best taken as Satan working through the Antichrist); and the duration of time signified is identified in the chapter (v. 6) as 1,260 days, which again is three and one-half years. (5) The rationale for a period of this length may be taken from Daniel 9: 26, 27 (which see), where the Antichrist breaks covenant with Israel at the midpoint of a week of years, which means at the three-and-one-half-year mark, after which he brings severe persecution on the nation for the last half of the week, a period of three and one-half years, called in Matthew 24: 21 the Great Tribulation. In summary, the picture of this final ruling king of Rome is as follows: he is a boastful person, who tries to act like God, making himself equal to God as he utters blasphemous words and tries to change God’s laws of the universe; he works severe hardship on God’s people (especially Jews in Israel, particularly after breaking covenant with them) for a continuing time of three and one-half years, the last half of the Tribulation period.

26–27 *But the court will sit for judgment, and his dominion will be taken away, annihilated and destroyed forever. 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.*

- *The court will sit:* This is the same expression as in verse ten, which suggests that the same occasion is in view. The Ancient of Days is Judge, and will be ready to pronounce sentence on the little horn. This means that the “time, times, and half a time” will be finished when the little horn has had his day of power. The Tribulation period thus will have ended and appropriate judgments will be necessary before the glorious millennial age is entered (cf. vv. 9-11).

- *His dominion:* The antecedent of “his” is the little horn, the subject of verses twenty-four and twenty-five. When the subject of judgment was treated in verse eleven above, the beast was in view, though particularly at the time when the little horn existed. Here, however, the little horn is in view for himself. In his time, the whole beast will be judged, which means that Rome will no longer head an empire, but the little horn will be judged in a special sense. He will lose his dominion and be cast alive into the Lake of Fire (Rev. 19:20). This is signifi-

¹⁷ LED, pp. 324, 25.

cant especially because the Antichrist will have been Satan's substitute king-substitute for God's King, Messiah, who is destined to be the true world Ruler. The false will be displaced so that the True can be installed.

- *innihilated and destroyed forever*: [literally: *To destroy and to consume it*] – Because nothing exists in the Aramaic text corresponding to “it,” the antecedent of which is “dominion,” “dominion” may be thought of either as subject or object of the two infinitives used. If taken as subject, the thought is that the little horn's dominion “to destroy and to consume” will be taken away; which is a suitable idea. Most expositors favor taking it as object, however, and probably correctly, since the thought then fits the idea of the extent of judgment meted out at this time. That is, not only will the little horn's dominion be taken from him, but the dominion itself will be destroyed and consumed, and that forever, so that no other ruler will ever be able to assume it after the little horn. In other words, the Roman empire as such will fully cease to exist when the little horn is judged. The two words “destroy” (מָדַד, *shemad*) and “consume” (אָבַד, *avad*, used here in the aphel, meaning “cause to perish”) are close in meaning. They may carry a secondary reference to the end of the little horn himself, just noted.

- *Sovereignty... dominion... greatness of all the kingdoms hunder the whole heavens*: These three expressions identify the nature and vastness of the rule now established by Messiah in place of the one destroyed. The first two expressions make the identification proper, namely, that the new rule will be a kingdom wielding dominion; and the third indicates the vastness of power exercised, saying that it will be “great,” will be composed of “kingdoms” (plural), and will extend “under the whole heaven.” The plural form used in reference to kingdoms may be only a plural of importance (often called *the plural of majesty*), or it may be an indication that there will be divisions in the overall kingdom. The phrase “under the whole heaven” shows that it will be world-wide in scope. Arguments were set forth in the discussion under 2:44 that the kingdom thus established, following the overthrow of Rome, will indeed be Messiah's earthly, millennial rule, rather than a spiritual kingdom established at His first coming. To those arguments now others may be added. First, in this vision, as in Nebuchadnezzar's dream of chapter two, it is only after the emergence of the ten-horn kings, and even of the little horn, that any mention of Messiah's contrasting kingdom is made, giving the suggestion that it will not come to existence until after their time. This requires a time well after Messiah's first appearance, even if the idea of the restoration of Rome is rejected, for Rome continued for some centuries after Messiah's first coming. Second, it is only after the destruction of the little horn, the Antichrist, that Messiah's kingdom is mentioned; and it is commonly accepted, even by those who identify this kingdom with Christ's spiritual rule, that the Antichrist is still future.¹⁸ Third, verses thirteen, fourteen, and twenty-seven speak clearly of the inauguration of the kingdom of Messiah (not its close, as Keil argues¹⁹) and the verses show that this kingdom will be a glorious rule in which all peoples will serve Messiah—something not yet true today, so far as His spiritual rule is concerned, but which will be true when He comes to set up His earthly reign after the demise of the Antichrist (Ezek. 37: 23).

- *Will be given to the ... saints*: This is the same thought as in verse eighteen (which see). The phrase “will be given” is more explicit as to how the kingdom will be “received” (as indicated in v. 18) by the saints. The One who gives it, of course, is the Ancient of Days, God the Father.

- *His kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom*: The antecedent of “His” is disputed, whether the “people of the saints” or the “Most High” Himself; but the former is more in keeping with the context, especially verse eighteen, where the saints are said to “possess the kingdom for an age” — an idea in parallel with “everlasting kingdom” (מַלְכוּת עוֹלָם, *malkut 'olam*) here.

- *All dominions will serve and obey Him*: The antecedent of “Him” must be the same as of “His” in the previous clause. The thought is that during the millennial reign of Christ, saints, whether believing Jews returned to Palestine or saved people in the world at large, will be the leading people. The wicked will not lead, as they did during the reign of the four beasts and as they will especially at the time of the little horn. In view of other Scripture, the following may be said more explicitly. In respect to the born again Jews returned to Palestine, are those who have accepted their Messiah-King by this time (when Messiah will have just delivered them from the Antichrist's armies [Zech. 14: 2-4; Rev. 19 : 11-21]) and will then, with Him as King, assume the role of the leading nation of the world (Deut. 28: 1-14; Isa. 65: 17-25) so that all other nations will literally render due respect and honor to them. In respect to saved people in the world at large, the thought is that they will be given positions of influence throughout the world, and have literal service and obedience rendered to them (2 Tim. 2:12; Rev. 5:10; 20:6). A further reason for rejecting the idea of this kingdom being Messiah's spiritual rule may be noted at this point. Certainly in the age now existent one does not see the dominions of the world

18 For instance, Young, YPD, p. 163.

19 KDC on Daniel, pp. 269-73.

serving and obeying “the saints.” Furthermore, if one holds that this becomes true only after Messiah comes again, at which time the eternal state begins (held by those who hold to the idea of a spiritual kingdom), there is little meaning for saying that dominions serve and obey saints then. During the eternal state, all wicked will be suffering the torment of hell.

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.”*

- *At this point the revelation ended:* Probably this statement also was spoken by the angel, whose words began in verse twenty- three. He simply stated that with the words of verse twenty-seven the interpretation was closed.
- *As for me, Daniel:* Daniel reintroduced himself, wishing to add a brief note as to his own reaction to the interpretation given.
- *My thoughts greatly troubled me:* His reaction was one of distress, as it was earlier, at the close of the vision proper (v. 15). His “thoughts,” meaning his understanding of, and reflection upon, what had just been stated, troubled him. The word for “troubled” (לָבַחַל, *bāhal*) is the same as used in verse fifteen (which see). Such momentous events, with all these kingdoms rising, persecutions of saints ensuing, punishments resulting, and ruling by saints following, were simply too much for Daniel to absorb and understand without difficulty.
- *my face grew pale:* Literally, “my color changed upon me.” The word for “color” is the same as that used in 5: 6, 9, 10, where it is said that Belshazzar’s color was changed in fright. The thought is that Daniel’s normal healthy color drained from his face and he became pale, the common result of shock.
- *I kept the matter to myself:* Though distressed by the words, Daniel did not put them from his mind. He continued to reflect upon them. He did not reject them, but accepted them fully. He only found it hard to understand and adjust to them. This would take time, and he gained time by keeping them in his heart. His keeping the matter in his heart may also imply that he did not share the vision with anyone. This could have been because he knew of no others who would accept or appreciate it. If his three friends still lived and had been near enough, they would have; but no mention of them is made after chapter three, and Daniel may have been without their company for some time past.