

THE BEASTS AND THE FUTURE
DANIEL 7, REVELATION 11:7-13

Well let's turn in our Bibles please to the book of Daniel, chapter 7. God willing, we're going to get through this entire chapter this morning. We have a lot of material to cover, so buckle your seat belts.

Now as we have been preaching through the book of Revelation, we have come to chapter 11, and we have studied in that chapter verses 1 through 13. And there in Revelation 11, verses 1 to 13, we have seen the church under the symbol of a temple, under the symbol of a holy city, and under the symbol of the two witnesses.

We have seen in Revelation 11 that the church is invincible in its gospel witness to the world, and every kingdom that arises against it fell before it, until the testimony of the church to the world was completed. But when the church has called the last elect person out of the kingdom of darkness and into the kingdom of Christ, then we saw in Revelation 11:7 that the Antichrist arises, puts together a coalition of all the nations of the earth, and makes war against the church.

The result is that the visible presence of the church disappears, the voice of the church is silenced, and the vast majority of the church members are killed on the earth during the reign of Antichrist. The coalition of nations under the leadership of Antichrist rejoices. They are thrilled to finally rid the planet of all visible manifestations of Christianity. The victory over the church is complete, except for a small, scattered, hidden remnant of believers who are left.

But this victory of Antichrist and his coalition of nations only lasts for small period of time, symbolically spoken of in Revelation 11 as three and a half days. Christ returns before the Church is totally exterminated and eradicated from the earth, and Christ resurrects all the dead believers. He transforms the few remaining living believers and raptures them all up to meet Him in the air. He then returns with them to the earth in judgment. He judges the Antichrist and all his followers and casts them into the lake of fire, as is described in Revelation chapter 20, verses 7 through 10.

Now this section in Revelation 11, in particular in verses 7 to 13, which speaks of the rise of Antichrist, that beast that ascends up out of the abyss—this section in Revelation 11, verses 7 to 13 that speaks of the rise of Antichrist, the near extermination of the church on earth, and the return of Jesus Christ in judgment, is also spoken of in Daniel chapter 7, which we're going to be looking at today. So Revelation 11, especially verses 7 to 13, are clearly spoken of in Daniel chapter 7.

Now last week you recall, we looked at Daniel chapter 2, which is parallel with Daniel chapter 7. In chapter 2, we saw the vision of this giant human figure, which symbolically represented the entire sweep of human history from Daniel's day until the end of time. Here in Daniel chapter 7, we see this exact same sweep of history from Daniel's day until the end of time, except this time

this sweep of history is symbolized, not by a human figure, but by a succession of four terrible beasts.

These four terrible beasts in Daniel chapter 7 speak to us of the cruel and wicked nature that the kingdoms of this world possess. Governments are not kind. Nations are like predatory animals as they go forth conquering and to conquer, and thereby inflict war and famine and death upon the world, as we saw with the four horsemen of the apocalypse in Revelation chapter 6.

Both chapter 2 of Daniel and chapter 7 of Daniel present the remainder of all of human history, and they do so with a repetitive use of the number four. They use this number four because the number four signifies the world. Four empires are represented by the human figure of chapter 2, and the same four empires are represented by these four beasts of Revelation chapter 7.

So these four empires that are represented both in Daniel chapter 2 and Daniel chapter 7, represent the sum total of the powers that the world produces in the course of its history from Daniel's day until the second coming. And while Daniel 2 was more general and less detailed, and introduced us to the remainder of all of human history, chapter 7 is far more specific, and gives us a more detailed view of all of human history and how it is going to unfold, especially at its end.

So you have something like the gospel of Mark—very brief, very compact, very limited in the amount of information it reveals, though it does give a complete picture of the life and ministry of Jesus. And then you come to Luke, and it's much larger and much more detailed, and provides much more information about what? The exact same thing—the life and ministry of Jesus Christ. And so we have Daniel chapter 2, which is more general and less specific, and then we have the exact same thing dealt with in Daniel 7, which is much more detailed and much more specific.

Well then, let us begin our examination of Daniel chapter 7, and see this parallel but much more detailed description of what we saw last week in Daniel chapter 2.

In the first place then this morning, let us consider together Daniel's vision revealed. Daniel's vision is revealed in verses 1 through 14. Notice if you will verse 1. It says, "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." Here in verse 1, we're told the time of Daniel's vision and we see that it was just before Babylon fell to the Medo-Persians during the reign of Belshazzar. Daniel has written down the essential content of his dream, and then in the subsequent verses he tells us what that content is.

Notice verses 2 and 3: "Daniel spake and said, I saw in my vision by night, and, behold, the four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea. ³And four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another." Now here we have a description of powerful winds, whipping up the sea into a maelstrom; four winds from the four quarters of the earth—north, south, east, and west

—all colliding, and the sea is just churning like it would in a great storm. This restless sea represents the churning mass of unsaved humanity, like it says in Isaiah 57 and verse 20, “But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt.” Sin, of course, always produces tremendous turmoil, whether in the life of an individual, or whether in the life of a society, or whether in the life of a nation. And so we see this tumultuous churning turmoil of the mass of unsaved humanity of the world.

Now out of this troubled sea—that is, out of this churning mass of unsaved humanity—four great beasts arise in order, one after the other, and each one different from the other. These four beasts are four successive world empires that follow after each other in order, and each have distinctive traits and characteristics.

Turn please in Daniel 7 to verse 17. Notice it says, “These great beasts, which are four, are four kings, which shall arise out of the earth.” Now it says in verse 3 that they arose out of the sea; here in verse 17, it says they arose out of the earth. That’s not a contradiction. The idea is they arose out of the world, and of course most of the world is covered by the sea. So astronauts out in space look back and they say, “Oh, there is earth” and they’re talking about the land and the sea together as being “earth” right? So there’s no contradiction here. These four beasts are four kings and kingdoms that have arisen from, if you will, beneath—from out of the earth, from out of the churning mass of humanity.

Now these four beasts, these world empires that arise in succession, are like rapacious beasts of great strength and cruelty. The reason Daniel, or God if you will, uses the metaphor of beasts to describe these kingdoms is because they are beastlike in their character. In Daniel 7, the character of each of these kingdoms is indicated by the predatory symbol that is used to describe them.

Notice verse 4: “The first [beast that arose out of the sea] 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 stand upon the feet as a man, and a man’s heart was given to it.” Now this lion with wings of an eagle on his back represents the Babylonian Empire, just as the head of gold was representative of the Babylonian Empire in chapter 2 of Daniel. Both the lion and the eagle are recognized as being the dominant predator in their realm, either of the earth, in the case of the lion, or the air, in the case of the eagle. In fact, sculptures of winged lions guarded the gates of the royal palaces in Babylon have been discovered by archaeologists.

So Babylon was swift and it was fierce in its conquest of other nations, and it devoured all competing kingdoms. But as Daniel kept on looking at this winged lion, its wings were torn out, it says in verse 4, and it assumed an upright posture, like a man. And it received a new heart—a man’s heart—to replace its animal heart.

Now this is clearly a reference to the experience of Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, which he had in Daniel chapter 4, verses 30 to 37. You remember he expressed pride and arrogance. God

humbled him down so he became like an animal and he was eating the grass of the field; and then God restored him. And you recall God saved him and regenerated and gave him a new heart, and he started praising and worshiping and following the God of Daniel, the God of heaven. You remember the story. This is an allusion to that.

So Nebuchadnezzar was restored from the judgment he was under. He was given a new nature. He became a worshipper of Daniel's God. And when Nebuchadnezzar became saved, Babylon lost its cruel, vicious, predatory nature and became a kingdom of humanity and decency, rather than one of pillage and conquest. And it is the nature of Christian kings and Christian kingdoms that they don't function the way pagan kings and pagan nations function.

That leads us to verse 5. Verse 5 says, "And behold another beast, a second"—which arose out of the sea—"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." Now this bear with three ribs in its mouth represents the Medo-Persian Empire, just as the arms and the chest of silver was representative of the Medo-Persian Empire in Daniel chapter 2.

Now the bear is a powerful and rapacious creature. He is, of course, more cumbersome than the lion, and he is pictured here as raised up on his side, so his head and shoulders are up off of the ground, while his hind quarters remain down on the ground. This seems to represent the two halves of the Medo-Persian Empire. The Medes as a people were more passive and inclined to inaction, while the Persians were more aggressive and inclined to conquest. So it was the nature of this combined kingdom that the Persians carried the Medes along and led them to greatness.

Now it says that this bear had three ribs in his mouth, between his teeth. Three, of course, is the number that represents perfection and completion and finality when it is used symbolically, as it is here. These three ribs represent the complete and final conquest that the Medo-Persian Empire will achieve as it arises and as it devours the remainder of the nations that oppose it.

That leads us then to verse 6. It says, "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." Now this third beast is said to be like a leopard. This leopard has four wings on its back and it has four heads. This leopard, of course, represents the Greek Empire, just as the belly and thighs of brass was representative of the Greek Empire in Daniel chapter 2. The four wings and the four heads represent the division of the kingdom after the death of Alexander the Great among his four generals. When Alexander the Great died, his kingdom was divided up into four pieces, and his four generals ruled each piece. You see this in Daniel 8:21-22

Now the leopard is fierce, it is swift, and it is agile in its predatory behavior. Alexander the Great and his four generals swiftly advanced their conquest of the nations of the world. God gave Alexander the Great and his four generals the ability to achieve world dominion with the

amazing rapidity of a running and flying leopard. In just ten years, Alexander the Great conquered the entire known world.

So in these first three beasts—the lion, the bear, and the leopard—we have the Babylonian Empire, the Medo-Persian Empire, and the Greek Empire represented. Now we come to the fourth and most important empire, the empire that takes us from the end of the Greek Empire to the end of time, and that is the Roman Empire and the subsequent kingdoms that follow it.

Notice verses 7 and 8: “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.”

Now this fourth beast is not identified with any beast that we know of on the face of the earth. This fourth beast is not identified but instead described, because it is not like any known animal, and it outranks in fierceness all the animals of the earth put together. It’s more fierce than a lion or a bear or a leopard, and you just can’t find any other creature that is as fierce as this beast. And so he’s not to be compared with any creature on earth.

Now this fourth beast is described as being dreadful and terrible and exceptionally strong, having great iron teeth. This fourth beast with the iron teeth represents the Roman Empire, just as the legs of iron was representative of the Roman Empire in Daniel chapter 2. And the violence of this fourth beast, this Roman Empire, is especially taken note of, just as it was especially taken note of in Daniel chapter 2 and verse 40. It says here in the last half of verse 7, it had great iron teeth and, notice, “it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it.”

So this was a devouring, breaking, crushing kingdom. And Rome was exceedingly violent and cruel, and crushed all nations under its iron heel. Rome could never get enough of conquest, and it ruthlessly broke and crushed and ground into the dirt all the nations and kingdoms that it conquered and defeated. But as we shall see, this Roman kingdom takes us to the end of time, when the kings of this world are destroyed and the final judgment by God is carried out.

Now I want you to remember back in Daniel chapter 2 last week. In Daniel chapter 2, we saw that the Roman Empire, which was symbolized by the legs or iron, was further described as having feet and toes made of iron and clay. You recall we saw that this Roman Empire took us clear to the end of time when the stone was cut out without hands and destroyed the image. And in the same way, this iron beast also takes us to the end of time.

So we saw that the feet of iron mixed with clay, and the ten toes of iron mixed with clay, followed chronologically after the iron legs of the Roman Empire. In Daniel chapter 2, we saw that this fourth kingdom, the Roman Empire, started out as very strong and very powerful, but eventually that empire broke up into a multitude of nations as time went on. Ten, of course, is a symbolic number which represents totality and perfection, and the ten toes of the image of

Daniel chapter 2 represented and symbolized the perfect total of all the nations that follow after the Roman Empire, clear to the end of time.

Now having seen the statue of Daniel 2 had ten toes that followed the Roman Empire, what do we find with this fourth beast in Daniel chapter 7? Well, we find that he has ten horns. Notice chapter 7 and verse 7. It says, “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;”—now here it is—“and it had ten horns.”

Now these ten horns correspond to the ten toes of the image in Daniel chapter 2. In the Bible, horns are symbolic of strength and power, and of rule and authority. And these horns represent nations that exercise power and rule and authority. And these ten horns represent the perfect total of all the nations that follow after the Roman Empire, clear to the end of time, just like the feet of iron and clay and the ten toes of iron and clay represented the perfect total of all the nations that followed after the Roman Empire, clear to the end of time.

So as the chronology proceeds, we have Babylon, we have Medo-Persia, we have Greece, we have Rome, and then we have all of the individual nations and kingdoms that followed after, represented by the ten toes and by the ten horns. And that takes us then to the end of time, when the final judgment occurs.

Now verse 8 gives us some additional information about these nations that follow after the Roman Empire—information that was not given to us in Daniel chapter 2. Notice verse 8: “I considered the horns,”—see, there was no discussion about the ten toes; it was just taken note of that they were there. But now we’re going to get some additional information about these ten horns, which are equivalent to the ten toes. Verse 8: “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.”

Now as Daniel considers these ten horns, he sees an additional horn, an eleventh horn if you will, come up. And it’s called here in verse 8 a “little horn.” But this horn is not little in either power or in arrogance. It is only “little” in terms of the time that it is allowed to rule—symbolically, three and a half days, as we shall see. This little horn subdues three horns, and this little horn has the eyes of a man. It has the mouth of a man that speaks great blasphemies. As we shall see, this little horn represents the Antichrist that appears at the end of time.

Now we have previously said that horns represent kingdoms, but this horn is unique. This horn has eyes and it has a mouth; therefore, it represents an individual. This individual subdues all kingdoms currently in existence under him as he displaces these three horns. Three, of course, is the number that conveys the idea of perfection and completion and finality, just as it did with the three ribs in the mouth of the bear. To subdue three kings is to subdue, then, the complete

number of kingdoms that exist on the earth when Antichrist arises. His dominion over all the kings of the earth will be perfect and final, and he will rule a one-world government. But his rule is going to be very short lived.

Notice verses 9 and 10: “⁹I 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. ¹⁰A 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.”

Here we see that this fourth beast takes us to the end of time with his ten horns, and of course the appearance of Antichrist right at the last. At the end of time, God will come in judgment and wrath and will cast down all the thrones and kingdoms that have set themselves against the Lord and against His Anointed, and join themselves to the Antichrist.

For those of you have a different version, verse 9 will say, “I beheld till the thrones were *set*,” as though somebody went in and arranged a bunch of thrones, and then God came down and chose one of them and sat on them. I want to say to you, the King James Version is correct in its translation. The thrones were cast down. Can you imagine somebody arranging a bunch of thrones in heaven, and then God coming and selecting one and sitting in one? There’s one throne in heaven, and that’s the one God occupies. The idea here is that when God’s throne arises, all these thrones are destroyed and cast down—the thrones representing these kingdoms that are represented by these ten horns, and of course these last three in particular, who submit themselves to Antichrist and form this transnational coalition that then unitedly persecutes and makes war against the church.

The language used here to describe God the Father and the glory of His person, His throne, and His attendants, reflects the language used by Ezekiel in Ezekiel chapter 1 and Ezekiel chapter 10, when Ezekiel is describing his vision of the throne room of God. The whole description is glorious and breathtaking in the picture it presents of the majesty of God and the fearful awesomeness of His judgment—the fire that proceeds out of the throne and the myriad of uncountable attendants that are around the throne, and the exalted glory and majesty that the one sitting on the throne has, here called the Ancient of days.

And what does the Ancient of days, that is, the eternal God—what does He do? Notice verse 11. Once the judgment is set and the books are opened, verse 11 says, “I beheld then because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake:”—that’s the Antichrist, with his mouth of blasphemies—“I beheld even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame.” So Antichrist and his beastly kingdom are going to be destroyed and cast into the lake of fire.

Now this coming of God, this capturing of Antichrist and His beastly kingdom, and it being judged and cast into hell, are spoken of in Revelation chapter 11, verse 13 and verse 15. So hold

your hand here in Daniel, and please turn to Revelation 11. Now from this point forward, we're going to be turning a little bit back and forth between Daniel 7 and Revelation 11, so you might want to just throw a bookmark or something in one chapter or the other, so it's easy for you to flip back and forth.

Notice Revelation chapter 11, verse 7. It says, "And when they," that is, the church, represented by the two witnesses, "shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit"—that's this little horn of Daniel with the mouth and the eyes—"shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them. ⁸ And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. ⁹ And they of"—now here's his three kings that he has subdued, which represents all the peoples of the earth—"And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations"—this is this coalition of these three kings that submitted themselves to Antichrist, these symbolic three kings, which is all the kingdoms of the earth that submitted themselves to Antichrist—it says they "shall see their dead bodies three days and an half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves. ¹⁰ And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth." And here is the pinnacle of Antichrist's triumph. But it quickly comes to an end, verse 11, "...after three days and an half the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them. ¹² And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them."

Now here's our verse. Verse 13 of Revelation 11 is equivalent to verse 11 of Daniel 7. So Daniel 7 is now played out in Revelation 11 and verse 13: "And the same hour was there a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand: and the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven." Notice further verse 15: "And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign forever and ever." So what we have here in Revelation 11:13 and 15 is a description of what the Ancient of days is doing. When He comes, He opens the book, He sets the judgment, and the first thing He does is grab Antichrist and his kingdom and he sends them to hell, and the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of the Ancient of days and of His Christ, and they shall reign forever and ever.

Now look please at Revelation chapter 19. Not only is this judgment of verse 11 of Daniel 7 spoken of in Revelation 11, verses 13 and 15, it's also spoken of in Revelation 19, verses 19 to 20. Notice Revelation 19, verses 19 to 20. Jesus is returning, and it says, "And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies,"—that's the beast that ascended out of the abyss, the Antichrist—"And I saw the beast," the Antichrist, the little horn, "and the kings of the earth,"—there's his transnational coalition, the symbolic three kingdoms that submitted themselves to him—"and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army."

Now they've already attacked the church and destroyed it, and now Jesus has come, and they say, Now we're going to make war against Jesus and His returning army. Ha! Verse 20: "²⁰ And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. ²¹ And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh."

This is also the same event that's spoken of in chapter 20, verses 7 to 10. Notice Revelation 20:7: "And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison," and of course, when he's loosed out, he raises up Antichrist, the little horn, okay? "⁸ and shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle:"—there's the transnational coalition again—"the number of whom is as the sand of the sea."—Innumerable people set against the church. "⁹ And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed [surrounded] the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them. ¹⁰ And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night forever and ever."

And so we see the beast, we see the false prophet on the earth—they're physical beings. But whose behind all of this? It's Satan, right? And so not only are the beasts and the false prophet cast into the lake of fire along with the kingdom that they rule, which is this one-world government, but the one who is behind it all, Satan, is also cast into the lake of fire. And thus we see this final judgment in Daniel chapter 7 being carried out.

Now I want you to turn back to Daniel chapter 7. When the Ancient of days, when God the Father returns and He begins to execute this judgment, and He judges Antichrist and kills all of his people and casts them all into hell, that brings us to verse 12. Notice verse 12: "As concerning the rest of the beasts," that is, the winged lion, the bear with three ribs in his mouth, the leopard with the four heads and the four wings—as concerning those beasts of those three kingdoms—"they had their dominion taken away." As each successive kingdom came, the previous kingdom lost its dominion. "Yet their lives were prolonged for a season and time."

Now what's being said in verse 12 is that the end of the fourth kingdom, which we just saw in verse 11—the end of the fourth kingdom and the Antichrist, who is its final ruler—is different from the ending of these three previous kingdoms. The preceding three kingdoms lost their dominion, verse 12 says, but those who populated those kingdoms did not all die, and they did not cease to remain on the earth. They continued to live, though conquered. They remained on the earth for a time, until of course they eventually died.

But though that's how these first three kingdoms ended, that is not the case with the fourth kingdom and how it ended. When it is destroyed, all of those who populate it are destroyed as

well, because the end of the fourth kingdom is the end of the lives of all of its citizens, without exception, whereas with the end of the other kingdoms, most of the citizens lived. But not so with the end of the fourth kingdom.

Now notice verses 13 and 14, where Christ is explicitly brought up and mentioned. Verse 13: “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. ¹⁴ 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.”

Now here in verses 13 and 14, God the Father, the Ancient of days, gives the kingdom to Jesus Christ, His Son. Here in verses 13 and 14 is the climax and the goal of the vision. The kingdom of Christ is the fifth and final kingdom, after which there will never be another. It says here that Jesus comes, in verse 13, “with the clouds of heaven.” To come with the clouds of heaven is a metaphor that often speaks of God coming in wrath and judgment. To come with the clouds is to come with wrath and judgment. We saw that and explored that in detail in our message in Revelation chapter 1, verses 7 through 8.

And so it is not just the Ancient of days, but also the Son of man who comes to execute judgment upon the earth, as we see Him doing in Matthew chapter 24—remember where He separates the sheep from the goats? But the focus here is on the eternal, universal, and absolute dominion that Christ shall have and exercise in His kingdom over all people and nations and languages. In contrast to the kingdoms of this world, all of which have fallen and ended, Christ’s kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, which will not pass away, and which will never be destroyed. It is given to Him by His Father as a reward for His work of redemption, and Jesus will rule the redeemed saints in the new heavens and the new earth forever and ever, for all eternity without end.

Christ will have a kingdom that is the opposite of these cruel, animalistic kingdoms that devour people. His kingdom will be one of unmitigated goodness, happiness, holiness, and delight; one that will serve not only the glory of the King, but also one that will serve the good of the people. And thus, Daniel’s vision is revealed. And that brings us to our second major point this morning.

Having seen Daniel’s vision revealed, notice secondly, Daniel’s vision explained. This is in verse 15 to 28, the rest of the chapter—the vision revealed, and then the vision is explained. This will go a little quicker. Now notice verses 15 and 16. It says, “¹⁵ I Daniel was grieved in my spirit in the midst of my body, and the visions of my head troubled me. ¹⁶ 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.” And you’ll find I’ve used a lot of material out of this section to interpret the first section, okay?

So Daniel is grieved and troubled by all he’d seen and all that it meant, so he spoke to one of the angels mentioned in verse 10 and asked for an explanation. Verse 17 and 18—here’s the

explanation: “¹⁷ These great beasts, which are four, are four kings, which shall arise out of the earth. ¹⁸ But the saints of the most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom forever, even forever and ever.” And we’re done. That’s the interpretation, folks.

Here in verses 17 to 18, we have a very brief summary of the meaning of the entire vision. The four beasts are four kings and kingdoms which will arise out of this world; that is, will arise by human means and human agency out of the mass of humanity. These kings and kingdoms will arise out of the seething, sinful cauldron of lost humanity, but their kingdoms will not last. Believers in Christ shall achieve, by the grace of God, what the wicked could never achieve by mere human and military and political effort.

The saints will inherit the kingdom of Christ, they will possess it, and they will retain it forever. In a word, the church will triumph over the world. That’s what verse 18 is saying. The church will triumph over the world. The kingdom of God will defeat and overcome and destroy all worldly kingdoms. The world will lose all of its kingdoms, but the church shall have the kingdom of Christ forever and ever.

But this little two verse summary of the interpretation of this vision, in verses 17 and 18, does not satisfy Daniel. There is an extremely important detail that Daniel feels he has to understand better, and that is the meaning and the identity and the activity of the little horn. That is, he wants to understand in more detail the work of this final and last king on the earth, otherwise known as Antichrist.

Notice verses 19 to 20: “¹⁹ 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; ²⁰ 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.” So here in verses 19 and 20, Daniel asks about the fourth beast and the horns, and in reply, the angel grants to him further visions of the activity of that eleventh horn, in verses 21 and 22.

Here’s the further vision: “²¹ I beheld, and the same horn,” that is, the little horn, “made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; ²² 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.” Now I want you to notice how clearly verse 21 describes the work of Antichrist in Revelation 11:7. Keep your hand here in Daniel and turn to Revelation 11:7. I’ll just read it to you.

Listen to Daniel 7:21: “²¹ I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them.” Now Revelation 11:7: “And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them.” There’s an exact parallel. The horn is the beast that came out of the abyss. He is that last king that appears at the very end of history who puts together his transnational coalition and destroys the church. So Daniel chapter 7 and verse 21 speaks of what happens in

Revelation chapter 11 and verse 7. Clearly, this eleventh horn is the Antichrist; he is the beast that arose out of the abyss of Revelation 11:7.

Now turn back please to Daniel. This making war with the saints, Daniel 7:21, and prevailing against them does not last long. Notice verse 22. It says it happens “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.” In verse 22, it says that upon Antichrist’s defeat of the church on earth, God comes in judgment, He rules in favor of the saints and against Antichrist, and He grants to the saints the possession of the kingdom of Christ.

Now the angel isn’t done. The angel now gives further information to Daniel and explains the remainder of the matter in verses 23 to 27. Notice first of all verses 23 to 24: “²³ Thus he”—that is, the angel that explained to him the summary meaning in verses 17 and 18—the angel “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”—clearly a reference to the Roman Empire in its brutal conquering of the then-known world. Verse 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.”

Now here in verse 23 we have a description of the Roman Empire and its unique nature. It’s unique in the degree of its cruelty, and it’s unique in the extent of its dominion. It shall rule the whole earth and it will tread it down and devour it and break it. That’s what’s said in verse 23. So the Roman Empire was greater in cruelty and greater in extent than any of the previous three kingdoms. It devoured the whole earth, it treaded the whole earth under its feet, and it broke in pieces every nation it conquered. That’s what verse 23 is saying about the Roman Empire.

But verse 24 now speaks of all the remaining nations that flowed out of and followed chronologically from the Roman Empire, represented by these ten horns. Horns of course are symbols of power and strength, and rule and authority. Horns are representative of kings and kingdoms, okay? So all remaining nations flowed out of the Roman Empire and followed it, represented by the ten horns, until the last nation and king arose, represented by the little horn that subdued the three surrounding horns. This is of course the kingdom of Antichrist, who subdued with perfection and completeness and finality the kingdoms that existed when he arose.

These symbolic three kings who fall into submission to the one-world rule of the Antichrist represent the coalition of nations who gather together through the deception of Satan to attack the church on earth. So you’ve got the Roman kingdom in verse 23. You’ve got all the succeeding kingdoms in verse 24, until Antichrist arises. Three is the symbolic number of perfection, completeness, and finality. He perfectly, completely, and finally brings all the kingdoms of the world under his rule, and then he makes war on the saints, and he overcomes them and kills them.

And what will Antichrist and his coalition of nations do? Verse 25: “And he,” Antichrist, the little horn, “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 [the saints] shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time.” So what does this Antichrist and his coalition of nations going to do? He’s going to commit great blasphemy against God. You remember in Second Thessalonians chapter 2 and in verses 3 and 4, it says, “that man of sin [will] be revealed, the son of perdition; ⁴ who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.”

That’s the blasphemy. Antichrist shows up and says, Forget all your other gods, I’m god. Worship me. That’s the blasphemy that he speaks. And of course, the real Christians aren’t going to worship him, are they? So he’s going to slaughter them. And just like the early Christians wouldn’t say “Caesar is Lord,” and they were thrown in the Coliseum—remember, eaten by the lions?—that was just a foreshadowing of Antichrist. When he comes and demands worship from the whole world, we won’t give it to him, so we will be slaughtered.

So he will horribly oppress the saints of the most high God. He makes unremitting war on them because they are the only ones on earth who will not worship him as God on earth. It says he will attempt to change times and laws, in verse 25; that is, to overthrow every established and permanent principle of human activity and human morality. If you’ve studied history, you remember the French Revolution and how they instituted a ten day week, and how they promoted sexual anarchy, and they sought to change times and they sought to change laws.

Now for a brief time, as verse 25 says, Antichrist will appear to be victorious in changing times and laws. He will be victorious for how long? Verse 25 says “until a time and times and the dividing of time,” that is, a three and a half time period. Now what three and a half is that? Well it’s the three and a half days of Revelation 11, verses 9 and 10. So the three and a half days of Revelation 11:9 and 10, when Antichrist wins and defeats the church and the dead bodies of the saints lie in the street and the whole world is rejoicing—that lasts for three and a half days. At the end of verse 25, it’s talking about those same three and a half days. Antichrist will triumph over the saints, and the saints will be given into his hand for that very short period of time, symbolized by three and a half days, this “time, and times, and the dividing of time.”

But—it will not last. Verse 26: “But the judgment shall sit.” That’s what’s spoken of in Daniel 7, verses 9 and 10. “But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion,” that is, Antichrist’s dominion, “to consume and to destroy it unto the end,” spoken of in verse 11 of Daniel 7. ²⁷ And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him. ²⁸ Hitherto is the end of the matter.”

And so the kingdom of Antichrist and his apparent triumph over the church will not last; judgment will come; the Antichrist and his kingdom will be destroyed; his dominion will be

taken away by the Ancient of days and His Son when they come in judgment. And that's what we're going to see as we look at the seventh trumpet in Revelation chapter 11. That's what we see in Revelation 11, 11 through 18. When the Ancient of days and His Son come—Boom! That's the end of Antichrist's little three and a half day triumph.

Verse 27 tells us the conclusion of the matter. Christ will be enthroned as King of the world, and the saints will possess the kingdom, nevermore to be trodden under the foot of the Gentiles. The saints, once oppressed and slaughtered, are now victorious and they possess eternal life. The Antichrist, once briefly victorious and triumphant as the ruler of the whole world and worshipped as God, is now utterly defeated, stripped of his authority and rule, disgraced as a fraud, and cast into the lake of fire.

The point of Daniel chapter 7 and the point of Revelation chapter 11 is that the days of the kingdoms and rulers of this planet are limited. History has a definite predestinated end. What we're experiencing now is not just going to go on and on and on and on forever. The clock is running out for the kings and the kingdoms of this earth. And I tell you, we are in the fourth beast, we are past the Roman Empire, we are into the feet of clay mixed with iron, we are into the time of the ten horns. What we haven't seen yet is the rise of the little horn.

And I don't know when that will occur. It will occur when Satan is loosed. When will that occur? Not a clue. Could be tomorrow, could be a thousand years from tomorrow, but that will be the triggering event. Satan will be loosed; Antichrist will arise; the transnational coalition will form against the church; it will be wiped off the face of the earth, with the exception of a small remnant. This will last for a short period of time. Jesus will return; He will resurrect His dead martyrs; He will rapture His living saints; His wrath will be poured out upon Antichrist and his kingdom; they will all be cast into hell; the kingdom of Christ will be established; we will possess it forever and it will never end. That is biblical eschatology.

This is why the Obamas and the Hillaries of this world will not win. They have power for a short time. I'm not saying either of them are the Antichrist, but I'm saying they exemplify these kings that rise. And what happens to every one of them? They fall. And what happens to their kingdoms? They are destroyed. And what replaces them? The everlasting kingdom of Christ.

And so this is why the Obamas and the Hillaries of the world will not win. They have power for a little time, they can persecute the people of God for a while, but their time is limited, and then they will be cast into hell. And the kingdom will be ours forever and our King will be Christ for all eternity. We will suffer for a time, but we will triumph forever.

The optimistic eschatology that the Scripture sets before us is that the kingdoms of this world are all going to fall, and the kingdom of Christ is going to stand forever. It will be the final kingdom, after which there will be no more kingdoms.

So do you struggle living under the kingdoms of this world? Take heart. The Ancient of days is coming, the Son of man is coming, the Stone is coming to smash and crush the kingdoms of this world. Recognize that your state now is temporary and you will be delivered from it. Whatever persecutions you are under, they will be remedied and rectified, and you will be restored to everlasting life and happiness in the kingdom of Christ forever and ever and ever, without end. That's the good news of the eschatology of the world and of the church. Shall we pray together.

Father, we thank you so much for this wonderful foresight of how history is going to unfold. And Father, we just are so pleased that eternity is not going to be one kingdom taking the place of another taking the place of another, with their rapacious and cruel and vicious oppression of those they rule and conquer. But rather, the kingdom of Christ will come, and it will be a kingdom of peace, and joy, and contentment, and prosperity, and blessing, where rule will be perfect and peace will prevail. Thank you that the Prince of peace is coming, and that His kingdom will be perfect, and we shall be in it, and we shall know everlasting joy because of it.

And now Father, if there's any who are outside of Christ, and thus outside of this coming kingdom, Father, may they repent now. May they receive Christ quickly so that they too might enjoy the blessings of a triumphant returning King, and not follow after a wicked Antichrist, who shall be crushed into the lake of fire, and they along with him. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.