

The Anti-Christ

Who Is He?

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The prophecy of Daniel 7 Places the identity of the Anti-Christ in the setting of History!

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

In the Bible, the earthly power which is presented as the Anti-Christ is described by Paul as “the man of sin” “the mystery of iniquity”. See 2 Thessalonians 2:3-10. He is pictured by John the Revelator as the “beast” with the mystery number 666. But in the book of Daniel, this power is called “the little horn”, and is placed in a prophetic setting so that its identity can be determined historically. This is the importance of the study of the seventh chapter of the prophecy of Daniel.

DANIEL 7

7:1 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.

7:2 Daniel spoke and said, I saw in my vision by night, and, behold, the four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea.

7:3 And four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another.

NOTE

A beast in prophecy symbolizes a king or kingdom. See Daniel 7:17 - “These great beasts ... are four kings, which shall arise out of the earth.” Also Daniel 7:23 - “The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom.” The terms, “king” and “kingdom” are used interchangeably.

4 The first was like a lion, and had eagle’s wings: I beheld till the wings thereof were plucked, and it was lifted up from the earth, and made stand upon the feet as a man, and a man’s heart was given to it.

NOTE

A lion with eagle’s wings was a familiar sight to Daniel. As an official of the kingdom of Babylon, he saw this symbol everywhere he went, carved in stone on the buildings of the palace, pictured in the mosaics of the pavement on which he walked. It was the national emblem of Babylon. Jeremiah uses these words to describe Nebuchadnezzar, Babylon’s famous king - “Behold, he shall come up like a lion. Behold, he shall come up and fly as an eagle. Concerning the kingdom which Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon shall smite.” Jeremiah 49:19,22,28.

5 And behold another beast, a second, like to a bear, and it raised up itself on one side, and it had three ribs in the mouth of it between the teeth of it: and they said thus unto it, Arise, devour much flesh.”

NOTE

NOTE: - The Kingdom which followed Babylon was Medo-Persia. This was a dual monarchy. The Medes ruled first followed by the Persians. The prophecy indicates this aspect by noting that the “bear” raised itself up on one side. The three ribs represent the powers overthrown in its rise to dominance, namely, Lydia, Babylon, and Egypt.

6 After this I beheld, and lo another, like a leopard, which had upon the back of it four wings of a fowl; the beast had also four heads; and dominion was given to it.

NOTE

The Grecian Kingdom under Alexander the Great overthrew the Persian Empire. When he died his kingdom was divided into four parts as symbolized by the “four heads”.

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 here before it; and it had ten horns.

NOTE

NOTE: - The fourth universal power to rule the world from Daniel’s day was Rome. It was so different from any beast that Daniel knew that he was unable to name it. It is non-descript. The ten horns are noted in Daniel 7:24 as “ten kings that shall arise.” It is a fact that the Roman Empire was split up into just ten smaller kingdoms between the years 351 and 476 AD. The following are their ancient and modern names:

1. Alemanni - Germany.
2. Franks - France.
3. Anglo-Saxons - England.
4. Burgundians - Switzerland.
5. Visigoths - Spain.
6. Suevo - Portugal.
7. Lombards - Italy.
8. Heruli.
9. Vandals.
10. Ostrogoths.

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.

NOTE: - In this verse there are two identifying marks to locate “the little horn” in history. It came up “among” the ten horns, and “three” of the original ten were overthrown in its rise to power. In Daniel 7:24 another identifying mark is given. The “little horn” would come up “after” the ten horns. There is only ONE power in all history that fits this description. At Rome itself, in the very center of the fractured Empire, there arose after 476 AD, the Papacy - the one man government of the Catholic church. In its rise to power, three of the Gothic tribes - the Heruli, the Vandals, and the Ostrogoths - were overthrown and disappeared from history. The reigning power of these kings passed to the pope, and thus figuratively, the crowns, the symbols of power were placed on the head of the Pope, hence the deeper, significance of the triple crown worn by the Pope. The power of the Papacy was established by the decree of Justinian in 533 AD, and was carried out by force of arms in 538 AD, in the overthrow of the Ostrogoths by Justinian’s general, Belsarius.

9 I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire.

10 A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened.

NOTE: - The expression - “were cast down” can be translated, as in the ARV, -“were placed”. Thus this verse would read -“I beheld till thrones were placed”. This is the scene of judgment, one purpose of which is to take away the “dominion” of the little horn. See Daniel 7:26.

11 I beheld then because of the voice of the great words which the horn spoke: I beheld even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame.

12 As concerning the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away: yet their lives were prolonged for a season and time.

NOTE: - For some of the “great words” which the “little horn” has spoken see note on verse 25. The fact that Daniel sees the “little horn” power continuing until it is destroyed in “the burning flame” indicates that the Papal Anti-Christ will continue to the end of time.

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.

NOTE

This coming of the Son of man is not His return the second time but rather His coming to the Ancient of Days at the hour of judgment to receive a kingdom. After the judgment here described is completed, then Jesus, the Son of man, comes to carry out the decisions of this Supreme Court of the Universe, “to give every man according as his work shall be.” Revelation 22:12.

7:15 I Daniel was grieved in my spirit in the midst of my body, and the visions of my head troubled me. **7:16** 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.

7:17 These great beasts, which are four, are four kings, which shall arise out of the earth.

7:18 But the saints of the most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever.

NOTE

At verse 15, the explanation of this vision begins. First a brief summary is given. But this does not satisfy Daniel.

7:19 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;

7:20 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 spoke very great things, whose look was more stout than his fellows.

7:21 I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them;

7:22 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.

NOTE

Daniel's chief concern and interest centers in the fourth beast and the "little horn".

7:23 Thus he said, The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces.

7:24 And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise: and another shall rise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings.

7:25 And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time.

NOTE

In verse 25 a detailed account of what the Anti-Christ will do, and the period of time in which he will do it, is given. Consider carefully the clauses of this verse:

"He shall speak great words against the most High" - Pope Leo XII stated - "We hold upon this earth the place of God almighty." In a work by F. Lucii Ferraris sanctioned by the Catholic Encyclopedia (Volume VI, page 48), this statement is found - "The Pope is of so great dignity and so exalted that he is not a mere man, but as it were God and the vicar of God." Innocent II I declared of the priests - "Indeed, it is not too much to say that in view of the sublimity of their offices the priests are so many gods."

"He shall wear out the saints of the most High" "The church has persecuted. Only a tyro in church history will deny that. Protestants were persecuted in France and Spain with the full approval of the church authorities. We have always defended the persecution of the Huguenots, and the Spanish Inquisition." Western Watchman, official organ of Father Phelan, St Louis, Montana, December 24, 1908.

"That the Church of Rome has shed more innocent blood than any other institution that has ever existed among mankind, will be questioned by no Protestant who has a competent knowledge of history. The memorials, indeed, of many of her persecutions are now so scanty, that it is impossible to form a complete conception of the multitude of her victims, and it is quite certain that no power of the imagination can adequately realize their sufferings." - W. E. H. Lecky History of the Rise and Influence of The Spirit of Rationalism, Volume 2, page 32.

"He shall think to change times and laws." The ARV translates this clause "he shall think to change the times and the law." One has only to consult a Catholic Catechism to note how the Ten Commandments have been altered. The second commandment has been deleted, and the tenth has been divided to make up the ten. The one command of the ten which deals with time has been boastfully altered. Note the following from A Doctrinal Catechism, p. 174, by Rev. Stephen Keenan:

"Question. Have you any way of proving that the Church has power to institute festivals of precept?" "Answer. Had she not such power, she could not have done that in which all modern religionists agree with her; - she could not have substituted the observance of Sunday the first day of the week, for the observance of Saturday the seventh day, a change for which there is no Scriptural authority."

"They shall be given into his hands until a time and times, and a dividing of time." This is the same period of time which is given in Revelation 12:14 as "a time, and times, and a half a time." It is also declared to be a period of "forty and two months" Revelation 13:5, and "a thousand two hundred and threescore days." Rev. 12:6. Allowing the Bible rule (Ezekiel 4:6) that in prophecy a day equals one year, we have a period of 1260 years of papal supremacy. In 538 A. D., the last of the three horns were plucked up by the armies of Justinian, and the Pope became the supreme power in the West fully established in the seat of the Caesars at Rome. Exactly 1260 years later in 1798 on orders from Napoleon, the armies of France overthrew the Pope and declared the government of the Papacy to be ended. The Pope was taken prisoner, and died in exile.

Thus in every mark of identification found in the prophecy of Daniel, the "little horn" stands identified as the Papacy of the Catholic Church. The pope is the "man of sin", "the mystery of iniquity" which was to set himself up as God in the "temple of God". He is the "beast" which has received his power and authority from "the dragon". The number of his name is 666. (See study on Revelation 13.)

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

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. As for me Daniel, my cogitations much troubled me, and my countenance changed in me: but I kept the matter in my heart.

NOTE: - The decision of the Judgment will be rendered in favor of the saints of the Most High, and finally to them will be given through the Son of man, the Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, the dominion and the greatness of the Kingdom of God. May we be numbered among the citizens of that Kingdom!

For more facts on this vital theme see DANIEL Notes by G. Burnside and 'The Papacy in Bible Prophecy'.

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