

# 'An Interpretation of Daniel's Beasts' (section 7.1b)

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## An Interpretation of Daniel's Beasts

In the language of Prophecy Beasts are put for nations & kingdoms & their several parts for the analogous parts of the Kingdoms as their heads for the governing parts their horns for the military powers, their wings for the regions into which they extend & the powers whereby they raise & move themselves, their bodies for the common people their flesh for the riches their bones for strong holds, their teeth, nails & hoofs for bands of soldiers such as are Legions Squadrons, Regiments & Companies, & the number of heads horns or wings of any Beast for the number of Governments Dominions or particular Kingdoms in that Beast. And because short-lived Beasts are put for long-lived Kingdoms the days of the Beasts are put for the years of the Kingdoms. These things I take for granted having explained them in another place & upon this foundation I proceed to explain the Prophecies of Daniel

Daniel tells us that the Golden head the silver breast the brazen belly & the iron leggs of the statue in Nebuchadnezzars vision signify four successive kingdoms wherof the first is that of the Babylonians or Assyrians at Babylon. Thou o King, saith he to Nebuchadnezzar, art King of Kings for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom power & strength & glory, & wheresoever the children of men dwell the beasts of the field & the fowls of the heaven [that is the Kingdoms of the world] hath he given into thine hand & hath made thee ruler over them all: Thou art this head of Gold. And after thee [that is after thy Kingdom shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee [the Medo-Persian] & another third kingdom of brass [the Grecian] which shall bear rule over all the earth & the fourth Kingdom [the Roman] shall be strong as iron, for as much as iron breaketh in pieces & subdueth all things.

Daniel tells us also that the four Beasts in his own vision the Lion, the Bear, the Leopard & the dreadful terrible & exceedingly strong ten horned Beast which arose successively out of the great sea, are four kingdoms which shall arise out of the earth. And all Interpreters agree that these kingdoms are the same which those signified by the four parts of the Statue, the ten horns of the fourth Beast answering to the ten toes of the iron leggs; & the everlasting kingdom of the Son of man which succeeds the four & is over all nations & shall not pass away (Dan 7.14,) answering to the stone which smote the Image upon his feet & brake it to pieces & became a great mountain & filled the whole earth & signifies a kingdom which <2r> God shall set up & which shall break in pieces & consume the former kingdoms & not be left to other people but stand for ever. Dan. 2.34, 35, 44.

So then the Lion which is the first of the four Beasts signifies the Kingdom of Babylon. This Lion had eagles wings to signify the double nation & dominion of Assyria & Chaldea. With these wings it was lifted up from the earth & made to stand upon the feet as a man, that is it was raised high in dominion & power. And a mans heart was given to it to signify its humanity towards other kingdoms. For the Kings of Nineveh & Babylon

upon conquering any new kingdom did not presently destroy the government thereof as the following Monarchies did but only made it tributary till it rebelled. Ierusalem rebelled twice before the king of Babylon would destroy it. Daniel beheld till the Lyons wings were pluckt wherewith he raised himself up from the earth, that is till his power & dominion was taken away wherewith he had exalted himself. The Lyon was not slain but continues still alive with his wings pluckt. For the three first Beasts had their lives prolonged for a season & time after their dominions were taken away Dan. 7.12 that is untill they are slain by the two edged sword Apoc. 19.15, 21.. And so all the four parts of the statue continue in being together till the stone cut out of the mountain smites the iron feet of the statue & breaks them all to pieces, the iron the brass the silver & the gold & the wind carries them away together. So then the four parts of the Image & all Daniels Beasts are in being to this day, the bodies of the Beasts signifying not the persons of Kings but the regions powers & dominions of those nations. The Ram had two horns when the Medes & Persians signified thereby had but one king & the Lyon has two wings when there was but one king of the Chaldeans & Assyrians.

We are therefore to apply the Beasts & parts of the Statue to four sorts of Nations which reigned successively & are all of them still in being & perfectly distinct from one another. And the first of them are the nations of Assyria or Babylonia which after the dissolution of their Empire composed the Province of Babylonia & was the third part of the Persian Empire as <3r> Herodotus relates & according to Strabo extended eastward to Susiana Elymais & Paretica inclusively, northward to Media & Armenia exclusively & westward to Mesopotamia & the Arabes Scenitæ inclusively. For Cicilia, Syria, Phœnicia, Moab, Ammon & Egypt were the auxiliary nations, as Herodotus calls them, which in the wars with the Medes revolted from the Assyrians as was explained above & therefore are not reckoned by Strabo among the Nations of Babylonia. The Lion therefore & the Golden head of the statue signify to this day the Province of Assyria or Babylonia bounded as above.

And so the Bear which is the second Beast & the silver breast of the statue signify to this day the nations of the Medes & Persians who reigned in the second place. The Bear raised it self or stood up on one side to signify that one of those two nations rose above the other. He held three ribbs in his mouth to signify his conquests. The ribs are Sardes Babylon & Memphys the three strong imperial cities of the Kingdoms of the Lydians Assyrians & Egyptians, together which the military strength & power & dominion of those cities. He holds them in his mouth between his teeth as if he were eating them to signify that they are three conquered nations distinct from his own original body. And he is bid to arise & eat much flesh to signify that he should draw great riches from his conquests.

Daniel signifies this kingdom also by a Ram with two horns one of which was higher then the other (the Persian then the Medic) & came up last, & saith that this Ram with two horns are the Kings (that is kingdoms) of Media & Persia & that the Ram pusht westward & northward & southward so that no Beast (that is no Kingdom) could stand before him. For the Medes & Persians carried on their wars & conquests into those quarters by invading Assyria, Asia minor, Egypt & Greece. The Goat brake his two horns but slew him not & therefore he still continues alive which his horns broken & signifies the nations of the Medes & Persians to this day.

In like manner the Leopard which is the third Beast & the brazen belly & thighs of the statue signify to this day the nations of the Greeks who reigned in the third place. This Leopard had four wings of a Fowl & four heads to signify four capital dominions into which this Em <4r> pire should extend it self Grecia, Asia minor, Syria & Egypt: all which nations together compose the Leopard & are still signified by it.

The same nations & dominions are also signified by the He-Goat & his four horns which came up towards the four winds of heaven. The rough Goat, saith Daniel, is the king of Grecia & the great horn between his eyes is the first king [that is the first kingdom.] Now that being broken whereas four [horns] came up for it, four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation but not in his power. This is further thus explained by Daniel in another place. There shall stand up yet three kings in Persia [Cyrus Cambyses & Darius] & the fourth [Xerxes] shall be far richer then they all: & by his strength through his riches he shall stir up all against the realm of Grecia. And a mighty King [Alexander the great] shall stand up that shall rule with great dominion & do according to his will. And when he shall stand up his kingdom shall be broken & shall be divided towards the four winds of heaven; & not to his posterity nor according to his dominion which he ruled: for his kingdom shall be pluckt up even for others besides those Daniel goes on to describe the actions of two of those horns or kings which he calls kings of the south & north & names Egypt for the land of the king of the

south & by the king of the north understands the king of Asia minor & Syria as all interpreters agree. Whence before the union of Asia & Syria the king of the north must respect Asia & there will remain Syria & Grecia for the Kings of the east & west.

These four regions belonged not to the bodies of the two first Beasts, they were all of them in the dominion of the Greeks before the battle at Arbela whereby the Persian Empire fell: they continued in their dominion till the Empire of the Romans arose, they spake the Greek language & after the division of the Roman Empire into the Greek & Latin Empires they all belonged to the united monarchical body of the Greek Empire till the Saracens invaded Syria & Egypt: and therefore they may justly be reckoned the four heads & wings of that Empire & to compose that body of people which to this day is represented by the four headed & four winged Leopard & by the Goat with four horns which Daniel tells us signifies the kingdom of the Greeks divided <5r> towards the four winds of heaven

Alexander the great died at Babylon an. I. P. 4390 & was succeeded in Greece & Macedon (the western wing of the Leopard) by Antipater & others down to Perseus whom the Romans conquered an P. I. 4546.

In Egypt & the neighbouring parts of Arabia & Afric (the southern wing) he was succeeded by Ptolomeus Lagi & other Greeks down to Cleopatra in the end of whose reign Augustus reduced Egypt into a Roman Province an P. I. 4684.

Seleucus, saith Iustin<sup>[1]</sup>, after the death of Alexander possessing the kingdom of the east built there a city which he called Antioch after the name of his father Antiochus, & thence he invaded Babylonia & Bactria. He & his posterity reigned in Syria till by their civil discords the kingdom fell into the hands of Tigranes king of Armenia & 18 years after was reduced into a Roman Province by Lucullus & Pompey an P. I 4645.

Asia minor (the northern wing) fell to the share of Antigonus & his son Demetrius who reigned there till Demetrius was conquered by Seleucus king of Syria an. P. I. 4426. From which time the kingdoms of Asia & Syria remained united under one king. But yet they are still represented by two horns, much after the manner that the kingdoms of the Medes & Persians have but one king & yet are represented by the two horns of the Ram till the very fall of the Persian Empire, when the Goat smites the Ram & breaks his two horns.

Out of one of the four horns of the Goat in the latter time of their kingdom when the transgressors were come to the full came forth a little horn which grew mighty but not by his own power & waxed exceedingly great toward the south & toward the east & toward the pleasant land & it waxed great to the host of heaven & cast down of the host & stars to the ground & stamped upon them & magnified himself against the Prince of the host & by him the daily sacrifice was taken away & the place of his sanctuary cast down & it cast down the truth to the ground & destroyed the mighty & the holy people & practised & prospered; & by all these circumstances this horn is the kingdom of Pergamus. That kingdom came up out of the kingdom of Macedon by the revolting of Philetaerus from Lysimachus, was at first a little one, by assistance of the Romans took the greatest part of Asia minor from Antiochus magnus king of Syria, afterwards assisted the Romans in conquering Perseus, & being now a large rich & very flourishing kingdom it descended to the Romans by the last will & testament of Attalus its king, & by their power & conduct grew mighty & extended it self southward into Egypt & Libya & Eastward into Asia & Syria & the holy-land, by the arms of Pompey sacked Ierusalem & put an end to the kingdom of Iudea, in the reign of Tiberius slew the <6r> in that of Vespasian took away the daily sacrifice & cast down the sanctuary, persecuted the Christians & at length separating from the Romans became the Greek Empire seated at Constantinople, & in the Churches of Christians set up the worship of dead men & Images.

This Empire being monarchical & of long continuance & containing precisely the whole body of the Goat, deserved as much to be represented by the last horn of the Goat as the kingdom of Alexander did to be represented by the first great horn between the Goats eyes. The prophesy was for many days at least 2300 that is for so many years: it reaches to the time of the end & the Goat is still in being as are all Daniel's beasts & to this day it signifies the nations of the Greek Empire. And therefore that Empire while in a monarchical form under the Greek Emperors was a horn of the Goat & the most considerable of all the horns. It answers exactly to the Goats last horn & is so very considerable that it ought not to want a representation & there is nothing but that horn to represent it.

If you think it improper that the nations of the Greek Empire in the time of their subjection to the Romans should be represented by a distinct horn, you are to consider that horns signify kingdoms as well united under one common monarch as separate under several monarchs. So the two horns of the Ram signify the kingdoms of Media & Persia under one common king & the eastern & northern horn of the Goat signify the kingdoms of Syria & Asia sometimes under one king sometimes under several. The Goat signifies the four winged kingdom of the Greeks even when united to the Romans & when the Goat signifies that kingdom its not improper to represent it also by a horn of the Goat. The Romans when they inherited the kingdom of Pergamus did not break off or destroy a horn of the Goat, but possess it. By the last will & testament of Attalus, they succeeded him in the throne of his kingdom & reigned in his stead. By that Will they became king of Pergamus, & reigned till they lost that kingdom by the separation of the Greek Empire from the Latin. So far was the succession of the Latines in the kingdom of Pergamus, or their reign over the Greeks, from being an objection, that it was requisite to make good the prophesy concerning this horn. For Daniel saith that it should be mighty but not by its own power. Which is as much as to say that in the time of its greatness it should not act apart by its own power but be mighty by another power superior to its own.

Now whilst the three first Beasts signify to this day all the nations of the Assyrian, Medo-Persian & Grecian Empires <7r> that is, all the nations from India to Greece & Egypt, there remains for the body of the fourth Beast, all the nations of the Roman Empire which lye on this side Greece & Egypt, & which after the division of this Empire between the Greeks & Latines, made up the Latin or Western Empire. And therefore within the compass of these western nations we are to look for the ten horns of the fourth Beast. These Beasts or Kingdoms are distinguished not only by their successive rise or reign but also by their language. The first spake the Assyrian & Chaldean, the second the Persian, the third the Greek, & the fourth the Latin. For the Greek was spoken in all the Greek Empire & not in the Latin, & the Latin was spoken in all the Latin Empire & not in the Greek. By this character therefore the third & fourth Beasts are distinguished even when they are united in dominion. For Daniel<sup>[2]</sup> makes languages as well as nations a mark of distinction

Now the fourth Beast, saith Daniel, was dreadfull & terrible & strong exceedingly & had great iron teeth & nails of brass & devoured & brake in pieces & stamped the residue which its feet, & such was the Roman Empire. Twas more dreadful terrible & strong in battel then any of the former kingdoms & accordingly had a larger dominion & stood much longer then any of them. It devoured, saith Daniel, the whole earth & trode it down & brake it in pieces, & hereby its dominions are distinguished into two parts, the nations which composed the body of the Beast before it began to be considered in this prophesy or which were afterwards devoured by it & converted into its body & the nations which it only trode down & brake in pieces. The first are the nations of the latin empire the other are the nations of the former empires & principally of the Greeks. Those nations it trode down brake in pieces & reigned over but they belong principally to the body of the third Beast. And it was divers from all the beasts that were before it. They were governed by kings, this by a Senate & Consuls. And it had ten horns, that is it became divided into ten kingdoms. It was not so divided at its first rise for then it could not have been so dreadfull & exceeding strong, but in the latter part of its reign it became divided. The first part of its reign is signified by the iron leggs of Nebuchadnezzars statue & in their reign the kingdom is said to be strong as iron & to break in pieces & bruise as iron that breaketh in pieces & subdueth all things. Dan. <8r> 2. 33, 40. The latter part of its reign is signified by the feet of the Statue which consisted of iron & clay mixed together & had ten toes. In respect of the toes Daniel saith that the kingdom shall be divided & in respect of the iron & clay which adhere not together that it shall be partly strong as iron & partly brittle & they shall not cleave together. Dan. 2.41, 42, 43. We are therefore to seek for the ten horns in the latter times of the fourth kingdom when it begins to grow weak & divided. The ten horns out of this kingdom, saith Daniel are ten kings that shall arise & another shall arise after them.

Now the Roman Empire continued in its full strength till the death of Theodosius the great which was 561 years after the conquest of Greece by the Romans, and if at any time it was shaken as in the time of the 30 Tyrants or divided as at the death of Constantine the great it soon recovered & reunited. Theodosius left it divided into the Greek & Latin Empires seated at Rome & Constantinople. The Greek Empire continued intire about 240 years & then lost Syria & Egypt to the Saracens but yet stood above 800 years longer before the Turks overthrew it. The Latin empire stood entire about 12 or 13 years & then at once A.C. 408 & 409 brake into ten kingdoms, the rise of which was as follows.

The Visigoths in the reign of Valens the Emperor invaded the eastern part of the empire, were beaten by Theodosius & upon submission had seats granted them in Thrace as subjects of the Empire A.C. 380. After

the death of Theodosius they rebelled made Alaric their captain & troubled the Eastern Empire for about five years together, & then advancing towards the western empire they were so beaten by Stilico the commander of the forces of that empire that Claudian calls the remainder of their forces tanta ex gente reliquias breves & Prudentius gentem deletam. Thereupon Alaric submitted being so far humbled that Orosius tells us he did pro pace optima et quibuscunque sedibus suppliciter & simpliciter orare. Then Stilico designing by their means to gain the Empire favoured them underhand & after some time procured a military Prefecture for Alaric & sent him into the east in the service of Honorius the western Emperor, committing some Roman troops to his conduct amongst his Goths & promising to follow soon after with his own army. His pretence was to recover some regions

[1] Iustin l. 15

[2] Dan. 3.7, 29 & 6.25. & 7.14

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