



Tribulation, Doctrinal Significance of The Roman Empire

Daniel 2

The context of Daniel 2 is the four Gentile world powers dominating the earth prior to the coming kingdom of Christ. These four Gentile world powers Babylon, Media-Persia, Greece and Rome constitute the time of the Gentiles.

Daniel 2:40-41 talks about the fourth kingdom, the Roman Empire and describes the fourth kingdom from man's view point. Strong, conquering and with two legs and ten toes. The fourth kingdom is a dual type kingdom. Two phases as to time. Two parts as to geography, the Eastern and Western. Two characteristics as to make-up, religious and political.

"Then there will be a fourth kingdom as strong as iron; inasmuch as iron crushes and shatters all things, so, like iron that breaks in pieces, it will crush and break all these in pieces. In that you saw the feet and toes, partly of potter's clay and partly of iron, it will be a divided kingdom; but it will have in it the toughness of iron, inasmuch as you saw the iron mixed with common clay." (Daniel 2:40-41, NASB)

The kingdom will be divided with the strength and toughness of iron and the weakness of clay. The mixing of iron and clay occurs simultaneously, not chronologically. They both occur together. The iron and clay is a mixture of peoples around the world. There is dissension in the ranks of the people, partly weak, partly strong.

Daniel 7

The context of Daniel 7:7-8 is the four kingdoms of the time of the Gentiles. This time is from God's standpoint. God considers them bestial. They are Babylon, Media-Persia, Greece, and Rome.

"After this I kept looking in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast, dreadful and terrifying and extremely strong; and it had large iron teeth. It devoured and crushed and trampled down the remainder with its feet; and it was different from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns. While I was contemplating the horns, behold, another horn, a little one, came up among them, and three of the first horns were pulled out by the roots before it; and behold, this horn possessed eyes like the eyes of a man and a mouth uttering great boasts." (Daniel 7:7-8, NASB)

Daniel 7:7 refers to the fourth kingdom, Rome. The fourth kingdom is described as a beast. Note that it is the kingdom described as a beast, not a person. This will help in the Revelation 13 exegesis. Daniel 7:7 describes the fourth beast as different from the others and having ten horns. In Daniel 7:8, the little horn is a person, whereas the ten horns are ten kingdoms.

The little horn of Daniel 7 is not the same as the little horn of Daniel 8. The little horn of Daniel 7 roots out three of the ten kingdoms (yet future). The little horn of Daniel 7 is the Dictator of the Revived Roman Empire and is described as having great perception and great communication ability.

Revelation 13

The context of Revelation 13 is the Tribulation, which is yet future. The Tribulation is future to John at his writing and future to us. Therefore, the facts of Revelation 13 which relate to the Tribulation must also be future. However, the facts that relate to the fourth kingdom may be past or may be future, depending on which part of the Roman Empire it is talking about. If the phase one part is being discussed then it would be past, prior to 476 AD. If the part discussed is Tribulational, then, of course, it



would be future.

The beast out of the sea is the fourth Gentile power of Daniel 7. This beast is the Roman Empire. Therefore, in the Book of Revelation when the beast is discussed it is talking about the Roman Empire, sometimes the part that is past and sometimes the Tribulational phase which is future. Nevertheless, the fourth Gentile world power is in view.

The fourth beast is described in Revelation 13. The beast has seven heads. Part of which we will find in Revelation 17 is past, some present, and some future. It has ten horns. These are ten kingdoms with heads of state called kings and these are ALL future, not only to John but also to us. It has ten crowns. This is the emphasis on the right to rule and the position of the heads of state.

The fourth kingdom is seen in Revelation as a composite beast, a picture of the characteristics of the others all wrapped up into one. This kingdom has all the previous characteristics. The head of this kingdom gets his power, seat of office, and his right of authority directly from Satan.

The fourth kingdom has seven heads (not people). One of the seven heads is wounded. The wounded head is revived. The world wonders at this. The actions of this revived head (type of government) is described in Revelation 13:4-10.

"they worshiped the dragon because he gave his authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast, and who is able to wage war with him?" There was given to him a mouth speaking arrogant words and blasphemies, and authority to act for forty-two months was given to him. And he opened his mouth in blasphemies against God, to blaspheme His name and His tabernacle, that is, those who dwell in heaven. It was also given to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them, and authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation was given to him. All who dwell on the earth will worship him, everyone whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who has been slain. If anyone has an ear, let him hear. If anyone is destined for captivity, to captivity he goes; if anyone kills with the sword, with the sword he must be killed. Here is the perseverance and the faith of the saints." (Revelation 13:4-10, NASB)

The second beast of Revelation 13 is another of the same kind. This beast is another power of the same kind expressed through a person or course. This power embodied in a person arises from the "earth" which is technical for the land of Palestine, the Jewish people. This second beast would be the power and person of the dictator of Palestine in the Tribulational period. The activities of the second beast in his relation to the first beast are described in Revelation 13:12-18.

"He exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence. And he makes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose fatal wound was healed. He performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down out of heaven to the earth in the presence of men. And he deceives those who dwell on the earth because of the signs which it was given him to perform in the presence of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who had the wound of the sword and has come to life. And it was given to him to give breath to the image of the beast, so that the image of the beast would even speak and cause as many as do not worship the image of the beast to be killed. And he causes all, the small and the great, and the rich and the poor, and the free men and the slaves, to be given a mark on their right hand or on their forehead, and he provides that no one will be able to buy or to sell, except the one who has the mark, either the name of the beast or the number of his name. Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for the number is that of a man; and his number is six hundred and sixty-six." (Revelation 13:12-18, NASB)



Revelation 17 - The Great Harlot

Revelation 17:1-18 gives the different phases of the fourth kingdom, the Roman Empire. The Great Harlot of Revelation 17:1 and the woman of Revelation 17:3-6, Revelation 17:9 and Revelation 17:18 are not the same designation. The Great Harlot is the religious harlot system whereas the woman is a designation of the city of Rome.

"Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and spoke with me, saying, "Come here, I will show you the judgment of the great harlot who sits on many waters," (Revelation 17:1, NASB)

"And he carried me away in the Spirit into a wilderness; and I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast, full of blasphemous names, having seven heads and ten horns. The woman was clothed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a gold cup full of abominations and of the unclean things of her immorality, and on her forehead a name was written, a mystery, "BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH." And I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the witnesses of Jesus. When I saw her, I wondered greatly." (Revelation 17:3-6, NASB)

"Here is the mind which has wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits," (Revelation 17:9, NASB)

"The woman whom you saw is the great city, which reigns over the kings of the earth." (Revelation 17:18, NASB)

The Great Harlot in Revelation 17 is universal in scope, has been embraced by kings from all over the earth, has made the people of the earth "drunk," and is the religious harlot system. The religious harlot system will be destroyed by the peoples under it and in its place will be allegiance to the antichrist and his political system. Rev.17:1-3; Rev. 17:15-16.

"Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and spoke with me, saying, "Come here, I will show you the judgment of the great harlot who sits on many waters, with whom the kings of the earth committed acts of immorality, and those who dwell on the earth were made drunk with the wine of her immorality." And he carried me away in the Spirit into a wilderness; and I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast, full of blasphemous names, having seven heads and ten horns." (Revelation 17:1-3, NASB)

"And he said to me, "The waters which you saw where the harlot sits, are peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues. "And the ten horns which you saw, and the beast, these will hate the harlot and will make her desolate and naked, and will eat her flesh and will burn her up with fire." (Revelation 17:15-16, NASB)

Revelation 17 - The Woman

The woman of Revelation 17 is the city of Rome, clothed with scarlet and riding the beast, the Roman Empire. The woman is described in splendor from the human viewpoint and in iniquity from God's viewpoint. The woman is described as the mother city of the harlot religious system and a persecutor of the saints and producing great awe. Rev. 17:3-6.

"And he carried me away in the Spirit into a wilderness; and I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast, full of blasphemous names, having seven heads and ten horns. The woman was clothed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a gold cup full of abominations and of the unclean things of her immorality, and on her forehead a name was written, a



mystery, "BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH." And I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the witnesses of Jesus. When I saw her, I wondered greatly." (Revelation 17:3-6, NASB)

The mystery of the woman is revealed in Revelation 17:7 and is stated in the rest of the chapter. She is riding on the beast, the Roman Empire. The City of Rome is carried by the Empire. The woman is sitting on seven mountains which are seven forms of government or powers. The term "mountain" in Revelation 17:9 is equal to the Old Testament concept of "horn." The woman, the city of Rome, will reign over the Revived Roman Empire as the location of the political center of the Revived Roman Empire, the fourth Gentile world power.

"And the angel said to me, "Why do you wonder? I will tell you the mystery of the woman and of the beast that carries her, which has the seven heads and the ten horns." (Revelation 17:7, NASB)

"Here is the mind which has wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits," (Revelation 17:9, NASB)

Revelation 17 - The Beast

The beast is the Roman Empire often represented by its head of state. It is seen being ridden by the "woman," the city of Rome. Rome is the capital of the Roman Empire. It is seen as having seven heads (forms of government) and ten kingdoms (horns), national cooperative entities. Rev.17:3; Rev.17:7.

"And he carried me away in the Spirit into a wilderness; and I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast, full of blasphemous names, having seven heads and ten horns." (Revelation 17:3, NASB)

"And the angel said to me, "Why do you wonder? I will tell you the mystery of the woman and of the beast that carries her, which has the seven heads and the ten horns." (Revelation 17:7, NASB)

The beast is seen in three stages in Revelation 17:8. Stage 1 is from the beginning to 476 AD, "was." Stage 2 is from 476 AD to an indefinite time, "is not." Stage 3 "shall ascend out of the bottomless pit," refers to the future in a Revived Roman Empire status.

"The beast that you saw was, and is not, and is about to come up out of the abyss and go to destruction. And those who dwell on the earth, whose name has not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, will wonder when they see the beast, that he was and is not and will come." (Revelation 17:8, NASB)

The beast is seen having seven heads which is equivalent to the seven mountains in Revelation 17:9-10. The seven heads or seven mountains are past, before John, one present to John and one yet future. The first five heads are five forms of government of the Roman Empire up to Julius Caesar. The sixth power or head is the imperial power of the Roman Empire of John's day up to 476 AD. The seventh head is the Revived Roman Empire power, yet future, and the eighth is the person of the antichrist who arises out of the seventh power. The man out of the Empire. Rev.17:10-11.

"Here is the mind which has wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits, and they are seven kings; five have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come; and when he comes, he must remain a little while." (Revelation 17:9-10, NASB)

"and they are seven kings; five have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come; and when he comes, he must remain a little while. The beast which was and is not, is himself also an eighth and is one of the seven, and he goes to destruction." (Revelation 17:10-11, NASB)



The fourth kingdom will have ten horns and ten kings, the power and the persons, yet future. They will get their authority from the head of the Revived Roman Empire. These 10 nations or kingdoms give all their allegiance to the fourth kingdom. They will unite in war against Christ and lose. Rev. 17:12-14.

"The ten horns which you saw are ten kings who have not yet received a kingdom, but they receive authority as kings with the beast for one hour. These have one purpose, and they give their power and authority to the beast. These will wage war against the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, because He is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those who are with Him are the called and chosen and faithful." (Revelation 17:12-14, NASB)

The people under the domination of the religious harlot system shall turn their allegiance from that religious system and give it to the great political ten national empire of the antichrist. Rev. 17:15-16. They will destroy the religious harlot system in the process.

"And he said to me, The waters which you saw where the harlot sits, are peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues. And the ten horns which you saw, and the beast, these will hate the harlot and will make her desolate and naked, and will eat her flesh and will burn her up with fire." (Revelation 17:15-16, NASB)

The geographical center for the activity of this fourth bestial kingdom, the Revived Roman Empire, is the city of Rome from which the world of nations, ten kingdoms, specifically will be governed. In Revelation 18, the destruction of this great Empire of Rome is described. This will take place at the end or near the end of the Tribulation.

Revelation 12 and 13

In Revelation 12:3-4, we have the seven head and ten horn beast directly related to the fall of Satan in heaven, thus tying it directly with the Angelic Conflict and also the functioning opposition to the nation Israel who is the woman in this passage. The child is a reference to Christ, the woman to Israel, the dragon to Satan. The dragon of Revelation 12:3 is parallel to the dragon of Revelation 13:4.

"Then another sign appeared in heaven: and behold, a great red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads were seven diadems. And his tail swept away a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that when she gave birth he might devour her child." (Revelation 12:3-4, NASB)

"they worshiped the dragon because he gave his authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, Who is like the beast, and who is able to wage war with him?" (Revelation 13:4, NASB)