

Chapter Two

The Vision of Four Beasts

Daniel 7:1-28

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. 2 Daniel spake and said, I saw in my vision by night, and, behold, the four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea. 3 And four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another. 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.

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. 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.

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. 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.

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. 11 I beheld then because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake: 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.

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.

Daniel's Visions Interpreted

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. 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 for ever, even for ever and ever.

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. 21 I beheld, and the same 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.

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. 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. 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. 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.

To begin with, let us have a closer look at these three verses:

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.

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;

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.

In this vision the fourth beast is said to be devouring and stamping the residue. The Aramaic word represented by the Hebrew word *sha'ar* or *shear*; **Strong's #7605 and #7606: a remainder, other, remnant, residue, rest.** Residue in English also means: that which remains; the remainder; the rest of them; or the others. In the context it refers to the other **three kingdoms. In verse 23 the term "the residue" is rephrased as ". . . the whole earth" which would clearly include the other kingdoms.** There is nothing in the context of this passage to give any indication that the other three beasts conquered or stamped or destroyed each other in a chronological progression. Rather, it indicates that they were all contemporary kingdoms being stamped on by the fourth kingdom.

Consider this verse also:

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

First of all, we take note that the Aramaic word represented by the Hebrew word *shear* is here translated **'rest', the very same word that is used for 'residue'.** (It seems to me that English translators use as many different words as possible for the same word. I do it myself when writing so as not to get repetitive. Means you have to pay close attention to detail.) When we take into consideration the context of the whole passage, it becomes clear that the fourth kingdom is the instrument that takes away the dominion **of the other three kingdoms by "stamping" or "trampling" them and that the existence of those kingdoms remains for a "season and a time"**, until the coming of The Kingdom of God which shall never be destroyed.

What makes this verse difficult to comprehend is that it comes after the scene before the judgment seat **with the Ancient of Days and confusion can arise if we think it's a continuation of the activities before the Throne.**

However, when we realise that it is but a change of subject in the narrative beginning with the phrase **"As concerning the rest", or "As concerning the residue" as it could be translated, the confusion is removed.** These days we would probably say **"By the way" rather than "As concerning" to introduce the short statement about the other three kingdoms which the fourth beast tramples.** Nevertheless, the rest **of the verse makes it clear that the "rest of the beasts" lose their dominion, but remain in existence for "a season and a time".**

In the previous chapter when we discussed Daniel Chapter 2, we found the description of the procession of the earthly kingdoms that would follow the reign of Nebuchadnezzar and it is primarily Babylon centred, as the dream was actually given to the king to show him what would follow after his reign. In contrast, the Chapter 7 scenario includes the whole earth and focuses on kingdoms that would have dominion over all mankind.

Let us now let Scripture shine light on this passage of Scripture. These verses from Daniel will give us some insight into the nature of these beast kingdoms.

Daniel 10:13

But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days: but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me; and I remained there with the kings of Persia.

When the angel Gabriel came to Daniel, he mentioned a little of the spiritual battle that he and the angel Michael were involved in. He mentioned the “kings of Persia” and in so doing he calls the ruling powers of darkness ‘kings’.

Throughout the long and detailed prophecy in Daniel Chapter 11, that covers a period of about 500 years, there are repeated references to the king of the South and the king of the North. Gabriel in his message to Daniel speaks of these two kings in the singular, even while detailing the actions of several Greek leaders that succeeded each other in the natural. As we continue with the following verses it will become increasingly apparent that these kings are spiritual entities that hold sway over the earthly kingdoms.

Ephesians 6:12

For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

The apostle Paul refers to these spiritual beings as principalities, powers and rulers of the darkness of this age. Let’s get back to Daniel.

Daniel 7:2-3

Daniel spake and said, I saw in my vision by night, and, behold, the four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea. 3 And four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another.

Daniel 7:16-17

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

The Aramaic word that corresponds to the Hebrew word for ‘wind’ is also translated ‘spirit’. The word is *ruach*, used over forty times in the Hebrew Scriptures in the phrase *Ruach Elohim* which is translated Spirit of God. In a similar passage from the prophet Zechariah, who was a contemporary of Daniel, we find the alternative translation of the Hebrew word *ruach*:

Zechariah 6:5,7

And the angel answered and said unto me, These are the four spirits of the heavens, which go forth from standing before the Lord of all the earth.

7 . . . So they walked to and fro through the earth.

Zechariah tells us there are four spirits of the heavenly spiritual realm. In Daniel 7:2, if we use the alternative translation of *ruach*, we can get some insight into the meaning intended. The four spirits of heaven were stirring up the “sea”, which verse 17 interprets as “the earth”.

It is clear then, that the 'sea' is the 'sea of humanity' of all the earth that Jesus speaks metaphorically of in His parable of the dragnet (Matthew 13:47-50). From this 'sea', these great beasts arise, which are four 'kings' (Daniel 7:17) and as we have just seen, these 'kings' are the spiritual principalities and powers which hold sway over people and are the enemy with which the angels do battle. By way of reminder, the word 'spirits' in the passage from Zechariah is the exact same Hebrew word that gives us 'winds' in Daniel 7.

Here is another Scripture from Hosea that speaks with similar imagery that I believe sheds more light on this subject:

Hosea 13:7-10 NKJV

“So I will be to them like a lion; like a leopard by the road I will lurk; 8 I will meet them like a bear deprived of her cubs; I will tear open their rib cage, and there I will devour them like a lion. The wild beast shall tear them.

9 “O Israel, you are destroyed, but your help is from Me. 10 I will be your King.

These verses in their context are speaking to Ephraim, the leading tribe of the Kingdom of Israel that was to be scattered among the Gentiles, and God was warning them that through these four beasts (lion, leopard, bear and 'wild beast'), **they would be afflicted with destruction, yet promising them that He** was their help. These beasts were going to be out in the world where Israel was going to be, four beasts that would devour them because of their apostasy even when the Lord was there to be their King and help if they would but turn to Him. God gave them over to their pagan ways and this was the warning **of the consequences. Typical Israel, they didn't listen.**

The fourth beast is a particularly evil beast indeed which will end up ruling the whole earth and **persecuting the saints until the “dividing of time” and is destroyed when Christ shall come to culminate** the Kingdom of God. It seems that it is He, and only He, that will conquer this beast.

Daniel 7:9

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.

At the beginning of this verse we have the phrase: “thrones were cast down”. Most modern translations render this as “thrones set up”, or “set in place”, or some such phrase. The Hebrew word for cast is *remah* and is used in all the following verses throughout the book of Daniel. (3:6, 11, 15, 20, 21, 24; 6:7, 12, 16, 24; 7:9; 8:7, 12; 11:12). In Chapter 3 it refers to being cast into the fiery furnace. In Chapter 6 it is being cast into the lion's den. With Daniel 8:7 it is the Goat casting down the Ram in the vision. Daniel 8:12 has it as the Sanctuary being cast down. In Daniel 11:12 it is the casting down of tens of thousands by a conquering king. Daniel never used this word as setting something up, it is always used as casting down. I believe the King James Version has it correct and Young's Literal Translation confirms it:

Daniel 7:9 YLT

I was seeing till that thrones have been thrown down, and the Ancient of Days is seated

When Christ comes, the thrones of this final beast kingdom are cast down (and any other thrones) and the beast is defeated, the Ancient of Days will be seated on His Throne, the court shall be seated and the books shall be opened. It looks like Judgment Day when all authorities and powers are made subject

unto Him (see also 1 Corinthians 15:25). The saints will inherit the Kingdom that is promised to them and all other kingdoms will be destroyed forever.

The interpretation of Daniel's vision is limited in its details with regard to the identity of the various beasts. Although the fourth beast has more said about it, it is still left somewhat vague as far as who or what this kingdom actually is when it appears on the scene. The only identifying comments are mostly concerned with what the beast actually does; it tramples the rest. And as for the other three beasts, the only comments we have are scant: the leopard beast has dominion given to it and later the three beasts have their dominion taken away and their lives **prolonged for a "season and a time"**.

Many prophecy pundits have theorised that the four beasts in the vision are four successive kingdoms, basically subscribing to the idea that the vision is but a confirmation of their interpretation of **Nebuchadnezzar's** dream that asserts a four kingdom paradigm. With examination of the details, we discovered that the four kingdom scenario for Daniel Chapter 2 cannot be supported for there are in fact five kingdoms referred to in that dream of the statue, which we found to be confirmed by the testimony of history.

We then discovered in God's Word that there are four spirits in the heavenly realm which go out into all the world (Zechariah 6:5-7; Hosea 13:7-8; Daniel 7:2). **When one surveys the spectrum of the world's belief systems**, we find that the entire multitude of all religions outside of the revelation of God found in the Holy Bible can be reduced into four categories. This is because outside of Christ, people have four basic dispositions toward God: 1. They deny His existence, which gives place to Atheism and Pantheism; 2. They make Him just one of many gods, which creates Polytheism; 3. They acknowledge His existence but have no personal relationship with Him and consequently have no idea what He is really like, thus forming Monotheism, of which we find there are two main streams of thought: Deism and Theism; 4. Then there is Anti-Christ, which is singled out from the Monotheistic beliefs because it directly attacks the reality of the Father and the Son with the purpose **of eventually presenting another 'Christ'**. **And so we have these four principalities and powers prevailing over the earth: Atheism; Polytheism; Monotheism; Anti-Christ.** Four ruling spirits of the heavenly or spiritual realm.

Let us now take a look at the four beasts in Daniel: Warning, although based on what has so far been presented, some of what follows is my opinion.

The First Beast: A lion with eagle's wings.

Daniel 7:4 NKJV

The first was like a lion, and had eagle's wings. I watched till its wings were plucked off; and it was lifted up from the earth and made to stand on two feet like a man, and a man's heart was given to it.

The First Beast: Atheism

Pantheism and Atheism are two sides of the same coin. Saying that everything is God (Pantheism) is **effectively saying there is no God. The thought is, "I'm God, you're God, everyone and everything thing is God."** **This line of thinking reduces God to nothing that can be related to; some kind of cosmic consciousness without personality.** Pantheism is found primarily in the teachings of Buddhism; which is a spiritual form of Atheism. It is also found in the philosophy of the New Age Movement. China, which is predominately Buddhist, finds no problem aligning itself with atheistic communism because it is the same spiritually. Buddhism first arose in southern Nepal and spread rapidly into Asia and India, later into China, Southeast Asia and Sri Lanka, otherwise known as Ceylon. It then declined in India due to the rise of Hinduism and later Islam. Estimates of **the world's population of Atheists and Pantheistic Buddhists** vary greatly from around 350 million to well over a billion.

The description of it being a lion with wings that are later plucked off, could refer to its powerful and rapid initial growth, it flew, but plucked wings defining its much inhibited proselytization in later years. **A man's heart given to it perhaps signifying its humanistic nature, something that developed as it went along.** This aspect of Atheism is expressed in the philosophy of Humanism and Communism.

The Second Beast: A bear with ribs in its mouth.

Daniel 7:5 NKJV

“And suddenly another beast, a second, like a bear. It was raised up on one side, and had three ribs in its mouth between its teeth. And they said thus to it: ‘Arise, devour much flesh!’

The Second Beast: Polytheism.

The primary organised religion that promotes Polytheism is Hinduism, which is a fusion or synthesis of various Indian cultures and traditions, with diverse roots and no founder. Basically a formalization and systemization of the rampant Polytheism that prevailed among the various tribes who worshipped **a multitude of gods after the tower of Babel. This ‘Hindu Synthesis’ developed into the oppressive caste system that prevails throughout India to this day.** Estimates of the world population of Hindus is somewhere around one billion. Polytheism includes all the various animalistic cultures around the world.

The bear with three ribs in its mouth that devours much flesh suitably and accurately describes the manner in which the upper caste devours the lower castes in society. In all polytheistic cultures, the priesthood and witch doctors devour the common people through fears and superstitions. The bear having no wings never moved much from where it originated, clings stubbornly to its traditions and is not particularly proselytistic.

The Third Beast: A leopard with four heads and four wings.

Daniel 7:6 NKJV

“After this I looked, and there was another, like a leopard, which had on its back four wings of a bird. The beast also had four heads, and dominion was given to it.

The Third Beast: Monotheism.

This spiritual power includes all monotheistic religions, whether deistic or theistic. Includes, but not limited to, the Sikh and Bahai faiths, and Judaism; and the most dominant manifestation is false Christianity which began to be formed immediately after the apostolic age, though the seeds were being planted even in New Testament times. True Christianity is an ongoing spiritual experience with the Holy Spirit that provides a personal relationship with God through His Son, Jesus Christ. The effect of this beast is always to block, remove or suppresses that reality so that one is simply left with a religion whose adherents are holding fast to a form of godliness that denies the power thereof (2 Timothy 3:5).

Evidence of its foundations being laid can be found in the writings of the ‘church fathers’ and it was well established and institutionalised by the fourth century during the reign of the Roman Emperor Constantine. During the Dark Ages there were four main streams: the Roman Catholic Church, the Greek Orthodox, the Russian Orthodox and the Egyptian Coptic. All of these are branches of the same tree, filled with damnable doctrines that take people to perdition: Mariolatry, transubstantiation, an elevated priesthood, praying to ‘saints’, a works based salvation of legalism, formalism, ritualism,

allegorism, a distorted representation of Jesus and a host of other false doctrines characterize this beast. Whenever it manages to assume political power, it has historically persecuted not only true believers, but anyone who attempts to resist its totalitarianism, and they do this believing they are doing God service and sometimes they even do it in the name of Jesus.

By the way, this author understands that there are true believers in Christ that work within the structures erected by this beast to turn the hearts of those caught up in the influence of this particular religious spirit to the love and power and truth of God. May the Lord bless their efforts and strengthen them to build His Kingdom in the hearts of those they find themselves among.

The four heads of the leopard represent the four primary denominations mentioned above and their multiple offspring. The four wings denote its ability to rapidly spread around the world. The spots of the leopard represent its ability to camouflage itself as genuine Christianity. Many Christians simply fail to discern this beast and come under the effects of this religious principality and power. Most **probably they don't lose their salvation, but they certainly suffer from a form of Christianity that lacks** the power of the Holy Spirit. Historically, every outpouring of the Spirit that has brought revival has eventually been squashed by this evil principality which continually influences: toward a turning of the grace of God into licentiousness and lewdness (Jude 1:4); toward self-effort and legalism that effectively denies the grace of God altogether (Galatians 3:3); or a return to the philosophies of this world as with the acceptance in some denominations of a form of universalism. These three forms of unbelief are warned of in Colossians 2:1-3:11.

The multitude of spots on the leopard could also represent the countless sects and cults this beast is clothed with. Interestingly, this particular beast was singled out to receive dominion in verse 6 and it is quite apparent that wherever it goes it establishes an authoritarian hierarchy or oligarchy within its structure and historically has found the ability to rise into political power. This is in direct conflict with **Jesus' statement that His Kingdom was not of this world. It is also in contradiction of Jesus' command** to His disciples to not exercise authority nor act like lords as the rulers of the Gentiles do (Matthew 20:25-28; 23:1-12): **"It shall not be so among you . . . he who would be great among you, let him be the servant of all."**

The ability to camouflage itself is part of the natural state of this beast which is also one of the main characteristics of the false teachers that the apostles warned the church of in various passages:

Jude 1:4 NKJV

For certain men have crept in unnoticed, who long ago were marked out for this condemnation, ungodly men, who turn the grace of our God into lewdness and deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ.

2 Peter 2:1 NKJV

But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, *and* bring on themselves swift destruction.

2 Corinthians 11:13-15 NKJV

For such *are* false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. 14 And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. 15 Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works.

Matthew 7:15

Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.

WOW. They creep in unnoticed; they secretly bring in heresies; they transform themselves into **ministers of righteousness; they come as wolves in sheep's clothing. There are many more Scriptures** describing the people that Jesus said would **come in His Name to deceive. Don't think for a minute that** these have not been in our midst and active in our days.

Basically, this beast is always working to reduce Christianity to a religion rather than a relationship with God through Christ. It appears Christian but it is not. Some call this beast Christendom, others call it Churchianity or Institutionalism and still others have coined the term Pagan Christianity. Many have adopted the term Mystery Babylon, exhorting believers to come out of it. Estimated adherents to the multitude of sects and cults could be as many as two billion worldwide. Who knows?

The Fourth Beast: The Ten Horned Beast

Daniel 7:7 NKJV

"After this I saw in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, exceedingly strong. It had huge iron teeth; it was devouring, breaking in pieces, and trampling the residue with its feet. It was different from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns.

The Fourth Beast: Antichrist.

Antichrist is also monotheistic. And whilst the Bible says that there are many antichrists, it also makes clear that there is The Antichrist. A number of sects and cults have been defined as antichrist because **they present a false Christ to the world: Jehovah's Witnesses, Christadelphians, Mormons, etc.** By biblical definition they are actually Pseudo Christian and as such are included in the previous beast. True Antichrist is described in the Word of God as one who denies the Father and the Son.

1 John 2:22-23 NKJV

Who is a liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist who denies the Father and the Son. 23 Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father either; he who acknowledges the Son has the Father also.

Whilst the Catholics and the aforementioned cults deny the Father and the Son in subtle ways: by distorting the **meaning of the term 'Son of God'; supplanting the ministry of Jesus somewhat** by adding Mary to the quotient; placing other mediators in place of Christ by praying to saints etc.; **they don't actually come out and say, "God has no Son". The only world-wide religion that explicitly denies the Father and the Son in direct statements from their so called holy book is Islam.** The Koran (or Quran) of Islam directly attacks the revelation that we have of Jesus coming as God manifested in the flesh, dying on the cross and being bodily resurrected from the dead to ascend into Heaven. The Koran says, **"God has no son." The Koran says, "It is blasphemy to say God has a son."** (Here's a list of some Koran quotes on this subject for those interested: 2:116; 5:116; 6:101; 9:30; 10:68; 19:35; 19:88; 23:91; 39:4; 43:82; 72:3; 112:1-4)

Islam is pure Antichrist and it is on the rise. A study of Islam and its 'theology' reveals that it is indeed a ready-made cloak for the Antichrist, a tailor made religion for the 'man of sin'. Islamic theology has a character called the Mahdi; their version of Messiah. How that will evolve I don't really know. We shall

just have to wait and see. My guess is that the magnitude of the lying signs and wonders that this man of sin will demonstrate will be sufficient to take the hearts of the unbelieving and the unrepentant in that day.

Daniel 7:23-25

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. 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. 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.

2 Thessalonians 2:3-4 NKJV

Let no one deceive you by any means; for *that Day will not come* unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, 4 who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.

How long it will take this kingdom to subdue the whole world and bring forth its ten kings I don't know. That it is here today on the world scene is quite clear. I would not be surprised, though considerably dismayed, to see Europe become Eurabia in my lifetime. I hope not. In the process of its takeover, it seems that Atheism, Polytheism and Monotheism will all be utterly oppressed but not completely eliminated when the Antichrist kingdom rules the world before the Return of Christ.

Another look at Daniel's description of the manifestation of this beast prior to the coming culmination of the Kingdom of God gives us some notable 'signs of the times'.

Daniel 7:24-25

“. . . out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise”

“. . . another shall rise after them;”

“he . . . shall subdue three kings.”

“he shall speak great words against the most High”

“. . . 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.

Most translators render “wear out” as “persecute”. So then: ten kings, followed by an eleventh who subdues three of the ten and is the one that speaks against the Most High God and exalts himself. Pretty easy to recognise when the time comes. These signs would probably be before the sun gets darkened and the moon loses its light as mentioned by Jesus. Someday, perhaps not in our time, but sometime we shall surely see.

Although this chapter is about the Four Beasts, I think it is pertinent to take a closer look at this last phrase in order to understand what it is actually saying about the end of the age.

Daniel 7:25

. . . a time and times and the dividing of time.

By way of reminder, this portion of Scripture was written in Aramaic which is a 'sister' language to Hebrew with many words being identical or similar. The word rendered 'time' is the Aramaic word *iddah* and refers to menstruation and it corresponds with the Hebrew word *iddan*, which is variously translated: **moment, period of time, situation, appointed time etc.** We still call a woman's time of menstruation a period.

To suggest this word means year in this verse as many Bible versions have is most unfortunate for there is a distinctly different Aramaic word for year and that word is *shena* or *shenah*. The corresponding Hebrew word for 'year' or 'years' is *shana*, which is used about 800 times throughout Scripture. Its also used by the Jews for their New Years Day which they call *Rosh Ha Shanah*, meaning 'head of the year'. The KJV's use of the word 'time' is at least literal if not fully understandable. What follows will help with the understanding.

The Common English Bible renders "time and times" as follows:

Daniel 7:25 CEB

. . . period of time, periods of time . . .

In this they got it accurately. However, along with most Bible versions, they render the KJV word "dividing" as "half a period" or "half a year", though a few versions agree with the KJV. The Aramaic word that is translated "dividing" is *pelag*. The Hebrew rendition of this word is *palag*, or *Peleg*, which is also translated 'divide' or 'divided' and refers to the land being divided by water; as in canals or rivers or streams. Peleg, the first man recorded to die after the flood was named after the event that divided the earth, probably when the melt back from the ice age divided the continents and made many islands (Genesis 10:25). So it is that *Pelag* or *palag* more literally means the dividing of time, in particular between this age and the age to come, in other words: the end of the age. Let us now take note of its context where we find these words:

Daniel 7:25-26

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. 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.

Do you see it? The last earthly kingdom is persecuting the saints until the dividing of time and then the judgment is made and the saints inherit the everlasting Kingdom. In the light of that which I have discovered, here's a paraphrase of how I believe this verse should be rendered:

Daniel 7:25 My Version

And the saints shall be given into his hand from time to time until the dividing of time at the end of the age.

For more on this subject see “A Time, Times **and Half a Time**” in the **Appendix of Every Believer’s Prophecy Guide** for a fuller explanation of the use of this phrase elsewhere in scripture.

Okay, back to the subject of the four beasts. I need to point out that I am not the first to suggest a spiritual reality to the beast kingdoms of Daniel Chapter 7. Adolph Ernst Knoch, who brought forth the Concordant Literal New Testament, wrote along these lines in the early 1900s. His version of the Bible was an attempt to overcome the vagaries of translation but ended up being too difficult to read and thus never became popular. Good for a reference only. His theory differs a little from mine as Islam was not on the radar with regard to Bible prophecy back then. Bible prophecy scholarship tended to be more Eurocentric, which it still mostly is. With the resurgence of modern day Islam, awareness of the Muslim Empire as the fifth kingdom of Daniel Chapter 2 is growing and has stirred prophecy pundits to re-evaluate their eschatological prognostics to a more Middle Eastern centred paradigm. Wherever Islam goes and becomes dominant, it crushes all other religions under its feet with ruthless force. It is infiltrating western civilisation at an astounding pace at the time of this writing (2017AD). Europe **seems to be committing cultural suicide, it’s just not rational. From** a spiritual point of view, however, it is completely understandable.

2 Thessalonians 2:9-12 NKJV

The coming of the *lawless one* is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, 10 and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. 11 And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, 12 that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

Yep, it’s entirely spiritual. Because they do not receive the “love of the truth”, God will deliver them to “the lie”, He will send them “strong delusion”. The God of love will not put up with evil forever. It’s simply not the loving thing to do.

Now we can see how these two passages from Daniel converge when it comes to the final kingdom that Christ will destroy when He comes. Whereas Daniel 2 is describing geo-political kingdoms, Daniel 7 is describing the spiritual kingdoms that prevail among the nations despite their geo-political boundaries. The kingdom that destroyed the dominion of Rome is different from all other kingdoms that have gone before it as it is both a geopolitical power AND it is a spiritual religious theocracy. When this is understood, one can easily put aside all previous efforts to reconcile the two passages: Scripture, history, and the present day Middle East scenario, all bear witness to the fact that the fifth kingdom of Daniel 2 **with its ‘feet and ten toes’** is also the fourth kingdom of Daniel 7 **with its ‘ten horns’** and it is EVIL AS. This final earthly kingdom definitely is not the long extinguished Roman Empire reconstituted. It is Islam, and its nature is to trample all other religions once it establishes itself within a host nation AND unlike any other religion, in its **‘holy books’** it denies the Father and the Son. It is this kingdom which will be prevailing over the earth when Jesus returns in power and glory to bring in the culmination of His Kingdom which will never end, a Kingdom that has a New Heaven and a New Earth where everlasting righteousness reigns. Hallelujah!

Interestingly, Islamists rarely completely wipe out the religions they conquer. Whilst they execute many, they often prefer to oppress them and make them second class citizens (*dhimmis*) with practically no rights, subjecting them to random acts of violence (in contrast to random acts of kindness) and forcing them to pay a special tax called *jizra*, otherwise known as extortion money. Thus the description of this kingdom allowing the other kingdoms to live but have no dominion seems to fit (Daniel 7:12). Nevertheless, it is pure Antichrist and it is on the rise today.