

4.3 - Beasts, Heads, and Horns

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Both Daniel and John are given important information concerning the identity of various symbols employed in the book of Revelation. In his night vision, Daniel sees four beasts, one of which has ten horns (Dan. 7:1-28). In John's vision, he sees two beasts, one of which has seven heads and ten horns (Rev. 13:1⁺; Rev 17:3⁺, Rev 17:7⁺) and another which has a single head with two horns (Rev. 13:11⁺). Although the fact that both Daniel and John saw beasts and horns does not necessarily mean their visions are related, there are a number of other characteristics concerning their visions which indicate that God was showing each of them different aspects of the same kings and kingdoms related to Gentile dominion throughout history and the final form of Gentile power at the return of Messiah (Dan. 7:13-14, 26-27; Rev. 19:11-20⁺). Perhaps the single most difficult aspect for interpreters of passages involving the beasts, heads, and horns is accounting for their differences while at the same time appreciating their similarities. In various passages, all three symbols—beasts, heads, and horns—are said to be "kings" (Dan. 7:14, 24; Rev. 17:10⁺). In addition, sometimes kings represent sequential rulers and their representative kingdoms and other times contemporaneous kings within a single kingdom (Dan. 7:6; 8:8; Rev. 17:10⁺). And if that were not enough, the distinction between an individual *king* and the *kingdom* which he represents is not always readily discerned.

4.3.1 - Nebuchadnezzar's Dream and Daniel's Vision

In order to understand the significance of the symbols which John saw in the book of Revelation, we need to first become familiar with some of the things which Daniel was shown pertaining to Gentile dominion and the time of the end. Although the book of Daniel contains a tremendous amount of material which bears upon the book of Revelation and the activities of the [Antichrist](#), we will limit our examination to two main passages which deal with the sequence of kingdoms leading to the second return of Christ. (See our discussion of [The 70th Week of Daniel](#) elsewhere.) The first of these is Nebuchadnezzar's dream consisting of an image made up of differing metals which Daniel interprets (Dan. 2:31-45). The second is Daniel's night vision of four vicious beasts which arise from the sea (Dan. 7:1-28). When these two passages are compared, it becomes evident that they represent two different perspectives on the same subject: four major world kingdoms which constitute the *times of the Gentiles* during which Israel will be precluded from full control of her land and her promised blessing in the [Messianic Kingdom](#). Each of the passages begins with a description of the Babylonian kingdom of which Daniel was currently a captive (having been deported from Jerusalem, Dan. 1:1-6) and closes with the final Gentile kingdom being destroyed by God's kingdom on earth. Several aspects are seen from a comparison of the related passages:

- **Perspective** - Nebuchadnezzar's dream describes the series of kingdoms from *man's perspective*. They appear as a beautiful image comprised of various metals, some precious. Daniel's night vision describes the same kingdoms from *God's perspective*. They appear as a series of vicious beasts.¹
- **Downward Trend** - In both passages, the sequence shows a downward trend. In Nebuchadnezzar's dream, the head of the image is *gold*, the chest and arms of *silver*, the belly and thighs of *bronze*, the legs of *iron*, and the feet of iron and partly *clay*. The value of each metal reduces as the kingdoms advance. At the same time, the strength of each metal grows stronger with each kingdom until the last kingdom which contains two extremes: the strength of iron and the weakness of clay. In Daniel's night vision, the last beast is uniquely terrible compared with the preceding beasts and much additional information is given concerning this last beast.²
- **Broken by God** - Both the image and the last beast are destroyed directly by God. This tells us that the kingdoms represented by the series of precious metals and the ferocious beasts spans from Daniel's time until God's kingdom comes on earth. (See [The Arrival of God's Kingdom](#))

Most conservative interpreters, who believe the book of Daniel to be [inspired](#) (Mat. 24:15; Mark 13:14), interpret the four metals and four beasts as representing the kingdoms of Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome.³

Gentile Kingdoms⁴

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Kingdom	Beautiful Statue (Seen by Nebuchadnezzar: Man's Perspective) Dan. 2:31-35	Vicious Beast (Seen by Daniel: God's Perspective) Dan. 7:1-28
Babylon (Dan. 2:38).	Head of gold (Dan. 2:32, 37).	<i>Like</i> a lion with eagle's wings (Dan. 7:4). 5
Medo-Persia (Dan. 2:39).	Chest and arms of silver (Dan. 2:32).	<i>Like</i> a bear with three ribs (Dan. 7:5). 6
Greece (Macedonian, Dan. 2:39).	Belly and thighs of bronze (Dan. 2:32).	<i>Like</i> a leopard with four wings and four heads (Dan. 7:6). 7
Rome (Dan. 2:40).	Legs of iron (Dan. 2:33).	A <i>unique</i> beast dreadful and terrible (Dan. 7:7, 19-20, 23-25). 8
Rome divided and dispersed (Dan. 2:41-43).	Feet partly of iron and partly of clay, [ten] toes (Dan. 2:33, 41).	Ten horns, a little horn, slain (Dan. 7:8, 11; Rev. 19:20 ⁺).
Millennial Kingdom (Dan. 2:44-45). 9	Stone cut without hands, strikes image, fills entire earth (Dan. 2:34, 35).	Son of Man (Da 7:13-14, 18, 22, 26).

4.3.2 - Symbols of Kingdoms

Having compared Nebuchadnezzar's dream and Daniel's night vision, we are now better prepared to take in the "big picture" concerning the various beasts, heads, and horns seen by John in the book of Revelation. The diagram below illustrates the major symbols in the visions given to Daniel and John concerning the beasts, heads, and horns which contribute to an understanding of the book of Revelation. The beasts, heads, and horns represent kings and kingdoms.

Seven Heads and Ten Horns of Daniel and Revelation



The chart above is called an *entity-relationship* diagram. It contains *entities* (within rounded rectangles) and *relationships* (shown as arrows between entities). The main purpose of the diagram is to identify each entity from the prophetic Scriptures and to show how it relates to the other entities. Each entity is numbered for identification. When reading the diagram, the following points should be born in mind:

- **Numbers** - Each symbol is identified by a unique sequential number. For example, the *Sea* (upper right) is #2. This number can be used to locate the description pertaining to the item below: [#2 - Sea](#). In some cases, symbols are grouped within a larger symbol which is described by its own sequence number. For example, both the [#2 - Sea](#) and the [#3 - Earth](#) are within the [#1 - Whole World](#).
- **Relationships** - Arrows indicate relationships between symbols. The type of relationship depends upon the type of arrow, as seen in the legend.
- **Identifying Arrows** - In the descriptions which follow, arrows are identified by a pair of numbers within brackets separated by a dash. The first number identifies the symbol where the arrow originates and the second number identifies the symbol where the arrow terminates. For example, the arrow between [#2 - Sea](#) and [#8 - Four Beasts/Kings](#) is designated by ^[#2-#8].
- **Identity** - With the exception of symbols colored gray, symbols which appear in the same color are understood to represent different aspects of the *same entity*. In our diagram, [#13 - Seventh King](#), [#16 - Beast](#), and [#25 - Little Horn](#) all appear in the same color since each symbol denotes different aspects of the reign of the same individual: [Antichrist](#).

The descriptions follow in the numeric order given in the diagram.

4.3.2.1 - #1 - Whole World

The whole world consists of the [sea](#) which the [four beasts](#) rise out of ^[#2-#8] (Dan. 7:3) and the [earth or land](#) from which the [four kings](#) ^[#3-#8] (Dan. 7:17) and the [False Prophet](#) ^[#3-#18] (Rev. 13:11⁺) arise. The [Harlot](#) "who sits on many waters" (Rev. 17:17⁺) is supported, in some sense, by the "peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues" upon which she sits ^[#2-#21] (Rev. 17:15⁺).¹⁰ The [False Prophet](#) causes the [whole world](#) to make an [image of the beast](#) ^[#1-#19] (Rev. 13:14⁺). The [terrible beast](#) is said to devour the whole

earth^[#12-#1] (Dan. 7:23) and the [beast](#) is given authority over every tribe, tongue, and nation^[#16-#1] (Rev. 13:7⁺). See [Symbols of Kingdoms](#).

4.3.2.2 - #2 - Sea

Together with the [earth](#), the sea makes up the [whole world](#). Both land and sea together denote all regions of the earth. At times, the sea denotes *Gentile nations* whereas the earth (or land) denotes *the Jews*. See commentary on [Revelation 10:2](#). See [Symbols of Kingdoms](#).

4.3.2.3 - #3 - Earth

Together with the [sea](#), the earth makes up the [whole world](#). Both land and sea together denote all regions of the earth. At times, the earth (or land) denotes *the Jews* whereas the sea denotes *the Gentile nations*. See commentary on [Revelation 10:2](#). See [Symbols of Kingdoms](#).

4.3.2.4 - #4 - Seven Heads/Kings

In the book of Daniel, all we find mentioned in relation to the sequence of kingdoms is the *four* beasts and the corresponding *four* metals of [Nebuchadnezzar's dream](#). There, we find that the fourth beast has *ten* horns, but nowhere is there explicit mention of *seven* heads (but see [Daniel saw Seven Heads](#)). We do find one helpful bit of information related to our topic because the *ten* horns were said to be on the *head* of the fourth beast. This is helpful when we come to the book of Revelation because it hints at a correlation between *beasts* and *heads* and indicates that the *ten* horns are found upon the head of the last beast, not distributed across several heads. When Daniel sees his vision, the duration of all four beast/kings is yet future. Thus, he was shown *four* beasts, which are said to be “four kings *which* arise out of the earth” (Dan. 7:17).¹¹ At the time John wrote Revelation, all four beasts had already arisen. Babylon, Medo-Persia, and Greece had already come and gone and the initial phase of the Roman empire was in progress. Thus, John's vision in relation to the *identity* of the kings is from a perspective of his day, taking in the entire sweep of history—past, present and future. John's [beast](#) has seven heads^[#16-#4] (Rev. 13:1⁺; Rev 17:3⁺, Rev 17:7⁺).

Daniel makes the number less; but he started with his own times, and looked only down the stream. Here the account looks backward as well as forward. That which is first in Daniel is the third here, and that which is the sixth here is the fourth in Daniel. Only in the commencing point is there any difference. The visions of Daniel and the visions of John are of the same Divine Mind, and they perfectly harmonize, only that the latest are the amplest.¹²

John's view takes in *seven* heads which are said to be seven kings (Rev. 17:9-10⁺). John is told:

Here *is* the mind which has wisdom: The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits. They are ([εσσι](#) [eisin]) seven kings. Five have fallen, one is, *and* the other has not yet come. (Rev. 17:9-10⁺).¹³

The heads are *mountains* upon which the woman sits. They are also *kings*. Some attempt to identify these as literal kings or emperors of Rome:

The view is promising only until one tries to apply it to specific kings. Does one begin counting with Julius Caesar or with Caesar Augustus? The answer to this is purely arbitrary. Are all the emperors counted or just the ones that emphasized emperor worship? This, too, is arbitrary. Are Galba, Otho, and Vitellius excluded because of the shortness of their reigns? If so, this is quite arbitrary. For those who resort to counting emperors, the text is enigmatic beyond hope. If John wrote Revelation during Nero's reign, the Roman emperors are too few. If he wrote it during Domitian's reign, they are too many.¹⁴

Aune enumerates nine different schemes for counting the kings. Beale designates five such schemes.¹⁵

We have seen elsewhere in Scripture that *kingdoms* are often represented by their *kings* or as *mountains* (e.g., Jer. 51:25; Dan. 2:35).¹⁶ We also note that the [Harlot](#), who sits on the heads is considered to be the “mother of harlots and of the abominations of the earth” (Rev. 17:5⁺). This implies her origin in distant history past and argues for an understanding of the kings as kingdoms spanning long periods of time. Yet wisdom is required to identify the heads which are kings: which kings or kingdoms do they represent? We take the heads/mountains/kings to represent *kingdoms* rather than individual kings associated with a single kingdom. Regardless of the identity of the first two of the fallen kingdoms (Babel and Egypt or Egypt and Assyria, see [#5 - Five Fallen Kings](#)), the next four are identified by Daniel's vision ([#8 - Four Beasts/Kings](#)) making Rome the sixth which ruled at the time of the Revelation. John is shown *two* additional kings yet future, a seventh *and* an eighth.¹⁷

These are **seven** kings. Five have fallen, one is, *and* the other has not yet come. And when he comes, he must continue a short

time. The beast that was, and is not, is himself also the **eighth**, and is of the seven, and is going to perdition. (Rev. 17:10-11⁺)¹⁸ [emphasis added]

The eighth king is not one of the seven heads/mountains/kings, but arises from the seven (Rev. 17:11⁺). This passage is somewhat confusing because it is accounting for the fact that a single king will represent both of the kingdoms which are future to John's vision. The [Antichrist](#), the [Beast](#), arises out of the *seventh* kingdom, but also suffers a wound and is revived to rule as an undisputed *eighth* king:

The preferred scheme is that the five who have fallen are the kingdoms of the past which have persecuted God's people [see [#5 - Five Fallen Kings](#)] . . . The one that remains is Rome, the persecutor of God's people when John was writing. The seventh is the final great persecutor, the reunited Roman Empire headed up by Antichrist, and the eighth is the final form of Gentile world rule—the final empire of Antichrist, which will arise from the seventh after the Antichrist dies and comes back to life.¹⁹

The seven heads are said to have names of blasphemy (Rev. 13:1[±]; Rev 17:3[±]). "The 'names of blasphemy' . . . on the beast's heads are names that amounted to words or conduct injurious to God's honor and holiness."²⁰ The heads themselves—the kingdoms they represent—blasphemed God. The tendency of great kings to regard themselves as divine, their rule having been gained by their own hand, and their opposition to God and his people is legend (e.g., 2K. 19:6; Ps. 74:10; Isa. 37:6; 52:5; Dan. 4:30; 5:23).

4.3.2.4.1 - Daniel saw Seven Heads

There is another possibility for understanding the seven heads which removes the need for John's vision backward in history to take in vistas earlier than Daniel's day. How can that be? John sees *seven* heads which are said to represent seven kings, but Daniel only sees *four beasts*. Yet one of Daniel's beasts, the [leopard](#), is said to contain four heads. We also are told that the fourth beast has a single head (Dan. 7:20). If we add the heads of the other two beasts, then this would account for *seven* heads: one each on the first, second, and fourth beasts, and four heads on the third. This view has the advantage of removing the need to identify kingdoms prior to the time of Daniel to account for all seven heads which John sees. It seems to provide a solution which allows both John's and Daniel's visions to have the same historic scope, but from different perspectives—John looks backward in time, but no further back than the time of Daniel. Unfortunately, there are several problems with taking the seven heads implicitly seen by Daniel as the seven heads explicitly shown to John:

1. **Five Fallen** - John is told, concerning the seven heads: "They are seven kings. **Five have fallen**, one is, and **the other has not yet come**" [emphasis added] (Rev. 17:10[±]). If we understand the first three beasts of Daniel to represent kingdoms which had passed from view in John's day (e.g., Babylon, Medo-Persia, and Greece) and the fourth beast to be Rome, then we would have expected John to be told, "**Six have fallen**, one is, and **none is to come!**" For at the time of John, three of the four beasts had passed from the stage of history and *six* of the seven heads should have been accounted for.
2. **Beasts are Kings** - Daniel is explicitly told that the *four beasts* (having seven implicit heads) are *four kings* (Dan. 7:17). John is told that his *seven heads* are *seven kings* (Rev. 17:10[±]). If each of Daniel's beasts is a king, how can we take the four heads of one of the beasts and make them kings in the same sense as the beasts? John's seven heads cannot be the same as the seven heads on Daniel's beasts because the seven heads implicitly seen by Daniel only represent *four* kings. For Daniel, it is the *beasts* which represent kingdoms, whereas for John, it is the *heads*. The four heads seen upon Daniel's third beast provide additional information concerning the internal workings of the third beast kingdom (e.g., correspond to the four notable horns, Dan. 8:8), but are not to be included in a tally of heads as seen by John.
3. **Sequential Kingdoms** - Another problem with this view is the inconsistency of treating the four heads of the third beast—which are typically understood to be four contemporaneous rulers who follow upon Alexander the Great (Dan. 8:8)—the same as John's seven heads which appear to be sequential in their relationship.
4. **Historical Span** - This view limits the historical span of the seven heads which the [Harlot](#) sits upon to extend no earlier than the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, the first beast. If so, then the Scripturally-significant kingdoms of Babel, Egypt, and Assyria cannot be accounted for in the ride of the [Harlot](#). Yet aspects of her identity argue for her ride to extend back to very early history, for she is the "**mother** of harlots and of abominations of the earth" [emphasis added]. How could she be considered the true mother if she only began to ride as late as Babylon (in the sense of excluding the kingdom of Babel under Nimrod, Gen. 10:8-10)? In that case, she too would be *a daughter* rather than *the mother*.

While there is great attraction in the potential simplification of finding all seven of John's heads upon Daniel's four beasts, there are significant hurdles to doing so. It seems better to take the seven heads, which are found upon both the [Beast](#) and upon the dragon, as denoting seven historic kingdoms under the sway of Satan:

Then the devil, taking Him up on a high mountain, showed Him **all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time** And the devil

said to Him, "All this authority I will give You, and their glory; for **this has been delivered to me, and I give it to whomever I wish**. Therefore, if You will worship before me, all will be Yours." (Luke 4:5-7) [emphasis added]

See [#16 - Beast](#). See the commentary on [Revelation 17:10](#). See [Symbols of Kingdoms](#).

4.3.2.5 - #5 - Five Fallen Kings

The five kings which had fallen by John's day (Rev. 17:10+) appear to represent kingdoms (see [#4 - Seven Heads/Kings](#)). Assuming Rome is the kingdom which "is" at the time of John, then five kingdoms precede it and one will follow. We know from the book of Daniel that the three kingdoms which precede Rome are Greece, Medo-Persia, and Babylon (see [#8 - Four Beasts/Kings](#)). Yet two more are required. If we limit our scope of inquiry to kingdoms of special relevance to Israel, then two additional candidates immediately come to mind: Assyria and Egypt. Since Israel was born as a nation in the Exodus from Egypt, the five fallen kings represent all fallen kingdoms of significance which oppressed Israel from her birth to John's time—the time of Rome. The most likely candidates are Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia, and Greece.

The five kingdoms of the past are the ones who have persecuted God's people (Egypt, Eze. 29-30; Nineveh or Assyria, Nah. 3:1-19; Babylon, Isa. 21:9 and Jer. 50-51; Persia, Dan. 10:13 and 11:2; Greece, Dan. 11:3-4). The persecutor of God's people during John's lifetime was Rome. . . . So the angel's clarifying word to John about these seven heads [Rev. 17:9-11+] spans essentially the entire history of Gentile world empires.²¹

Five empires ruled the known world in succession before John the Apostle wrote his book of Revelation. The empires of Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Media-Persia and Greece each ruled the known world. . . . The Roman Empire ruled in John's day.²²

At the moment John wrote, Israel was in subjection to Rome. It had been in subjection to Greece, Persia and Babylon. But in its still earlier history, Israel had been in slavery to Assyria, and, in its beginnings was in slavery to Egypt. So Isaiah writes, "For thus saith the Lord God, My people went down aforetime into Egypt to sojourn there; and the Assyrian oppressed them without cause" (Isa. 52:4).²³

The view which takes Egypt as the first kingdom is based, in part, on understanding the seven heads as *Gentile* kingdoms and the context of Revelation 17+ as favoring a Jewish/Gentile distinction. Evidence for such an emphasis can be found in the broader context of Revelation, especially chapters 7, 11-12, and 14. It also recognizes the well-documented *opposition* each of these kingdoms represented to God's people. But limiting the kingdoms to only those which existed after the calling of Abraham, the father of the Jews, has the weakness of being unable to account for the full history of the [Harlot](#). If it can be shown that she predates the Jewish nation, then upon what head can she be said to have ridden upon prior to Egypt and the events of the Exodus? Taking the first two kingdoms to be Egypt and Assyria does not seem to do full justice to the description of the [Harlot](#) who sits on the seven heads which are the seven kings (Rev. 17:7-10+). She is given the name *Babylon* and is identified as the "mother of harlots and of the abominations of the earth" (Rev. 17:5+). In order to be the *mother* of harlots and abominations (which denote spiritual idolatry), she would have to be the *source* from which her daughter harlots were born. Thus, it seems best to see the [Harlot](#) as having ridden upon the [Beast](#), sitting upon its [seven heads](#), throughout history. This would argue for understanding the five fallen kingdoms as stretching back beyond Egypt to the time of the construction of the first major city recorded in Scripture: Babel (Gen. 11:1-9).²⁴

Cush begot Nimrod; he began to be a mighty one on the earth. He was a mighty hunter before the LORD; therefore it is said, "Like Nimrod the mighty hunter before the LORD." And **the beginning of his kingdom was Babel**, Erech, Accad, and Calneh, **in the land of Shinar**. From that land he went to Assyria and built Nineveh, Rehoboth Ir, Calah, and Resen between Nineveh and Calah (that [is] the principal city). (Gen. 10:8-12) [emphasis added]

If the kingdom of Babel²⁵ is taken to be the first kingdom and the five kingdoms span from the time of the tower of Babel through the initial appearance of Rome, the most likely candidates for the second kingdom would be either Egypt or Assyria. Of the two, Egypt had a greater significance as a repressor of God's people and introducing them to idolatry (Ex. 32:4; Eze. 23:2-4). The view that Babel is the first kingdom has the advantage of providing a head for the [Harlot](#) to sit upon all the way back to the initial rebellion of mankind manifested by the great city: Babel.

Just as impossible was it [as Rome] for the Babylon of Nebuchadnezzar's day [to be the mother of harlots, Rev. 17:5+]; and for the same reason. It does not date back far enough. We must go further back, and find it in Gen. 10:8-10 and 11:9. There we find it in the land of Shinar. Under Nimrod began the work in the spirit of Anti-christ; his object being to build a city, and make for his People a name, so that they might not be scattered. Babylon [Babel] was founded in rebellion against God.²⁶

This would accord with the identification of the [Harlot](#) as "that **great city** which reigns over the kings of the earth" [emphasis added] (Rev. 17:18+).²⁷ See commentary on [Revelation 17:10](#). See [Symbols of Kingdoms](#).

4.3.2.6 - #6 - First King

The first of the five fallen kings probably represents either the kingdom of Babel or Egypt. See [#5 - Five Fallen Kings](#). See [#7 - Second King](#). See [Symbols of Kingdoms](#).

4.3.2.7 - #7 - Second King

The second of the five fallen kings probably represents Egypt or Assyria. If the first king is taken as representing the kingdom of Babel, then the second king is most likely Egypt. If the first king represents Egypt, then the second king is most likely Assyria. See [#5 - Five Fallen Kings](#). See [#6 - First King](#). See [Symbols of Kingdoms](#).

4.3.2.8 - #8 - Four Beasts/Kings

Daniel sees these four beasts in his night vision in the first year of the reign of Belshazzar (Dan. 7:1-28). Daniel's vision pertains to the future, not the past, and so the first of the four beasts he is shown represents Babylon, the kingdom within which he found himself captive at the time of the vision. Daniel is shown a sequence of beasts with differing characteristics culminating in a unique and particularly terrible final fourth beast. The four beasts of Daniel's vision appear to represent four major kingdoms which dominate the history of the Jews from Daniel's day until the time Messiah sets up His kingdom (Dan. 2:34-35, 44-45). The four beasts are said to originate from the [sea](#) ^[#2-#8] (Dan. 7:2). They are also said to be four kings which arise out of the [earth](#) ^[#3-#8] (Dan. 7:17). Each *king* represents a *kingdom*. The four beasts of Daniel's night vision correspond to the four metals of the image in [Nebuchadnezzar's dream](#) (Dan. 2:32-45). The four beasts Daniel sees are a subset of the [seven heads](#) which John sees throughout Revelation (Rev. 12:3⁺; 13:1⁺; 17:3⁺, 7⁺, 9⁺). Three of the beasts/kings shown to Daniel had already fallen by the time John saw his vision. These three beasts/kings, along with two other kings which predate Daniel's vision, form the [five fallen kings](#) shown John (Rev. 17:10⁺). See [#9 - Lion Beast](#), [#10 - Bear Beast](#), [#11 - Leopard Beast](#), and [#12 - Terrible Beast](#). See [Symbols of Kingdoms](#).

4.3.2.9 - #9 - Lion Beast

The first beast of Daniel's night vision: "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" (Dan. 7:4). This beast appears to correspond to the head of gold in [Nebuchadnezzar's dream](#) (Dan. 2:32, 38). "Interpreters of the book of Daniel, whether liberal or conservative, generally have agreed that chapter 7 is in some sense a recapitulation of chapter 2 and covers the same four empires. Likewise, there is agreement that the first empire represents the reign of Nebuchadnezzar or the Neo-Babylonian Empire. . . . Daniel in his vision sees the wing's plucked and the lion made to stand upon his feet as a man, with a man's heart given to it. This is most commonly interpreted as the symbolic representation of Nebuchadnezzar's experience in chapter 4 when he was humbled before God and made to realize that, even though he was a great ruler, he was only a man."²⁸ The lion beast is the third of [seven kingdoms](#) which oppressed God's people through history. Dominion is taken from this beast, but its life is prolonged "for a season and a time" (Dan. 7:12). This is reflected in the contribution of its attributes to the final [Beast](#) who is the eighth head ^[#9-#16] (Rev. 13:2⁺). See [Symbols of Kingdoms](#).

4.3.2.10 - #10 - Bear Beast

"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!' " (Dan. 7:5). This beast appears to correspond to the chest and arms of silver in [Nebuchadnezzar's dream](#) (Dan. 2:32, 39). "Taken as a whole, the prophecy of the second beast accurately portrays the characteristics and history of the Medo-Persian Empire which, although beginning in Daniel's day, continued for over 200 years until the time of Alexander the Great, 336 B.C."²⁹ The kingdom represented by the bear beast follows upon the overthrow of the lion beast: Medo-Persia overthrew Babylon ^[#9-#10]. The bear beast is the fourth of [seven kingdoms](#) which oppressed God's people through history. Dominion is taken from this beast, but its life is prolonged "for a season and a time" (Dan. 7:12). This is reflected in the contribution of its attributes to the final [Beast](#) who is the eighth head ^[#9-#16] (Rev. 13:2⁺). See [Symbols of Kingdoms](#).

4.3.2.11 - #11 - Leopard Beast

"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" (Dan. 7:6). This beast appears to correspond to the belly and thighs of bronze in [Nebuchadnezzar's dream](#) (Dan. 2:32, 39). "The third beast is commonly identified as the empire of Greece. . . . On the face of it, . . . the history of Greece under Alexander the Great corresponds precisely to what is here revealed. . . . It is a well-established fact of history that Alexander had four principle successors. . . . Lysimachus, who held Thrace and Bithynia; Cassander, who held Macedonia and Greece; Seleucus, who controlled Syria, Babylonia, and territories as far east as India; and Ptolemy, who controlled Egypt,

Palestine, and Ariba Petrea.”³⁰ The kingdom represented by the leopard beast follows upon the overthrow of the bear beast: when Alexander overthrew Medo-Persia ^[#10-#11]. The leopard beast is the fifth of [seven kingdoms](#) which oppressed God’s people through history. Dominion is taken from this beast, but its life is prolonged “for a season and a time” (Dan. 7:12). This is reflected in the contribution of its attributes to the final [Beast](#) who is the eighth head ^[#10-#16] (Rev. 13:2+). See [Symbols of Kingdoms](#).

4.3.2.12 - #12 - Terrible Beast

This beast appears to correspond to the legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay in [Nebuchadnezzar’s dream](#) (Dan. 2:33, 40-43). The beast is said to be uniquely dreadful and terrible (Dan. 7:7, 19, 23). It is said to have *iron* teeth (the fourth metal in Nebuchadnezzar’s dream was *iron*) and great emphasis is placed upon its trampling and breaking to pieces—corresponding to the feet in Nebuchadnezzar’s dream (Dan. 7:7, 19). The beast is said to have ten horns, which correspond to the ten toes of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream ^[#12-#22] (Dan. 7:7, 20). At the demise of this beast, when its dominion is taken away and its body is destroyed and burned (Dan. 7:11, 26), the saints will possess the kingdom ^[#12-#14] (Dan. 7:18). This kingdom devours the whole earth ^[#12-#1] (Dan. 7:23). Although some interpreters take this beast to be Greece (the kingdom of Alexander the Great), most conservative scholars (who believe in the [inspiration](#) of Daniel) identify the fourth beast as Rome:

Probably the most decisive argument in favor of interpreting the fourth empire as Roman is the fact . . . that the New Testament seems to follow this interpretation. Christ, in His reference to the “abomination of desolation” (Mat. 24:15) clearly pictures the desecration of the temple, here prophesied as a future event. . . . the Grecian view would require fulfillment in the second century B.C. The New Testament also seems to employ the symbolism of Daniel in the book of Revelation, presented as future even after the destruction of the temple.³¹

From the standpoint of history the identification of the fourth empire as Rome can be traced to early times: Josephus (*The Antiquities of the Jews* 11:7); 4 Ezra 12:10-12 in A.D. 80-120; the Assumption of Moses, chapters 8-9 in A.D. 7-30; 2 Baruch 39:3-4 before A.D. 70; and later Jewish writings cited in the *Jewish Encyclopedia*, 10.394.³²

A problem arises in relation to the ten kings and the description of how the fourth beast is overthrown as this does not correspond with the demise of the Roman empire. This difference explains why we are discussing the beasts of Daniel in our treatment of the book of Revelation. Aspects of the prophetic passages both in Daniel and Revelation suggest that this fourth beast continues beyond its initial appearance, but in a fragmented form:

Whereas you saw the feet and toes, partly of potter’s clay and partly of iron, **the kingdom shall be divided**, yet the strength of the iron shall be in it, just as you saw the iron mixed with ceramic clay. And as the toes of the feet *were* partly of iron and partly of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly fragile. As you saw iron mixed with ceramic clay, they will mingle with the seed of men; but they will not adhere to one another, just as iron does not mix with clay. **And in the days of these kings** the God of heaven will setup a kingdom which shall never be destroyed. (Dan. 2:41-44a). [emphasis added]

For an unspecified period of time after the breakup of the fourth kingdom, it continues in a distributed form until the time of the end when God establishes his kingdom on earth—when the stone smashes the feet of the image, including its ten toes (Dan. 2:34-35, 44-45). “The destruction of the fourth beast here described refers to a time yet future in connection with the second advent of Christ.”³³ The kingdom represented by the terrible beast follows upon the demise of the leopard beast: when the Roman empire obtained control of the areas previously under the control of Alexander and the four kings who arose after his death ^[#11-#12]. John was told that the seven heads of the beast of Revelation 17+ were seven mountains and seven kings: “They are seven kings. Five have fallen, one is, **and the other has not yet come**” [emphasis added] (Rev. 17:10+).³⁴ As we discussed above, the five that have fallen are five kings representing five kingdoms prior to Rome. The king that “is” probably represents the form of the Roman empire which existed at the time of John’s vision. The terrible beast is the sixth of [seven kingdoms](#) which oppressed God’s people through history and follows upon the [five kings](#) who had fallen prior to John’s vision (Rev. 17:10+). This final beast Daniel sees is the same beast which John sees rising from the sea in Revelation 13+:

Preterists are correct in relating the beast of Revelation 13+ with the fourth beast of Daniel 7. Many interesting parallels exist between the two. For example, both have a worldwide empire (Daniel 7:7, 23; Revelation 13:8+), both rule for three-and-one-half years (Daniel 7:25; Revelation 13:5+), both dominate the saints for three-and-one-half years (Daniel 7:25; Revelation 12:14+; 13:7+), and both are characterized by their arrogant and blasphemous words (Daniel 7:8, 11, 20, 25; Revelation 13:5+). Because of these parallels, many scholars have concluded that both beasts are one and the same.³⁵

They both will come out of the sea (Dan. 7:3; Rev. 13:1+), both will have ten horns (Dan. 7:7, 20; Rev. 13:1+), and both will be succeeded by the kingdom of Christ (Dan. 7:11, 26, 27; Rev. 17:14+; Rev 19:20+; Rev 20:4-6+). . . . the symbolism of the lion, the bear, and the leopard (Dan. 7:4-6) is evident in the beast in Revelation 13:2+.³⁶

See [Symbols of Kingdoms](#).

4.3.2.13 - #13 - Seventh King

The seventh king is the last of [seven kingdoms](#) which oppressed God's people through history and follows upon the last [terrible beast](#) shown to Daniel (Dan. 7:7, 19-20). The seventh king is the king which had "not yet come" at the time of John's vision (Rev. 17:10⁺). Concerning the seven heads which are seven kings, John is told, "They are seven kings. Five have fallen, one is, *and* the other has not yet come. And when he comes, he must continue a short time" (Rev. 17:10⁺).³⁷ The seventh king is said to be future to John's day, but when he arrives, he will only continue a short time. This probably corresponds to the relatively short period between the rise of the [Antichrist](#) and his initial demise by a fatal wound (Rev. 13:3⁺ cf. Zec. 11:17). Thereafter, he is revived as an [eighth head or king](#) (Rev. 17:11⁺). In our diagram of [Symbols of Kingdoms](#), we have drawn the seventh king within the [sixth king](#) because it is evident from the revelation given Daniel concerning the [fourth beast](#) (which corresponds to the sixth king) that after its initial appearance and rule, the kingdom of the fourth beast fragments but continues to exist until the time of its ultimate overthrow to establish the [Millennial Kingdom](#) (Dan. 2:35, 44-45). Therefore, in some sense, the seventh king is a continuation of the sixth king, represented by the [terrible beast](#). This understanding requires the emergence of an empire at the time of the end which is in some way a continuation of the Roman empire of John's day (Dan. 2:40-44). The seventh king is related to the eighth head, the [Beast](#). "The beast that was, and is not, is himself also the eighth, and is of the seven, and is going to perdition" (Rev. 17:11⁺). It appears the seventh king, having received a fatal wound, enters the [abyss](#) ^[#13-#17] (Rev. 17:18⁺) prior to his revival as [Beast](#) (Rev. 13:3⁺, Rev. 13:14⁺). This view recognizes that the passage which describes the relationship between the seventh king and the [Beast](#) (the eighth head), employs the phrase, "that was, and is not," which is associated with the wounding and subsequent ascent of the beast from the abyss (Rev. 17:11⁺ cf. Rev. 17:8⁺). See [#16 - Beast](#). See [Symbols of Kingdoms](#).

4.3.2.14 - #14 - Millennial Kingdom

The Millennial Kingdom is the kingdom of God on earth which, when it comes, destroys all previous kingdoms (Dan. 2:35, 44-45; 7:14, 22, 26-27; Rev. 19:11-21⁺). In Daniel's vision of the [four beasts](#) which were said to be kings (representing kingdoms), God's kingdom on earth follows upon the destruction of the fourth, [terrible beast](#) ^[#12-#14]. Thereafter, Christ will reign on the throne of David for one thousand years from Jerusalem (Rev. 20:4-6⁺). See [The Arrival of God's Kingdom](#). See [Millennial Temple](#). See [Millennial Kingdom](#). See [Symbols of Kingdoms](#).

4.3.2.15 - #15 - Dragon

We are told that the dragon is, "that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world" (Rev. 12:9⁺). The dragon is said to have [seven heads](#) and [ten horns](#) ^{[#15-#4] [#15-#22]} (Rev. 12:3⁺). The heads of the dragon are said to wear diadems (Rev. 12:3⁺), a further indication that the heads represent kings (Rev. 17:9-10⁺). The [Beast](#), who also has seven heads and ten horns (Rev. 13:1⁺; Rev. 17:3⁺, Rev. 17:7⁺), is closely identified with the dragon. This reflects the dragon's empowerment of the [Beast](#) ^[#15-#16] (Rev. 13:2-4⁺). This empowerment is likely related to the healing of the fatal wound resulting in the Beast's rise from the Abyss to be marveled at by the world (Rev. 13:3⁺; Rev. 17:8⁺). See [Supernatural Origin?](#). See commentary on [Revelation 20:4](#). See [Symbols of Kingdoms](#).

4.3.2.16 - #16 - Beast

The [Beast](#) is probably the most confusing entity in a consideration of the symbols representing kingdoms and individuals of the visions given to both Daniel and John. This confusion stems from several overlapping aspects of the revelation concerning the Beast:

1. The term "beast" is used by Daniel to describe *several* kings (Dan. 7:17). Of these four, the last is unique and especially terrible.
2. The term "beast" is used both to denote the final kingdom and the final king which leads the kingdom among the [ten horns](#) (Dan. 7:11; Rev. 16:10⁺; 17:11-13⁺).
3. The revival of the Beast makes him both a ruler of the [seventh kingdom](#) (Rev. 16:10⁺) and the final eighth head. The Beast is said to *have* seven heads and ten horns, yet he is also "of the seven" heads and "himself also an eighth" (Rev. 17:11⁺).
4. Sometimes the term "beast" denotes a *kingdom* (Dan. 7:7, 11, 19; Rev. 13:1-2⁺). Other times an *individual* (Rev. 11:7⁺; Rev. 13:4⁺, Rev. 12-14⁺, Rev. 17-18⁺; Rev. 16:10⁺, Rev. 16:14⁺; Rev. 19:19-20⁺). Elsewhere, the same individual is represented as a *horn* (Dan. 7:8) and a *head* (Rev. 17:11⁺).
5. John sees two "beasts," one rising from the sea (Rev. 13:1⁺) and another from the earth (Rev. 13:11⁺). The first, more

prominent beast is the one whom we describe here. We refer to the second beast from the earth using his alternate title as the [False Prophet](#).

Because of these complexities, our diagram of [Symbols of Kingdoms](#) is necessarily imprecise in some aspects because it is nearly impossible to accurately capture all the relationships between the various symbols which denote the Beast and his kingdom in a diagram. In our diagram, [#13 - Seventh King](#), [#16 - Beast](#), and [#25 - Little Horn](#) all appear with the same color since we believe each symbol denotes different aspects of the reign of the same individual: [Antichrist](#). The Beast has [seven heads](#) and [ten horns](#) ^[#16-#4] ^[#16-#22] (Rev. 13:1⁺; Rev 17:3⁺, Rev 17:7⁺). In this characteristic, he is identical with the [dragon](#) who gives him his power, throne and authority ^[#16-#15] (Rev. 13:2-4⁺; Rev 16:10⁺). This empowerment likely also includes the healing of the fatal wound resulting in the Beast's rise from the Abyss to be marveled at by the world (Rev. 13:3⁺; Rev 17:8⁺). He also is identified closely with the dragon in that he and the dragon both receive worship (Rev. 13:4⁺). The beast is, "like a leopard, his feet were like *the feet of* a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion" (Rev. 13:2⁺). The *leopard* denotes attributes of the [leopard beast](#) ^[#11-#16], the *bear* denotes attributes of the [bear beast](#) ^[#10-#16], and the *lion* denotes attributes of the [lion beast](#) ^[#9-#16] (Dan. 7:12; Rev. 13:2⁺). Two aspects should be noted:

- **Terrible Beast Missing** - In Revelation 13⁺, no mention is made of the [terrible beast](#) which followed these three beasts in Daniel's vision (Dan. 7:2-7). This is an indication that the Beast is an embodiment of that final terrible beast—consisting of the revival of the [seventh king](#) from his fatal wound out of the [abyss](#) ^[#17-#16] (Rev. 13:3⁺; 17:8⁺, 11⁺, 14⁺). The Beast ascends from the Abyss both temporally and physically (see [Supernatural Origin?](#)).
- **Sequence of Beasts Reversed** - In Daniel's vision of the [four beasts](#) which are said to be kings, the sequence is first [lion](#), then [bear](#), then [leopard](#), and finally the [terrible beast](#). John relates the first three in opposite order. This reflects the different vantage points of Daniel and John. In Daniel's day, the lion, bear, and leopard had not yet fallen. In John's day, they have all fallen, but contribute to the final Beast. Daniel looks forward in time, whereas here John looks back.

The Beast is said to have [ten horns](#), which are ten kings, but will rule over them: they are of one mind and give their authority to the beast ^[#16-#22] (Rev. 17:12-13⁺, Rev 17:17⁺). The ruler of this final beastly kingdom was seen by Daniel as a [little horn](#) (Dan. 7:8). See [#25 - Little Horn](#). The description of the Beast is remarkably similar to the little horn.³⁸ This is because the Beast is the final eighth *head* (kingdom) and the little horn is the prominent *horn* (king) of the time of the end. The final kingdom is ruled by the prominent king of the end:

Daniel's Little Horn versus The Beast of Revelation

Characteristic	Daniel's Little Horn	Beast of Revelation
Mouth	Speaks pompous words (Da 7:8, 11 ⁺ , Da 7:20, 25 ⁺ ; Da 11:36 ⁺).	A mouth speaking arrogant words and blasphemies (Rev. 13:5 ⁺). Blasphemes against God, His name, His tabernacle, and those who dwell in heaven (Rev. 13:6 ⁺).
Duration of Authority ³⁹	Saints given into his hand for time, times, and half a time (Dan. 7:25 ⁺).	Given authority for 42 months (Rev. 13:5 ⁺).
Persecutes the Saints	Prevails over saints ^[#25-#20] (Dan. 7:21, 25 ⁺).	Overcomes saints ^[#16-#20] (Rev. 12:11 ⁺ ; Rev 13:7 ⁺ , Rev 13:15 ⁺ ; Rev 20:4 ⁺).
Global Rule	Dan. 7:21-25 ⁺	Rev. 13:7 ⁺ ^[#16-#1]
A King	Dan. 7:24 ⁺	Rev. 17:10-11 ⁺
A Man	Eyes like a man (Dan. 7:8 ⁺ , Da 7:20 ⁺).	The number of a man (Rev. 13:18 ⁺).
Destined for Perdition	Dan. 7:11 ⁺	2Th. 2:3; Rev. 17:8 ⁺ , Rev 17:11 ⁺ ; Rev 19:20 ⁺ ; Rev 20:10 ⁺
Time of Destruction	When saints receive kingdom (Dan. 7:26-27 ⁺).	When saints receive kingdom (Rev. 20:4-6 ⁺).

A key difference between what John sees concerning the Beast and what Daniel is shown about the little horn is the relationship

between the Beast and the [False Prophet](#) (or second beast from the earth, Rev. 13:11⁺). The Beast supports the [False Prophet](#) and apparently is the source of his power (ultimately derived from the [dragon](#)). Scripture mentions that the False Prophet “exercises all the authority of the first beast **in his presence**” [emphasis added] ^[#16-#18] (Rev. 13:12⁺a). Although initially, the [Harlot](#) is supported by (rides upon) the Beast ^[#16-#21] (Rev. 17:3⁺, Rev 17:7⁺) and she rules over the kings of the earth (Rev. 17:18⁺), the [ten horns](#) who receive authority with the Beast (Rev. 17:12⁺) eventually join forces to turn on her and consume her ^[#22-#21] (Rev. 17:16⁺). (The [MT](#) and [NU](#) texts indicate that the [Beast](#) also turns on her ^[#16-#21]. See commentary on [Revelation 17:16](#).) If she includes an apostate religious system (as her title as mother of harlots and of abominations infers), then this opens the way for the Beast to garner all worship in her absence. As the final form of all world kingdoms, the Beast receives global worship (Dan. 11:37; 2Th. 2:4; Rev. 13:4⁺, Rev 13:8⁺, Rev 13:12⁺; Rev 14:9⁺; Rev 16:2⁺; Rev 19:20⁺; Rev 20:4⁺) which involves his subjects taking his number, the infamous *mark of the beast* (Rev. 13:17⁺; Rev 14:9⁺, Rev 14:11⁺; Rev 15:2⁺; Rev 16:2⁺; Rev 19:20⁺; Rev 20:4⁺; see commentary on [Revelation 13:18](#).) This probably occurs shortly after he overcomes the two Jewish witnesses (see commentary on [Revelation 11:7](#)) and installs himself within the Holy Place in the [Temple](#) (2Th. 2:4). See [Temple of God](#). In the reign of the Beast, the heads (sequential kingdoms spanning history) and the horns (contemporary kings of the last kingdom) intersect in a single individual. He is Daniel’s [little horn](#) which puts down the [three horns](#), but is also “the eighth *head*, and is of the seven *heads*,” having been wounded as the seventh and revived as the eighth (Rev. 17:11⁺).

So as one of the seven, the beast is a kingdom, but as an eighth, he is the king of that kingdom who sustains the wound and ascends from the abyss after his wound (cf. Rev. 17:8⁺). When this occurs, he is king over an eighth kingdom because his reign following his ascent from the abyss will be far more dynamic and dominant than before. This is the sense in which he is one of the seven, but also an eighth.⁴⁰

When destroyed, he is bound for perdition (Dan. 7:11, 26; 8:25; 9:27; 11:25; 2Th. 2:3-8; Rev. 17:8⁺, 11⁺; 19:20⁺; 20:10⁺).⁴¹ For additional background concerning the Beast, see [The Beast](#) and [Nero](#). See commentary on [Revelation 13](#).

4.3.2.17 - #17 - Abyss

The Abyss, the “bottomless pit,” is a deep compartment within the earth where fallen angels are held (Rev. 9:1-2⁺, Rev 9:11⁺). See commentary on [Revelation 9:1](#). The [Beast](#) is said to ascend from the **Abyss** ^[#17-#16] (Rev. 11:7⁺; Rev 17:8⁺), probably after being revived from his deadly wound as the [seventh king](#) ^[#13-#17] (Rev. 17:11⁺). See [Supernatural Origin?](#) The **Abyss** is also the holding place for the [dragon](#) (Satan) during the [Millennial Kingdom](#) (Rev. 20:1-3⁺). See [Symbols of Kingdoms](#).

4.3.2.18 - #18 - False Prophet

The False Prophet is the second beast which John sees which comes up out of the earth ^[#3-#18] having two horns like a lamb and who spoke like a [dragon](#) (Rev. 13:11⁺). His appearance is benign, like that of a lamb, but his prophecies and commands have their source in the devil. This is why Scripture refers to him as the “[False Prophet](#)” (Rev. 19:20⁺; Rev 20:10⁺). The **False Prophet** performs great signs and miracles which are used to witness to the [Beast](#) from which he derives his power. “He exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence and causes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast” ^[#16-#18] (Rev. 13:12⁺). He causes those on the earth to worship the [Beast](#) and to make an [image to the beast](#) ^[#18-#19] (Rev. 13:14⁺). He is even granted power “to give breath to the [image of the beast](#)” (Rev. 13:15⁺). It appears that the miracles he performs are *genuine*, but *what they attest to is false*. It is the **False Prophet** who causes all men to receive a mark in order to be able to buy or sell (Rev. 13:16-17⁺). Along with the [dragon](#) and the [Beast](#), he forms an *anti-trinity* wherein the dragon occupies a position like that of the Father, the Beast like that of the Son, and the False Prophet like that of the Holy Spirit, but testifies to the *false son*. All three are the source of demons which gather the kings of the earth to battle (Rev. 16:13-14⁺). (See [Campaign of Armageddon](#).) Both the **False Prophet** and the [Beast](#) are taken at the Second Coming of Christ and cast into the Lake of Fire as its first populace (Rev. 19:20⁺). They are still there one thousand years later when joined by the devil (Rev. 20:10⁺).⁴² No doubt the **False Prophet** plays a key role in the deception which Paul described in his letter to the church at Thessalonica:

The coming of the *lawless* one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and **lying wonders**, and with all **unrighteous deception** among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this reason God will send them **strong delusion**, that they should believe the lie, that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness. (2Th. 2:9-12) [emphasis added]

He is an instrument of both the dragon and the Beast, but ultimately of God. See [Symbols of Kingdoms](#). See commentary on [Revelation 13:11](#).

4.3.2.19 - #19 - Image of Beast

Scripture indicates that the [Beast](#) who attains worldwide worship (Rev. 13:8+) “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” (2Th. 2:4). But there is a catch—the [Beast](#) is *not* God. In particular, he lacks God’s unique attribute of *omnipresence*. So as long as he himself remains sitting in the [Temple](#), he is unable to venture forth on the various campaigns which are associated with his activities at the time of the end. This seems to be the motivation behind the instructions by the [False Prophet](#) that the [earth dwellers](#) should “make an image to the beast who was wounded by the sword and lived” ^[#1-#19] (Rev. 13:14+). Having established the image, the False Prophet is “granted power to give breath to the [image of the beast](#), that the image of the beast should both speak and cause as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed” ^[#18-#19] (Rev. 13:15+ cf. Rev 14:9+). This is perhaps one of the most remarkable statements in all of Scripture as it appears that the [False Prophet](#) is allowed, by the sovereignty of God’s permissive control of evil, to give the image life. Although we can’t be sure, it seems reasonable to think that one purpose of the image is to continue to occupy the holy place within the Temple allowing the Beast to venture forth to attend to his many responsibilities—leaving an icon present as the focal point of worship. Notice that both the Beast and *his image* are the objects of worship (Rev. 13:15+; 19:20+). Those who refuse to worship the *image* are killed ^[#19-#20]! Although the man of sin himself first sits in the Temple (2Th. 2:3-4), Jesus infers that something inanimate is set up in the holy place: “Therefore, when you see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet standing in the holy place. . .” (Mat. 24:15). The *abomination* in this verse is not a person (masculine or feminine) but a *thing* (neuter). Perhaps it is the image of the Beast?⁴³ It is impossible to know for certain. Yet, this would help explain one purpose of the image of the Beast. Following the judgments of the sixth trumpet “the rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of **the works of their hands**, that they should not worship demons, and **idols** . . .” [emphasis added] (Rev. 9:20+). Interestingly, the image of the Beast is the ultimate *work of their hands* since the [False Prophet](#) “deceives those who dwell on the earth . . . to make an image to the beast” (Rev. 13:14+). Thus, they themselves make the ultimate *idol* (icon) of their own worship! The image of the Beast is typified by Nebuchadnezzar’s gold image which his subjects were required to worship on penalty of death:

Nebuchadnezzar spoke, saying to them, “*Is it true*, . . . that you do not serve my gods or worship the gold image which I have set up? . . . if you do not worship, you shall be cast immediately into the midst of a burning fiery furnace. And who is the god who will deliver you from my hands?” (Dan. 3:14-15)

In the same way that Nebuchadnezzar’s *image* received worship on his behalf, so will the image of the beast receive worship together with the Beast himself. See [Tribulation Temple](#). See commentary on [Revelation 13:14](#). See [Symbols of Kingdoms](#).

4.3.2.20 - #20 - Saints

At the time of the end, the saints consist of Jewish believers who are hidden in the wilderness (see commentary on [Revelation 12:6](#)), the 144,000 sealed from the Jewish tribes (see commentary on [Revelation 7:4](#) and [Revelation 12:17](#)), and other Jews and Gentiles who come to faith after the [rapture of the church](#). These saints will live in the midst of a time of intense persecution. Many will be martyred (Rev. 6:9-10+; Rev 7:14+; Rev 12:11+; Rev 13:7+; Rev 20:4+). They will be persecuted by the [little horn](#) ^[#25-#20] (Dan. 7:21, 25), the [Harlot](#) ^[#21-#20] (Rev. 17:6+; Rev 19:2+), the [Beast](#) ^[#16-#20] (Rev. 13:7+), and the [image of the Beast](#) ^[#19-#20] (Rev. 13:15+). The church will not be among these saints. See commentary on [Revelation 3:10](#). See [Rapture](#). See [Symbols of Kingdoms](#).

4.3.2.21 - #21 - Harlot

The Great [Harlot](#) rides upon the [Beast](#) who has [seven heads](#) and [ten horns](#) ^[#16-#21] (Rev. 17:1+, 7+). The seven heads of the [Beast](#) are said to be seven mountains upon which the Harlot sits ^[#4-#21] (Rev. 17:9+). The Great Harlot sits upon “peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues” ^[#2-#21] (Rev. 17:15+). She rules over the kings of the earth ^[#21-#22] (Rev. 17:18+), but the [ten kings](#) of the [last kingdom](#) will hate her and eventually turn on her, making her desolate and naked, eating her flesh, and burning her with fire ^[#22-#21] (Rev. 17:16+). (The [MT](#) and [NU](#) texts indicate that the [Beast](#) also turns on her ^[#16-#21]. See commentary on [Revelation 17:16](#).) The Great Harlot is an incessant persecutor of the [saints](#) throughout history, being “drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus” ^[#21-#20] (Rev. 17:6+). See [The Great Harlot](#). See commentary on [Revelation 17](#). See commentary on [Revelation 12:1](#). See [Symbols of Kingdoms](#).

4.3.2.22 - #22 - Ten Horns/Kings

The ten horns first appear in Daniel’s night vision—arising from the fourth, [terrible beast](#) ^[#12-#22] (Dan. 7:24). From these horns an eleventh [little horn](#) arises ^[#22-#15] (Dan. 7:8). This [little horn](#) overcomes three of the previous ten horns (Dan. 7:8, 24). John sees the same ten horns upon the [dragon](#) ^[#15-#22] (Rev. 12:3+) and upon the [Beast](#) ^[#16-#22] (Rev. 13:1+; Rev 17:3+, Rev 17:7+). Indicating:

1. The horns are empowered by the dragon for the ultimate purpose which the dragon has for the [Beast](#). This is seen in their submission to the [Beast](#).
2. The [Beast](#) is the final stage of Daniel's fourth [terrible beast](#) out of which the ten horns arose^[#12-#22] (Dan. 7:24).

The ten horns are ten kings (Rev. 17:12⁺) of the time of the end who had not received authority by the time of John's vision "but they receive authority for one hour as kings with the beast. These are of one mind, and they give their power and authority to the beast."^[#16-#22] (Rev. 17:12-13⁺). Although the [Harlot](#) reigns over the kings of the earth^[#21-#22] (Rev. 17:18⁺), these kings hate the [Harlot](#) and destroy her in accordance with God's will^[#22-#21] (Rev. 17:16-17⁺). (The [MT](#) and [NU](#) texts indicate that the [Beast](#) also turns on her^[#16-#21]. See commentary on [Revelation 17:16](#).) Although both the [seven heads](#) and the ten horns are said to be "kings," there is an important distinction between the two. The seven heads span a long period of history whereas the ten horns are contemporaries at the time of the end:

While both the ten horns and seven heads are representative of kings, there is a difference between them. The ten horns are kings that are *contemporary* with each other. They all rise and reign at the same time. But the seven heads are *chronological* or *sequential*. One follows the other in chronological sequence, and no two are ever contemporary.⁴⁴

There is an intentional correlation between the horns of Daniel's night vision and the feet and toes of the image in Nebuchadnezzar's dream (Dan. 2:22-34, 41-42):

1. Both horns and toes are ten in number.
2. Both are outgrowths of the last Gentile kingdom (Dan. 2:41-42; 7:8; Rev. 17:12⁺).
3. Both are destroyed by the arrival of God's kingdom on earth, the [Millennial Kingdom](#) (Dan. 2:34; Rev. 17:14⁺ cf. Rev. 16:14⁺).

See [Nebuchadnezzar's Dream and Daniel's Vision](#). See [#4 - Seven Heads/Kings](#). See [#25 - Little Horn](#). See [Symbols of Kingdoms](#).

4.3.2.23 - #23 - Seven Horns

Of the [ten horns](#), seven are not overcome by the [little horn](#) (Dan. 7:8, 24). See [#26 - Eight Horns/Kings](#). See [Symbols of Kingdoms](#).

4.3.2.24 - #24 - Three Horns

Of the [ten horns](#), three are overcome by the [little horn](#)^[#25-#24] (Dan. 7:8, 24). See [#26 - Eight Horns/Kings](#). See [Symbols of Kingdoms](#).

4.3.2.25 - #25 - Little Horn

In Daniel's night vision, an eleventh "little horn" rises up among the [ten horns](#) of the fourth and final [terrible beast](#) (Dan. 7:8, 24). This eleventh, [little horn](#), has an appearance greater than the other horns (Dan. 7:20). He eventually overcomes three of the ten horns^[#25-#24] (Dan. 7:8, 24), leaving only seven horns with himself as an eighth (Dan. 7:8). The little horn which was eleventh—now eighth—corresponds to the [eighth head](#). Although the heads represent sequential kingdoms of history and the horns represent contemporary kings of the last kingdom, these are one and the same in the little horn. For he is both the ruler of the final kingdom (head) and the primary king (horn) among the kings of the end. Since the [Beast](#) and little horn are one and the same individual, we are not surprised to observe that the little horn has a number of personal attributes which identify him with the final [Beast](#) who is the revived ruler from among the [seventh kingdom](#), the form of the [terrible beast](#) at the time of the end. See [#16 - Beast](#). See [Symbols of Kingdoms](#).

4.3.2.26 - #26 - Eight Horns/Kings

Even though the [#22 - Ten Horns/Kings](#) give their authority to the [Beast](#) (Rev. 17:13⁺, Rev. 17:17⁺), the [Beast](#) still overthrows [three horns](#). This reduces the number of horns to 7 to which the [little horn](#) is added for a total of eight horns (Dan. 7:8). See [Symbols of Kingdoms](#).

Notes

¹"How sobering a thought that God sees the nations of the earth as wild beasts."—Donald Grey Barnhouse, [Revelation](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1971), 236.

²"The preciousness of the metal deteriorates from the top of gold to the clay of the feet, and there is a corresponding lower specific gravity; that is, the gold is much heavier than the silver, the silver than the brass, the brass than the iron, and the clay in the feet is

the lightest material of all. The approximate specific gravity of gold is 19, silver 11, brass 8.5, and iron 7.8. . . . While the materials decrease in weight, they increase in hardness with the notable exception of the clay in the feet. The image is obviously top heavy and weak in its feet.”—John F. Walvoord, [*Daniel: The Key to Prophetic Revelation*](#) (Chicago, IL: Moody Bible Institute, 1971), 63.

³“The interpretation of the royal image of Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. 2:31-43) and of the four corresponding beastfigures of the night vision of Daniel (Daniel 7) as the Babylonian, Persian, Grecian, and Roman world empires is found as early as Irenaeus (died A.D. 202) and in Josephus and the Jewish Rabbis. Luther says: ‘Upon this interpretation and the meaning all the world is harmonious, and fact and history strongly prove it.’ ”—Erich Sauer, [*The Dawn of World Redemption*](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1951, c1964), 172. Although no longer popular with Roman Catholic interpreters, this was the interpretation of Jerome: “Formerly the four kingdoms of Dn were commonly understood as being the Babylonian, the Medo-Persian, the Greco-Seleucid, and the Roman empires. Although this theory, defended by Jerome, was once regarded as the ‘traditional’ Catholic interpretation (in connection with the attempt to explain the ‘seventy weeks of years’ in 9:24-27 as culminating in the death of Jesus Christ), it would now find few modern Catholic exegetes to support it.”—R. E. Brown, J. A. Fitzmyer, and R. E. Murphy, [*The Jerome Biblical Commentary*](#) (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1996, c1968), Dan. 2:33.

⁴See [Tim LaHaye and Thomas Ice, [*Charting the End Times*](#) (Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, 2001), 88].

⁵See also Rev. 13:2⁺.

⁶See also Dan. 8:20; Rev. 13:2⁺.

⁷See also Dan. 8:21-22; 10:20; 11:2-4; Rev. 13:2⁺.

⁸See also Dan. 9:26.

⁹See also Rev. 20:4-6⁺.

¹⁰We have denoted this relationship as between the [sea](#) and the [Harlot](#), but that which she sits upon is called “many waters” (Rev. 17:1⁺, Rev 17:15⁺) rather than “sea.” Perhaps a subset of the sea is meant.

¹¹It is significant that the text does not say “four kings which *shall* arise out of the earth.” The first king (Nebuchadnezzar) had already arisen at the time of the vision.

¹²J. A. Seiss, [*The Apocalypse: Lectures on the Book of Revelation*](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1966), Rev. 17:10.

¹³Concerning inaccuracies in the KJV and NKJV, see commentary on [Revelation 17:10](#).

¹⁴Robert L. Thomas, [*Revelation 8-22*](#) (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1995), Rev. 17:10.

¹⁵Andy Woods, [*What is the Identity of Babylon In Revelation 17-18?*](#)

¹⁶“Adding to the case for identifying these as kingdoms is the appropriateness of the verb [πρᾶσιν](#) [epesan] to speak of a kingdom’s fall (e.g., Rev. 14:8⁺; 18:2⁺) (Alford).”—Thomas, [*Revelation 8-22*](#), Rev. 17:10.

¹⁷Fruchtenbaum offers a unique interpretation of the seven heads as *types* of Roman Government: the Tarquin Kings (753-510 B.C.); the Censors (510-494 B.C.); the Plebians or Dictators (494-390 B.C.); the Republicans or Decemvirs (Oligarchy of Ten, 390-59 B.C.); the Triumvirate (59-27 B.C.); imperialism (27 B.C. - present); absolute imperialism (the Antichrist). [Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, [*The Footsteps of Messiah*](#), rev ed (Tustin, CA: Ariel Ministries, 2003), 42] Scott offers a related view, “The seven heads on the Beast represent seven successive forms of government from the rise of the fourth universal empire on through its history till its end. ‘Five have fallen.’ These are Kings, Consuls, Dictators, Decemvirs, and Military Tribunes. ‘One is.’ This is the sixth, or imperial form of government set up by Julius Caesar, and under which John was banished to Patmos under Domitian.”—Walter Scott, [*Exposition of The Revelation*](#) (London, England: Pickering & Inglis, n.d.), Rev. 17:9-13. Neither view provides a head for the beast which the Harlot sits upon if she is a *mother* of harlots that predates the early Rome.

¹⁸Concerning inaccuracies in the KJV and NKJV, see commentary on [Revelation 17:10](#).

¹⁹Mark Hitchcock, [“The Stake in the Heart—The A.D. 95 Date of Revelation.”](#) in Tim LaHaye and Thomas Ice, eds., [*The End Times Controversy*](#) (Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, 2003), 145.

²⁰Thomas, [*Revelation 8-22*](#), Rev. 13:1.

²¹Ibid., Rev. 17:10.

²²James O. Combs, [*Rainbows From Revelation*](#) (Springfield, MO: Tribune Publishers, 1994), 184.

²³Barnhouse, [*Revelation*](#), 329.

²⁴Mal Couch, ed., [*A Bible Handbook to Revelation*](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 2001), Rev. 17:9-10.

²⁵“Sumeria: Under Nimrod, Babel in the land of Shinar became the first postdiluvian center for human rebellion.”—Henry Morris, [*The Revelation Record*](#) (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1983), Rev. 13:2.

²⁶E. W. Bullinger, [*Commentary On Revelation*](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1984, 1935), Rev. 17:5.

²⁷To be sure, there is a sense in which the kingdom of *Babel* (under Nimrod) and the kingdom of *Babylon* (under Nebuchadnezzar) share identity for they are in the same region and much that became Babylon undoubtedly originated in Babel.

²⁸Walvoord, [*Daniel: The Key to Prophetic Revelation*](#), Dan. 7:4.

²⁹Ibid., Dan. 7:5.

³⁰Ibid., Dan. 7:6.

³¹Ibid., Rev. 7:7-8.

³²Daniel K. Wong, [“The Beast From The Sea in Revelation 13.”](#) in [*Bibliotheca Sacra*](#), vol. 160 no. 639 (Dallas, TX: Dallas Theological Seminary, July-September 2003), 341.

³³Walvoord, [*Daniel: The Key to Prophetic Revelation*](#), Dan. 7:11-12.

³⁴Concerning inaccuracies in the KJV and NKJV, see commentary on [*Revelation 17:10*](#).

³⁵Andy Woods, [“Revelation 13 and the First Beast.”](#) in Tim LaHaye and Thomas Ice, eds., [*The End Times Controversy*](#) (Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, 2003), 238.

³⁶Wong, [“The Beast From The Sea in Revelation 13.”](#) 339.

³⁷Concerning inaccuracies in the KJV and NKJV, see commentary on [*Revelation 17:10*](#).

³⁸“Both will have a worldwide kingdom (Dan. 7:7, 23; Rev. 13:8⁺); both will speak blasphemies against God (Dan. 7:8, 11, 20, 25; Rev. 13:5⁺); both will have victory over the saints for forty-twomonths (Dan. 7:25; Rev. 12:14⁺; Rev 13:5⁺); both will be destroyed by Christ at the Second Advent (Dan. 7:11, 26; Rev. 17:14⁺; 19:20⁺); and immediately after their destruction the kingdom will be given to God’s saints (Dan. 7:22, 27; Rev. 20:4-6⁺).”—Ibid., 338.

³⁹See [*Prophetic Year*](#).

⁴⁰Thomas, [*Revelation 8-22*](#), Rev. 17:10.

⁴¹“Destruction, ruin, or waste, especially through the eternal destruction brought upon the wicked by God (Heb. 10:39; 2Pe. 3:7). Jesus contrasted the broad way that leads to life with the difficult way that leads to destruction (Mat. 7:13). The apostle Paul contrasted perdition with salvation (Php. 1:28).”—Ronald F. Youngblood and R. K. Harrison, eds., [*Nelson’s New Illustrated Bible Dictionary*](#) (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1997, c1995), s.v. “Perdition.”

⁴²Their continued existence in the lake one thousand years later provides irrefutable evidence against annihilationism. Those whose destiny is the Lake of Fire are not consumed, but continue to suffer forever.

⁴³The gender of the words used is not a foolproof means of determining the nature of the image because the gender of words does not always match their object. For example, although Jesus says to watch for the *abomination* (neuter), that which the earth dwellers make is an *image* (feminine) of the *Beast* (neuter). Still, Jesus’ words imply that an *object* rather than a person will stand in the holy place.

⁴⁴Fruchtenbaum, [*The Footsteps of Messiah*](#), 41-42.

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