

Study Guide #8: The Antichrist Prophecies, Part II

Introduction

In this Study Guide, we focus on the prophecy of Daniel 7, which was given in a prophetic dream to Daniel. In it, he sees 4 beasts, 10 horns, and a little horn, with the focus clearly on the little horn. Virtually all scholars agree that the little horn is the Antichrist. When and how does this Antichrist arise, what does he do, and when does he do it? We seek to answer these questions in this Study Guide.

Question #1: What do the beasts in this prophecy represent?

Answer: Read the brief description of the 4 beasts in Daniel 7:3-7. *First*, the 4 beasts in the prophecy are obviously *symbolic* animals because none of the 4 exists in the natural world. *Second*, by comparing Daniel 7:17, 23, these beasts represent human kingdoms. Note that 7:17 calls them 4 “**kings**,” and 7:23 calls the 4th beast a “**fourth kingdom**” (NKJV). This means they are kings in the sense that kings represent their kingdoms. *Third*, the language in 7:5-7 plainly states that these kingdoms arise sequentially, one after the previous one. This is also plainly verified in the parallel of Daniel 2 (vv. 39-40).



Question #2: Are these 4 beasts related to the 4 kingdoms of Daniel 2?

Answer: Yes. After the 4th beast/kingdom, 10 horns arise from it. Daniel 7:8 refers to these horns and indicates *division* among them: “...and there was another horn, a little one, coming up among them, before whom three of the first horns were plucked up by the roots” (NKJV). This division is an echo of the division in the feet and toes of the prophecy in Daniel 2. [See Explorer III, Study Guide #6.] Therefore, the 4 beasts must represent the same kingdoms in Daniel 2. Note the following chart that illustrates this:

<u>Daniel 2</u>	<u>Daniel 7</u>	<u>Interpretation</u>	<u>Dates</u>
Head of Gold	Winged Lion	Babylon (Neo-Babylonia)	605-539 B.C.
Chest & Arms of Silver	Bear	Medo-Persia	539-331 B.C.
Belly & Thighs of Bronze	4-headed Leopard	Greece	331-30 B.C.
Legs of Iron	Non-Descript Beast	Rome	30 B.C.-A.D. 476
Feet/Toes of Iron & Clay	10 Horns	Divided Western Europe	A.D. 476-2 nd Coming
	Little Horn	(To be filled in later)	
Stone Kingdom	God’s Kingdom	God’s Kingdom	

Babylon's dates are from Nebuchadnezzar's domination in 605 B.C. until the Medes and Persians under Cyrus the Great defeated Babylon in 539 B.C. Medo-Persia's dates extend until Alexander the Great defeated them in 331 B.C. Greece's dates extend until Rome defeated them in Egypt in 30 B.C. Most historians date the official fall of Rome to A.D. 476.

Question #3: What do the Ten Horns on the Fourth Beast represent?

Answer: The 10 horns mentioned in Daniel 7:7 are later said to be on the head of the 4th beast (v. 20). Verse 24 says that the **“ten horns are ten kings Who shall arise from this kingdom”** (NKJV). Symbolic horns in Daniel are kingdoms because we already established that the word **“kings”** in Daniel is used to represent their kingdoms (see Question #1). The horns in Daniel 8 represent their kingdoms except for the large horn that represents **“the first king”** of Greece (v. 21), who would be Alexander the Great. In both Daniel 7 and 8, with the one exception, horns seem to be kingdoms that are pictured as arising from another kingdom, just as literal horns are attached to symbolic beasts/kingdoms. Therefore, we conclude that the 10 horns on the 4th beast are kingdoms that arise after the fall of Rome.



Question #4: Are the Ten Horns in Daniel 7 the same as the Ten Horns in Revelation 17:3, 12?

Answer: Futurists usually identify the 10 horns in Daniel 7 as the same 10 horns that rule with the Antichrist in Revelation 17. However, the emphasis in Revelation 17 is on the complete unity of the 10 horns: **“These are of one mind, and they will give their power and authority to the beast”** (v. 13, NKJV). By contrast, Daniel 7:8 states that 3 of the 10 horns there will be **“plucked out by the roots”** (NKJV). Those same 3 will be subdued before the little horn begins its rule (Daniel 7:24-25). Moreover, the parallel with Daniel 2 confirms that *division, not unity*, is the theme in Daniel 7 among these 10 horns. Again, the 10 horns are even united in Revelation 17 when they turn against the Antichrist (vv. 16-17). Therefore, we conclude that the 10 horns in Daniel 7 are kingdoms that arise from the ashes of the Western Roman Empire and are definitely not the same as the 10 horns on the beast in the end-time. Thus, they correspond in Daniel 7 to the various so-called barbarian tribes that help defeat Rome in the West and then replace her as divided kingdoms in Western Europe.

Question #5: What is the little horn in Daniel 7, and what does it do?

Answer: According to Daniel 7:7-8, 20, 24, the little horn also arises from the ashes of the Western Roman Empire because it too is pictured on the head of the 4th beast like the other 10 horns and is said to arise **“among them”** (v. 8, NKJV). As a symbolic horn, it's also a political power—see Question #3. But it's also a religious power because of its activities described in verse 25, as outlined below in the NKJV:

- A He shall speak pompous words against the Most High,
- B Shall persecute the saints of the Most High,
- A¹ And shall intend to change times and law.
- B¹ Then the saints shall be given into his hand For a time and times and half a time.

Just as A is parallel to A¹, so is B parallel to B¹. This means that the little horn will *intend* to change God's "times and law." Note that he "shall intend" to do this; he will claim to have the authority to change God's times and law, but he is wrong. This makes him guilty of the religious sin of blasphemy, which specifically is the claim to have the authority to exercise divine prerogatives, such as the authority to forgive sins (Matthew 9:2-3; Luke 5:21) and to claim to be God (Matthew 26:63-65; John 10:33, 36). This demonstrates that the "pompous words" he speaks "against the Most High" are not openly hostile words emanating from some atheistic or other God-hostile power. Rather, he claims to have the authority to speak for God on earth. Indeed, the Aramaic word translated "against" essentially means "side," confirming in the context of its parallel phrase, the meaning that the little horn will be against God in the sense of being "over against" or "alongside" God, that is, claiming the prerogatives of God by daring to claim the authority to speak officially for Him. [NOTE: From Daniel 2:4 through 7:28, the book is written in Aramaic, with all other sections written in Hebrew.]

Question #6: Then what does the little horn represent?

Answer: Under Questions #4 and #5, we saw that the little horn is both a political power *and* a religious power. We also discovered that, like the 10 horns on the 4th beast, the little horn is also closely associated with Rome, and that it would arise among the division of the Western Roman Empire, which means shortly after A.D. 476. Finally, the fact that this religio-political power persecutes and exercises both civil and religious power during the Christian Era in a region which is overwhelmingly Christian in its profession by the time of the little horn's rise to power, means that it claims to be a Christian institution.



These characteristics point to one, and only one, power that matches the description of the little horn. That power is Papal Rome, the bureaucracy of the Roman Catholic Church headed by a Pope. This was the nearly universal interpretation of the great 16th-century Protestant Reformers, including Luther and Calvin. Because of some liberal developments in the 18th and 19th centuries *and* shifts in prophetic interpretation in the 19th century, Protestant Christianity has largely lost the "protest" in the word "Protestant." [NOTE: The focus of the prophecy is on the institutional hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church, *not* on its individual members, millions of whom lived up to the light they had and will thus be in Christ's kingdom.]

Question #7: What does the time element of the prophecy mean?

Answer: According to Daniel 7:25, the little horn will be active for a specific period of time—"a time and times and half a time" (NKJV). This time element in Daniel 7:25 is only the 1st occurrence of this time period in the Scriptures. For example, in Revelation 12, a period of 1,260 days (v. 6; cf. Revelation 11:3) and "a time and times and half a time" (v. 14) are equal to each other because both describe a period of time when the dragon forces the same symbolic woman to hide because of his attacks on her. Then the period of 42 months (Revelation 13:5) is also equal to the 1,260 days and the 3 ½ times. We can see that these 3 time expressions represent the *same* time span in this way: (1) A "time" represents the *ideal* year of 360 days; and (2) the word "months" represents the *ideal* month of 30 days. Therefore, 360 days per *ideal* year x 3 ½ = 1,260 days. And 30 days per *ideal* month x 42 = 1,260 days.

Question #8: Are these expressions of time literal or symbolic?

Answer: *First*, why speak of the same time period in 3 different ways if it were meant to be understood in literal terms? *Second*, all 3 time expressions are odd ways of talking about a literal period of less than 3 ½ solar years. *Third*, except for the 1,260 days, the time elements are based on non-literal times. For example, the Hebrew calendar alternated between months of 30 and 31 days and added a 13th month about every 3 years. In other words, there was no calendar which calculated one year as only 360 days and no period of 3 ½ consecutive years which consisted only of 30-day months. All this evidence strongly suggests that these time elements are symbolic. The only element of time common to all 3 expressions is *days*. And the only way that a day referring to a specific period of time is used symbolically is as a year. For example, see Numbers 14:34 and Ezekiel 4:6. See also Leviticus 25:2-4, where a 7-year period is implicitly based on the 7-day week, meaning that each day stands for a year in that case. Therefore, the period known as 3 ½ times, 1,260 days, and 42 months is actually 1,260 literal years. This is additional validation for the year-day principle. [NOTE: See Explorer III, Study Guide #4 for the year-day principle's use in the 70 Weeks prophecy.]

Question #9: Is there any additional evidence to support the conclusion that the prophetic time periods discussed in this Study Guide are based on the year-day principle?

Answer: Yes. Two of the time expressions we've been discussing—the 1,260 days and the 3 ½ times—are used in Revelation 12, as we saw under Question #7. An overview of that chapter provides additional evidence for the year-day principle applying to those time periods. There's almost universal agreement among Christian scholars that verses 1-5 are describing Satan's efforts to prevent Jesus from fulfilling His mission on earth, with verse 5 referring to Jesus' ascension back to heaven following His crucifixion and resurrection: **“And her Child was caught up to God and His throne”** (NKJV). Verse 6 then describes the fact that, failing to stop Jesus, Satan next turned his negative attention to the woman. This woman's description in verse 1 clearly makes her a symbolic woman. And a symbolic woman associated with God's people represents God's professed people themselves (Song of Solomon 6:10; Isaiah 26:17; 54:5; 66:7-9; Jeremiah 2:2; 3:14; 6:2-4; Ezekiel 16:8-14; Micah 4:10; II Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 5:21-23). The followers of Jesus, of course, are Christians. So verse 6 refers to the Church: **“Then the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, that they should feed her there one thousand two hundred and sixty days”** (NKJV).

After a parenthetical passage explaining that what Satan is doing on earth is an extension of a war that he lost in heaven (vv. 7-12), verse 13 resumes the story of Satan vs. the woman (Church). Finally, in verse 17, Satan is pictured as being completely **“enraged with the woman”** and makes **“war with the rest of her offspring...”** (NKJV). Note the subtle change in verse 17. Satan is still angry at the *woman*, but it is said that he then makes **“war with the rest of her offspring.”** So he shifts from a direct attack on the woman and moves against **“the rest of her offspring.”** The Greek word for **“rest”** in this verse signifies the “remnant,” as in the last portion of a bolt of cloth.



The use of this word *and* the shift from the “**woman**” to her “**offspring**” indicates that verse 17 is speaking of the *last* portion of Christian history. The outline below illustrates these truths:

- Early Church History—vv. 1-5
- Middle Church History—v. 6
- War in Heaven—vv. 7-12
- Middle Church History—vv. 13-16
- Late Church History—v. 17

Note that the time periods in this prophetic chapter are located in verses 6 and 14, which places the time period in the Middle Church History era. Since it’s notable that the time periods are *not* located in the *last* era of the Church (v. 17), it suggests that the 1,260 days are symbolic of a much larger literal time period, because it’s highly unlikely that a period of a literal 3 ½ years would be significant within the middle era of Church history—particularly in a chapter which focuses on a broad sweep of history. Therefore, this evidence is fully consistent with the application of the year-day principle in which the time element represents 1,260 literal years.

[NOTE: Explorer III, Study Guide #9 discusses the evidence that allows us to identify the beginning and ending dates of the 1,260 years.]