

## History And Prophecy / Daniel 7:1-14

As Christians, it is important to understand prophecy as it pertains to the time that we live in. Daniel was a Jewish prophet. His prophecies were for the nation of Israel, the land of Palestine, and the city of Jerusalem. They include specific information concerning gentile nations. Studying this information reveals that we are nearing the end of the church age.

Our text describes a vision that Daniel was given regarding four beasts. The first beast is like a lion with eagle's wings. This beast represents the nation of Babylon around 600 B.C. God allowed this nation to conquer the Jewish people. "Israel is a scattered sheep; the lions have driven him away: first the king of Assyria hath devoured him; and last this Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon hath broken his bones." (Jeremiah 50:17) The second beast is like a bear with three ribs in his mouth. This beast represents the Medo-Persian Empire. Cyrus the Great ruled this nation. The third beast is like a leopard with four wings and four heads. This is the Grecian Empire around 330 B.C. Alexander the Great along with four of his generals ruled this empire. The fourth beast has iron teeth and ten horns. Another horn rises up and plucks out three of the horns. This beast is the Roman Empire around 63 B.C. The first ruler of this empire was Julius Caesar. He was proclaimed to be the spiritual leader of Rome. With this title, Rome began to set up worship to the emperor. They built temples, statues, burned incense, and gave offerings in worship. This began a state religion that unified the empire. This is very significant today. It is out of this empire that the antichrist will come. He will unify the world and cause everyone to worship him with total allegiance.

Israel rejected their Messiah and God used gentile kingdoms to bring judgment. The church age is the time of the gentiles. It is our opportunity to receive salvation. However, the church age is coming to an end. God is fulfilling prophecy concerning the nation of Israel. When the church is raptured, the time of the gentiles will be over. God will once again turn to the Jewish people to give them another chance to accept Jesus as their Messiah.

Bible prophecy reveals that the church age is almost over. The world stage is set for the antichrist. God's judgment is coming for those that reject the gospel. Now is the time to draw close to God, share the gospel with the world, and look for the soon return of our Lord!

## POINTS OF DISCUSSION

1. Why did Israel miss their time of visitation? Luke 19:41-44
2. What is the message for the age of grace? Acts 2:38
3. Discuss the rapture of the church. I Thessalonians 4:13-18, 5:1-8