

Chapter 1

The Prophecy of Daniel Seven

Pope John Paul II was addressing the European Parliament in Strasbourg, France, on October 11, 1988, when the Rev. Ian Paisley* suddenly leaped to his feet and, pointing an accusing finger at the Pontiff, yelled, “I denounce+ you as the Antichrist!”¹ Paisley was quickly silenced as security guards moved in and unceremoniously ushered him out of the chamber.

* The Rev. Ian Paisley is a Fundamentalist preacher and a representative of the Democratic Union Party of North Ireland.

+The Religious News Service reported that Paisley said, “I renounce you...” It seems far more likely that he said, or at least meant to say, “I denounce you...”

Regardless of one’s religious beliefs, most everyone will agree that such behavior is rude and reprehensible. One seldom sees such unseemly deportment these days, but in centuries past it was not uncommon for both Protestants and Roman Catholics to hurl epithets at one another. For example, for three hundred years following the Reformation, Protestants accused the Roman Catholic hierarchy headed by the pope (usually called the papacy²) of being the “little horn” of Daniel 7 and branded it the Antichrist. Interestingly, a footnote on Daniel 7:8 in the Roman Catholic-approved Douay-Rheims Version says concerning this horn: “Another little horn. This is commonly understood of Antichrist.”³

“Antichrist” is a combination of two Greek words, ante, which, unlike our prefix “anti,” means both “against” and “in place of” and Christos, “Christ.” In other words, Antichrist is a religious system that, professing to take the place of Christ, in reality opposes Him in doing so.*

*See Cardinal Newman’s description of Antichrist in the second paragraph of his defense of his church, quoted on page 24 of this book.

To label a person or a religious system Antichrist is to level an odious charge. Fairness demands that we take seriously the testimony of the accused rather than the slanderous imputations of individuals like Paisley or the attributions of the Catholic-hating Protestants of Reformation times.

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In Daniel 7, this prophet saw four beasts rise out of the sea. The fourth beast had ten horns, three of which were displaced by a “little horn,” which becomes the focus of attention because it blasphemes God and persecutes His people. The vision ends with judgment rendered in favor of God’s people and executed against the little horn. (For the reader’s convenience, the appendix to this book contains the whole of Daniel 7, quoted from the Roman Catholic New American Bible [NAB].)

While Daniel was deeply concerned with the “fourth beast” and its “ten horns,” he was far more distressed by the “little horn” and its activity against the holy ones of the Most High (see Dan. 7:8,19-21). Hence, while this chapter will identify the fourth beast and the ten horns, it will focus especially on the little horn. Subsequent chapters will examine in depth the identity and duration of the little horn, the relation of Daniel 8 and 12 to chapter 7, and the events foretold to take place in “the time of the end.”

What the four beasts represent

The four animals in this prophecy are plainly declared to “stand for four kingdoms which shall arise on the earth” (v. 17). So the question is: What kingdoms do these creatures represent? A footnote in the Douay-Rheims Version gives the following interpretation: “Chap. 7. Ver. 3. Four great beasts. The Chaldean, Persian, Grecian and Roman empires.”⁴

Although the footnote goes on to give another explanation, Catholics and the Protestant Reformers were on common ground with respect to this interpretation of the four symbolic beasts of Daniel 7. Consequently, this common ground will be taken as the starting point of this study.

Virtually every history book on western civilization confirms the above sequence of empires. Beginning with the time the vision was given (553/552 B.C.), the Chaldean, also known as the Babylonian Empire, was followed by the Persian, otherwise known as the Medo-Persian Empire, then the Grecian, also called the Macedonian Empire, and lastly the Roman Empire.

Daniel 7:24 says, “The ten horns... [are] ten kings rising out of” the fourth kingdom, which according to the Douay-Rheims Version, was the Roman Empire. It follows, therefore that the “little horn” that “sprang out of the midst of these horns” (v. 8) must also be a king and that he too would rise out of the Roman Empire.

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Daniel 7 further says that the little-horn king would “rise up after” the ten kings appeared (v. 24); that as he “sprang up,” “three of the previous” horns or kings would be “torn away” or laid “low” “to make room for” him (vs. 8, 24, 8); and that although a king, he would be “different from his fellows.” The difference would be that he would have “eyes like a man” and “a mouth that... [would speak] arrogantly” “against the Most High” (vs. 24, 20, 8, 25).

It also says that this little-horn king would become “greater than... [his] fellows” (v. 20); that he would “oppress the holy ones of the Most High” (v. 25); that he would think “to change the feast days and the law” (v. 25); and that he would have power to persecute the holy ones of the Most High “for a year, two years, and a half-year” (v. 25).

What the ten horns represent

If the fourth beast is the Roman Empire, as the Protestant Reformers and the footnote in the Douay-Rheims Version both claimed, who are the “ten kings” that were to arise “before” the Antichrist, the “different” little-horn king, “sprang up” (vs. 24, 20)? A footnote on Daniel 7:7 in the Douay-Rheims Version gives this interpretation: “Ver. 7. Ten horns. That is, ten kingdoms, (as Apoc. 17, 12 [i.e., Rev. 17:12]) among which the empire of the fourth beast [Rome] shall be parceled.”

Was the Roman Empire parceled out among some ten kingdoms when it broke up? The Douay-Rheims Version footnote on this verse acknowledges that it was, and the Protestant Reformers said the same.

Father Joseph Turmel, a French Roman Catholic priest and theologian, confirms what the Douay-Rheims Version footnote says. Writing under the pseudonym of Andre Lagarde, he describes the breakup of the Western Roman Empire. Says he:

The Empire was falling into decay. The Barbarians knew that its life was failing, that the old organism was worn out, and they hastened to take possession of the remains. From every direction they came for the spoils. The Saxons and the Angles settled in Great Britain; the Franks invaded Northern Gaul; the Visigoths made Spain and the region south of the Loire their own; the Burgundians took possession of the upper valley of the Rhone; the Vandals made conquests in Africa. The Ostrogoths and Lombards were waiting for their turn to come. Among these new invaders some were heretics, others were pagans.

When Turmel says that some of the barbarians were heretics, he means that they were Arians. Unlike most Catholic Christians within

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the Roman Empire, the majority of the barbarian tribes that parceled out that empire were followers of Arius, presbyter of Alexandria (d. A.D. 336), who denied that “the man Christ Jesus” (1 Tim. 2:5) was of the same essence as the Father. It is for this reason that Turmel calls the barbarian tribes that rejected the doctrine of the full deity of Christ “heretics.”

The article “Arianism” in the New Catholic Encyclopedia (1967 ed.), says that

the Germanic Christians were known as Arians. Despite some persecution, Christianity in this form spread with remarkable vigor from the Goths to the neighboring tribes, such as the Gepides, Herules, Vandals, Suevi, Alamanni, and Burgundians. When they invaded the West[ern Roman Empire] and established the various Germanic kingdoms, most of these tribes professed homoeism [another term for Arianism] as their national religion and in some instances persecuted those among the Roman population who professed Catholic orthodoxy.

This religious division, added to the ethnic antagonism, retarded the unification of the Roman and barbarian peoples; but gradually the Catholic Church succeeded in eliminating Arianism. In some instances this was achieved by military action that all but wiped out the Germanic element: in 553* the Vandals in Africa were utterly destroyed by the armies of Justinian I; and in 552 the Ostrogothic kingdom of Italy suffered a similar fate.⁶

*The Encyclopedias article “Vandals” correctly gives the date as 534, rather than 553.

The Ostrogoths exterminated the Herules, or Heruls, briefly mentioned in this source, in 493.

C. Mervyn Maxwell, late professor of church history at Andrews University, confirms the above explanation of what happened in the breakup of the Roman Empire and adds some interesting corroborating details. He says:

Zeno, the Eastern Roman Emperor (474-491), grew increasingly fearful of the Arian Ostrogoths, who were encamped in a reserve not far from Constantinople, where they were becoming increasingly restless. At the same time Zeno was deeply concerned about the Arian Heruls in Italy, whose leader, Odovacar, in 476 had removed the last of the Western Roman Emperors and had proclaimed himself king. (This action of Odovacar is viewed as marking the “fall of the [Western] Roman Empire.”)

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In 487 Zeno officially commissioned Theodoric, leader of the Ostrogoths, to march to Italy and dispose of the Heruls.... [A]fter five years of fighting, the Ostrogoths... destroyed the Heruls, who disappeared from history. Thus the Catholic emperor Zeno accomplished the elimination of one of the Arian horns....

In the 530s Justinian [emperor of the Eastern Roman Empire from 526 to 565] launched a holy war against the Arian Vandals and the Arian Ostrogoths....

Justinian commissioned his finest general, Belisarius, to sail with an army from Constantinople to North Africa and destroy the Vandals. After the crucial battle of Tricamarum, the Vandals in 534 “disappeared like a mist,” says the Shorter Cambridge Medieval History.

Belisarius, obeying orders, then turned north against the Arian Ostrogoths in Italy.... In December 536 he marched unopposed into Rome with a mere 5,000 men. The Ostrogoths counterattacked by surrounding Rome with 150,000 men (Procopius says), making Belisarius a prisoner inside the city he hoped to liberate....

The Goths then foolishly cut the fourteen aqueducts leading into Rome in the hope of driving Belisarius to surrender from lack of water. But the torrents that poured from the broken aqueducts created a quagmire that bred malarial mosquitoes and caused epidemics. The large Gothic army was so grievously reduced by disease that in March 538 Belisarius with his small force was able to defeat it handily.

Although the Ostrogoths were not completely destroyed until 553 their defeat by Belisarius in 538 laid “low” (Catholic Study Bible), or, as Maxwell says, “significantly broke the power of,” the Arian Ostrogoths.⁸ Henceforth, the bishop of Rome was free to rise to a position of dominance in western Europe, as the New Catholic Encyclopedia clearly implies.

The “different” little-horn king

A kingdom is ruled by a succession of rulers - in other words, a dynasty or dynasties - not by a single monarch. Hence, the barbarian kingdoms, among which the Western Roman Empire was parceled, were each ruled by successions of kings. It follows, therefore, that the little horn represents a kingdom with its succession of rulers, not a kingdom with only one king (see The Catholic Encyclopedia’s definition of papacy in this chapter’s endnote 2). The interpretation that in the prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation a horn symbolizes a

kingdom with its succession of kings is of critical importance to this study and cannot be emphasized too strongly.

Specifically in reference to the Roman Catholic Church, Malachi Martin - a former Jesuit professor at the Vatican's Pontifical Biblical Institute and the author of the bestseller *The Keys of This Blood*, agrees with this definition. He says that the

churchly organization is aptly described as a "kingdom," or "monarchy," with all the classical connotations of those terms: a hierarchical structural pattern; a single authoritative head - the Pope - delegating authority throughout the structure.⁹

Note, however, that in this prophecy, the little horn was declared to be "different" from the other horns (v. 24). It is not surprising, therefore, that, unlike the horns that preceded it, the "little horn" had a "mouth that spoke arrogantly" "against the Most High," it oppressed "the holy ones of the Most High," and it attempted to change "the feast days and the law" (vs. 8, 25). These activities clearly have religious implications. Therefore, besides being a succession of political kings, the little horn was also a religious kingdom, or, to put it another way, the little horn was to be a religio-political dynasty.

As previously pointed out, the Douay-Rheims Version identifies this religio-political dynasty with Antichrist. In other words, Antichrist was to be a religio-political succession of rulers, yet ruled at any given time by a single ruler.

In light of the characteristics specified by Daniel 7 and substantiated by Roman Catholic (as well as Protestant) interpretations, can the Protestant Reformers be faulted for identifying the little horn with the papacy? To ask the question is to answer it; what other conclusion could the Reformers come to than that the papacy, by its own terms, was Antichrist?

But, as will now be shown, the astonishing thing is that Roman Catholics themselves have openly called the pope or the papal succession "Antichrist"!

As early as A.D. 991, more than five hundred years before there was a Protestant, Arnulf, Bishop of Orleans, France, accused the Roman pontiff of being "Antichrist, sitting in the temple of God, and demeaning himself as a god."¹⁰

Again, in 1240, centuries before Protestantism arose, Eberhard II, Archbishop of Salzburg, Austria, wrote that the people of his day - in other words, Roman Catholics - were "accustomed" to calling the pope

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“Antichrist.” Eberhard himself, obliquely, but unmistakably, pointed to the papal system as the little horn of Daniel 7. He said:

Ten kings exist at the same time, who have divided the circle of the earth, formerly the Roman empire, not for ruling but for destroying. There are ten horns, that which seemed incredible to divine Aurelius Augustine; the Turks, the Greeks, the Egyptians, the Africans, the Spaniards, the Gauls, the English, the Germans, the Sicilians, the Italians possess the Roman provinces and have cut off the Roman colonists in these parts. And a little horn has sprung up under these, which has eyes and a mouth speaking great things; he reduces to order the three most powerful kingdoms of Sicily, Italy, and Germany, and compels them to serve him; with an unendurable lordship he plagues the people of Christ, and the saints of God; he mingles divine and human things, he sets in motion the abominable and the detestable things. What is more clear than this prophecy? All the signs and wonders which that heavenly teacher of ours pointed out to us (unroll the chronicles) have been fulfilled long ago.¹¹

While the Reformers might not have agreed with every detail of Eberhard’s interpretation, the vital point is that here are Roman Catholic prelates, and even the Roman Catholic laity, calling the pope or the papal system “Antichrist.”

Since this is such a serious charge, no one should conclude that the papal system is Antichrist without indisputable supporting testimony. Therefore in the next chapter we will present statements from Roman Catholic sources and compare them with the specifications of Daniels prophecy.

1. Religious News Service, “Fundamentalist yells, nude statues fail to deter the Pope.” Release dated 10-12-88, no. 8954. Additional facts gleaned from statements made by those who saw the telecast.

2. The Catholic Encyclopedia (New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1911), art. “Papacy,” vol. 11, p. 451. Imprimatur: John M. Farley, Archbishop of New York: “Papacy. The ecclesiastical system in which the pope as successor of St. Peter and Vicar of Jesus Christ governs the Catholic Church as its supreme head.”

3. The Holy Bible: The Catholic Bible: Douay-Rheims Version (San Francisco: Benziger Brothers, Inc., 1941). Footnote on Dan. 3. Nihil Obstat: Arthur J. Scanlan, S.T.D., Censor Librorum. Imprimatur: Francis J. Spellman, D.D., Archbishop of New York. New York, February 3, 1941. Abbreviated D-R.

4. D-R: Dan. 7:3, footnote.

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5. Andre Lagarde [pseudonym for Fr. Joseph Turmel], *The Latin Church in the Middle Ages* (New York: Scribner, 1915), v, vi. Quoted in *Bible Students' Source Book*, Don F. Neufeld, Julia Neuffer, eds. (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1962), 690.

6. *New Catholic Encyclopedia* (San Francisco: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1967), art., "Arianism," vol. 1, p. 794. *Nihil Obstat*: John P. Whalen, MA., S.T.D., Censor Deputatis. *Imprimatur*: Patrick A. O'Boyle, D.D., Archbishop of Washington, August 5, 1966.

7. C. Mervyn Maxwell, *God Cares* (Nampa, Idaho: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1981), 145, 146.

8. *Ibid.*, 129.

9. Malachi Martin, *The Keys of This Blood* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1990), 604.

10. Abel Francois Villemain, *The Life of Gregory the Seventh*, James Baber Brockley, trans. (London: Richard Bentley and Son, 1874), 1:175, 176. Quoted by LeRoy Edwin Froom in *The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers* (Hagerstown, Md.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1950), 1:542. (*Abbreviated Prophetic Faith*, vol. 1, vol. 2, etc.)

11. Johannes Turmair, pseudonym Ioannes Aventino, *Annalium Boiorum Libri Septem* (Ingoldstadt: Per Alexandrum & Samuelem Weissenhorn, 1554), 685. Quoted in *Prophetic Faith*, 1:801.