

Manna for Your Soul

The Beast's Judgment

Monday, February 6, 2006

"I beheld then because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake: I beheld *even* till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame. ¹² As concerning the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away: yet their lives were prolonged for a season and time." **Daniel 7:11-12**

Looking at the Word:

Just as the opening session of heaven's court is about to begin, great words of boasting and blasphemy come from the horn, disrupting the ordered tranquility of the scene. Daniel's shift in focus from heaven back to earth is mirrored in the literary structure of the passage reverting back to prose.

- **The Boastful Beast (7:11a):** It is striking to note the contrast between the deferential awe and honor rendered the Ancient of Days in the courts of heaven and how the little horn speaks of him on earth. The Bible indicates that in the days just prior to the Lord's return, men will be characterized by unbridled arrogance and blasphemy (2 Timothy 3:2). Nowhere will this be more evident than in the spirit of Antichrist. He will not only accept the worship and adoration of men, but he will demand it, presenting himself as a god (2 Thessalonians 2:4). Referring to Antichrist, John writes, "And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies. . . and he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven" (Revelation 13:5-6). The people of earth will one day tremble in fear at the presence of Antichrist (the little horn). Ruling with god-like power, his smallest word will be the difference between life and death.
- **The Broken Beast (7:11b):** While Antichrist may terrorize the inhabitants of earth, heaven's citizens are undaunted by his threats; the horn's voice (at most) is only bluster and noise. The long years of man's spiritual rebellion will find its climax in Antichrist's kingdom. The little horn will have at his disposal all the militarized muscle the world can muster and, from earth's perspective, Armageddon will be an awesome display of man's fire-power. From heaven's perspective, man's resistance in light of God's omnipotence is so inconsequential that God finds it laughable (Psalm 2:4-6) and Daniel doesn't consider it worth mentioning. The outcome is never in doubt. Daniel's report of God's summary judgment of the beast is clear-cut in its simplicity. His life is taken. His body is destroyed. His eternal destiny is sealed in the fires of God's consuming wrath. This is a picture of total destruction. Nothing will be left of man's rebellion. All will be left in ashes. The first two men to be cast into the lake of fire will be Antichrist and the false prophet (Revelation 19:19-21). Destruction by fire was used throughout the Old Testament to picture God's judgment on man's wickedness (Genesis 19:24; Isaiah 30:33; 66:24; Ezekiel 28:18; 38:22; Malachi 4:1,3), but it is in the New Testament that the truth about hell is portrayed in full horrific detail (Matthew 5:22; 10:28; Mark 9:43; Luke 16:23-28; 2 Peter 2:4; Revelation 14:10; 20:13-14).
- **The Other Beasts (7:12):** Daniel viewed a parade of empires rise and fall in power and prestige. The destruction experienced by the last of Daniel's dream-creatures, however, was fundamentally different from that experienced by the earlier beast-like nations. First, the earlier kingdoms all met their end at the hands of other men but God's own hand will pull down the kingdom of Antichrist (Daniel 2:45; Revelation 19:11-21). Moreover, when the earlier kingdoms were conquered there remained a remnant from that nation's philosophy, practice, or customs that continued to live on in the nation that conquered them "for a season and time." However, Christ's return to set up His kingdom on earth will signal the termination for "the times of the Gentiles" (Luke 21:24, 27) and will usher in a new age. The world system will be done away. Human society and governmental structure will no longer rest upon man's philosophies and practice, but will instead find their source in the Word and will of God.

Application and Meditation:

"Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time" (1 John 2:15). The spirit of Antichrist may speak with a loud and confident voice today. Remember that it is only noise. Don't be cowed into silence and spiritual inactivity. The Lord's mission of reaching the world must not be lost in the swirl and rush of other issues and causes. God still expects us to be salt and light. Let's speak out for the Lord as He gives occasion.