

Conclusion to Chapter 7

We have noted the marked similarity between chapter 7 and chapter 2. Each gives an account of four kingdoms, representing the continuing power of ungodly human government. Each indicates that the first of these four kingdoms is that of Nebuchadnezzar. In each account the fourth kingdom is represented as the most terrible.

In chapter 2 and also in chapter 7 a second phase of the fourth kingdom is described. In chapter 2 this second phase is characterized by a great weakening of the kingdom, involving a mixture of peoples. In chapter 7 a glimpse is given of ten kings, with an eleventh who overcomes three of them, speaks very boastfully, makes war against the saints and oppresses them for a time, but eventually is destroyed as part of the final destruction of the terrible fourth kingdom.

In each there is a final dynamic section including three great events. The first of these is the supernatural origin of the force that will destroy all the beasts. This supernatural origin is represented in chapter 2 by the fact that the rock was "cut out without hands." In chapter 7 it is indicated by a great symbolic picture of the supreme power of the triune God (vv. 9-10) and again in verse 14 by the act of the Ancient of Days in giving power and glory to the Son of Man.

The second event is the destruction of every remnant of wicked human government. In chapter 2 this is represented by the complete destruction and removal of every part of the statue. In chapter 7 it is represented by the destruction and burning of the fourth beast, of which the little horn is a part.

The third event is the establishment of a new universal kingdom of righteousness and peace. In chapter 2 this is symbolized by the growth of the stone until it covers the whole earth. In chapter 7 it is represented by the coming of the Son of Man, invested by His Father with power over all nations, and associating the saints with him in His government.