

Statement: Since a symbolic “horn” is in Daniel 7 interpreted for us as a king or a kingdom, the “little horn” in Daniel 7 and 8 should be interpreted as a king or a kingdom. Papal Rome, being symbolized by a horn, may correctly be seen as a king or a kingdom in Daniel chapters 7, 8, and 11.

What does the symbol of a horn represent in the visions of Daniel? Most Protestant expositors have understood a symbolic horn to represent a king or a kingdom. Some, however, at least shortly after the Great Disappointment, suggested that a horn denoted only a *civil* power.

Let’s begin with the horns in Daniel 7, for this is where we largely derive our understanding of what a prophetic horn is.

Daniel 7:7,8

7) After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it: and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns. 8) I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things.

In his first dream/vision, Daniel saw four beasts. Daniel 7:7,8 details the portion of the symbolic vision that includes the fourth beast, its ten horns, and another little horn in the midst of them. The beast, the 10 horns, and the little horn were all symbols shown to Daniel in his dream.

Once the symbols have been presented in the dream, Daniel asks for the meaning of those symbols.

Daniel 7:16

16) I came near unto one of them that stood by, and asked him the truth of all this. So he told me, and made me know the interpretation of the things.

Daniel asks for the “truth” or meaning of the symbols. In answer, “one that stood by” shows Daniel “the interpretation” of the symbols. The interpretation of the symbols, then, is the truth of their meaning. Otherwise, Gabriel answers a question Daniel did not ask. From this point forward in the vision, when the angel speaks, he gives interpretations of symbols. He does not give additional symbols.

In verse 17, the angel interprets the four beasts as four kings that will arise, but in verse 18, he assures Daniel that the saints will take the kingdom and possess it forever.

Daniel focuses in and requests more detail on the fourth beast, the ten horns, and the little horn. He specifically asks for the “truth” of who or what the fourth beast is, who or what the ten horns are, and who or what the little horn is.

Daniel 7:19,20

19) Then I would know the truth of the fourth beast, ... 20) And of the ten horns that *were* in his head, and *of* the other which came up, and before whom three fell; even *of* that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spake very great things, whose look *was* more stout than his fellows.

The angel answers Daniel with the “truth” of what these symbols mean, and gives him the interpretation of the symbols.

Daniel 7:23,24

23) Thus he said, The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces. 24) And the ten horns out of this kingdom *are* ten kings *that* shall arise: and another shall rise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings.

The angel interprets the fourth beast as “the fourth kingdom upon earth,” and then interprets the ten symbolic horns as ten kings that arise out of it. These ten kings have been understood by Reformation Protestants and Seventh-day Adventists alike to be ten kingdoms or nations rather than ten individuals. In our evangelistic series for the general public, we consistently list the ten tribes of the divided Roman Empire as the ten kings, seven of which survived to become modern European nations.

The angel then interprets the symbolic little horn as “another” that “shall arise after” the ten kings. Some have raised the question, “Another what?” For the answer, we have only to look back at verse 20 where Daniel asked “of the ten horns that *were* in his head, and *of* the other which came up, and before whom three fell; even *of* that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spake very great things, whose look *was* more stout than his fellows.”

The word “another” means literally “one other” or “an additional one.” There must already be at least one in order for there to be “another.” Since the ten horns are ten kings/kingdoms, and a “horn” has not been given any other meaning by Gabriel, then “another” is an additional king/kingdom. If the little horn is not a king/kingdom, then it is something completely different from the other ten horns, and by definition it cannot be “another.”

Yes, the little horn king is “diverse” or different in some way from the other ten kings. But that does not mean he is not a king. The fourth beast, which Gabriel said was a king/kingdom, was also “diverse” from the other three beasts (vs. 19). When it arose, it

was a republic rather than a monarchy, but it was still denoted by Gabriel as a king/kingdom.

Our forerunners understood that the little horn of Daniel 7 is a king/kingdom. The first reference cited below is from a front-page editorial article on the fourth beast of Daniel 7, published while James White was editor.

“A kingdom, which was ‘diverse’ from all other kingdoms, it must also give rise to ten other kingdoms which are to exist together, even as the ten horns did on the head of the symbolic beast. It must, furthermore, give rise to **another kingdom – symbolized by the eleventh, or ‘little horn’** – which must, also, be ‘diverse’ from the first ten kingdoms; and before which, three of the ten are to be plucked up by the roots.”¹

This second reference was written by E. J. Waggoner.

“‘And the ten horns are ten kings that shall arise.’ Verse 24. This does not refer to ten *successive* kingdoms, because, ‘Another shall arise after them, and he shall subdue three kings.’ When the little horn arose, he plucked up three of the first horns by the roots. Verse 8. If the ten came up one after another, then there would simply have been **eleven kings**; and he could not have plucked up three out of the ten as he came up, if all had not existed at once.”

“...Comments on the **kingdom represented by the little horn**, must necessarily be reserve for other lessons. E. J. W.”²

Our spiritual forefathers saw the little horn of Daniel 7 as a king/kingdom and interpreted it as the Papacy. The little horn of Daniel 8 was also seen as Rome, but in both its Pagan and Papal phases, and was referred to as a king in both phases.

The vision of Daniel 8 opens with a ram with two horns attacked by a goat with one horn. The horn on the goat is then broken and four horns replace it. Then “out of one” of the four horns or as some suggest out of one of the four winds, comes a “little horn.”

Gabriel is commissioned by God to make Daniel “understand the vision” (Daniel 8:16). Gabriel begins by interpreting the symbol of the ram with two horns as the kings of Media and Persia (Daniel 8:20). The rough goat is the kingdom of Grecia, the notable horn is its first king (Daniel 8:21), and the four horns are four kingdoms (Daniel 8:22). When the end draws near for the four kingdoms, Gabriel says “a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up.” This is the kingdom symbolized by the little horn. Gabriel says it’s a king (vs. 23). Since there is only one, single horn and Gabriel calls it a king, the entire horn is a king/kingdom. Thus, the Papal phase is a king just as much as the Pagan phase. This is how our church forefathers understood it, a sampling of their writings follows.

¹ Editorial article found in *The Adventist Review and Sabbath Herald*, May 24, 1864

² Waggoner, E. J., *The Signs of the Times*, October 1, 1885

“Daniel 8:23-25 quoted. To avoid the application of this prophecy to the Roman power, pagan and papal, the papists have shifted it from Rome to Antiochus Epiphanes, a Syrian king who *could not resist* the mandates of Rome.”³

“This horn of Daniel 8 must not be confounded with the little horn on the fourth beast of Daniel 7. That symbolized the papacy exclusively. This embraces Rome through its whole career both pagan and papal. In other words, this horn of Daniel 8 is the same as the great and terrible beast of Daniel 7, in both its phases.”⁴

“Where the Authorized Version says, ‘In the latter time of their kingdom, when transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance and understanding dark sentences shall stand up.’ The Jews’ translation says, ‘A king with an impudent face and understanding deep schemes.’ I want to know, then, if that does not point out the papacy as we are reading it right here tonight from these documents? ‘A king of impudent face and understanding deep schemes.’”⁵

[Daniel 8:23-25 quoted.] “This great power, which followed Grecia, is none other than Rome, as all the world knows. And that power, as described in this scripture throughout, is Rome *in all its phases*, from the beginning to end; from the entrance of ancient Rome upon the scene of the world’s action, unto the end of the world, when ‘he shall be broken without hand.’ For this breaking ‘without hand’ is evidently that time and event referred to in the second chapter of Daniel, when a stone cut out ‘without hand,’ smites the image on the feet, and then all the kingdoms of the world are dashed to pieces and swept out of the world, and the stone becomes a great mountain, and fills the whole earth—and that is the kingdom of God.”⁶

“And notice particularly that in both the passages in Daniel, it is Rome, from its beginning to the end of the world, that is considered: it is Rome in both its phases, ancient and modern, that is described. The passage in the eighth chapter, in every feature, is applicable to modern Rome as well as to ancient Rome, and in *some* of its features is applicable *only* to modern Rome.”⁷

³ Andrews, John Nevins, *The Sanctuary and the 2,300 Days*, p. 11. Published in 1872 (See also White, James, *Bible Adventism*, p. 123)

⁴ Smith, Uriah, *The Biblical Institute*, p. 53. Published in 1878

⁵ Jones, A. T., *General Conference Bulletin*, Vol. 1, 1895, p. 30, par. 8

⁶ Jones, A. T., *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, April 10, 1900, p. 232, par. 9 (Italics in original)

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 232, par. 12

Adventists taught that a horn was a power, a king, and a kingdom. There were those who, during the time of the formation of our prophetic platform, taught that a horn could only be a *civil* power and not an *ecclesiastical* power. Our forefathers met this belief when teaching about the horns of the second beast of Revelation 13. They used the foundation of Daniel 7 and 8 to build their case against it.

“The idea appears to be generally prevalent, that a horn is used only to designate *civil* power. This is certainly a mistake.”⁸

“The two horns of the ram in Daniel 8, denoted the union of the two powers of Media and Persia in one empire. The great horn of the Grecian goat was the symbol of the first *form* of that power. The ten horns of the fourth beast denoted the ten distinct powers into which the fourth empire was divided. Daniel 7:23-25. And the little horn which came up after the ten, represented the Papacy, a *purely ecclesiastical power*. It was a *horn* before the three were plucked up. See Daniel 7:8, 24. This was accomplished in 538. But the Papacy did not become possessed of civil power until 755. Says Goodrich in his *History of the Church*:

“As a reward to the Roman pontiff, Pepin, in the year 755, conferred on Stephen, the successor of Zachary, several rich provinces in Italy, by which gift he was established as a *temporal monarch*,’ p. 98. See also Bower’s *History of the Popes*, Vol. 2, p. 108

“Hence it is certain that *ecclesiastical*, as well as civil power is represented by a horn. And it is evident that the horns of these beasts symbolize the entire power of the beasts.”⁹

“A horn is not used exclusively to represent civil power; for the little horn of Daniel’s fourth beast, the papacy, was a horn when it plucked up three other horns, and established itself in 538. But it was then purely an ecclesiastical power, and so remained for two hundred and seventeen years from that time, Pepin, in the year 755, making the Roman pontiff a grant of some rich provinces in Italy, which first constituted him a temporal monarch. (Goodrich’s *Hist. of the Church*, p. 98. Bower’s *Hist. of the Popes*, Vol. 2, p. 108.)”¹⁰

J. N. Andrews and Uriah Smith, two of our most formidable theologians, both taught that a horn, interpreted as a king or kingdom, was not exclusively confined to a *civil* power, but could be an *ecclesiastical* one as well. J. N. Andrews also referred to the Papacy as a priest-king.

⁸ Andrews, John Nevins, *The Three Messages of Revelation 14:6-12*, p. 92, par. 2, 1855 Edition

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 94, par. 1-3

¹⁰ Smith, Uriah, *The United States in the Light of Prophecy*, p. 71, par. 4, 1874

“The little horn arises in the midst of these ten kingdoms, a different power from these, ruled by a *priest-king*; and warring against the cause of God.”¹¹ (Italics in original)

E. J. Waggoner did likewise in 1896.

“When one reads of princes as suppliants at the foot of the Pope, and of almost daily pomp and ceremony, it is not difficult to see what the prophet meant when he described the persecuting power that was to rise after the division of the Roman Empire as one ‘whose look was more stout than his fellows.’ Prouder claims were never made by the most arrogant of kings than are made by the priest-king who represents the Papacy.”¹²

Today, Vatican City State is governed as an absolute monarchy; a civil and ecclesiastic power.¹³

Our pioneers saw the little horn of Daniel 7 as a king as well as an ecclesiastical power. They saw the little horn of Daniel 8 as Rome, a king in both its phases, pagan and papal.

The symbol of a little horn used in Daniel chapters 7 and 8 can be interpreted as both a civil and an ecclesiastical power, and indeed it has been so interpreted by our pioneers. Therefore, the interpretation found in Daniel 11, in which Daniel is made to understand the vision given him in chapter 8, is not confined to civil kings only, but can include ecclesiastical powers as well.

¹¹ Andrews, J. N., *Sermons on the Sabbath and the Law*, p. 128. Published in 1870

¹² Waggoner, E. J., *The Present Truth*, UK, December 31 1896

¹³ <http://www.vaticanstate.va/content/vaticanstate/en/stato-e-governo/organi-dello-stato.html>