

# Present Truth

2 Peter 1:12

Dear Readers,

June 1999

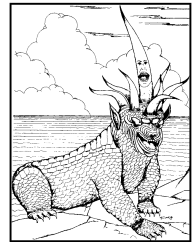
*"Grace be to you and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ."* (Galatians 1:3) We pray you are doing well, and the Lord is richly blessing you. We are approaching the day when the Lord will descend from heaven to redeem His people. I sincerely pray that you and your family will be ready to meet Him on that day. It will be a very solemn day. Thank the Lord that He has granted us yet a short time to prepare for that great day. *"Prepare to meet thy God."* (Amos 4:12)



## Prophecy (Part 2)

*An Exposition of Daniel 7*

by James White



In communicating instruction to the children of men, God is pleased to give *"line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little, and there a little."* The Saviour saith [John 16:12], *"I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now."* Revelation has not only been progressive, but the same truths have been repeated again and again, under different figures, emblems, and forms of speech. As a kind parent enforces important truths upon the minds of his offspring, illustrating and repeating, to make the deeper impression, so our Heavenly Father labors to impress our minds with truths connected with, and having a bearing on, our eternal destiny, and necessary to establish the faith of his people, and inspire in them confidence in his Word. He has given them way-marks to determine the truth of his Word, and to mark the period of the world in which they are living.

To illustrate: Suppose you were traveling a road with which you were unacquainted. You inquire of a

stranger—he tells you that road leads to a glorious city, filled with every good thing, governed by the most lovely, mild and benevolent Prince that the world ever saw; that in that city there was neither sickness, sorrow, pain nor death. He then proceeds to tell you what you may expect to pass on the road, by which you may know he has told you the truth, and which will mark the progress you have made.

First, then, he tells you, after leaving him, and traveling awhile, you will come to a monument that can be seen at a great distance; on the top of it you will see "a lion" having "eagle's wings." At a distance beyond that, you will come to another monument, having on it "a bear" with "three ribs in his mouth;" passing on still, you will at length arrive at a third monument, on the top of which you will behold a "leopard" having "four wings of a fowl" and "four heads." After that, you will come to a fourth, on which is a beast "dreadful and terrible," with "great

iron teeth” and “ten horns.” And lastly, you will come to another place, where you will see the same beast, with this difference; three of its first horns have been plucked up, and in the place of them has come up a peculiar horn, having “eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth.” The next thing you will look for, after passing the last-mentioned sign, is the city.

With these directions you commence your journey. What do you look for first? The lion. At length you see it. That inspires in you some faith in the person’s knowledge and truth who had directed you. Having passed that sign, the next thing you expect to see, as marked in the directions, is the bear. At length you come in sight of that. There, say you, is the second sign he gave me. He must have been perfectly acquainted with this road, and has told me the truth. Your faith increases as you travel on. What next do you look for? Not the city, certainly. No, you look for the leopard. Well, by and by you behold that, in the distance. There it is, you cry; now I know he has told me the truth, and it will come out just as he said. Is the next thing you look for the city? No, you look for that terrible beast with ten horns. You pass that, and say as you pass, how exactly the man who directed me described everything. Now your faith is so confirmed that you almost see the city; but, say you, there is one more sign to pass; viz, the horn with eyes, then the city comes next. Now hope is high, and your anxious eyes gaze with intense interest for the last sign. That comes in view, and you exclaim in raptures, There it is! All doubt is now removed; you look for no more signs; your longing eyes are fixed to gaze on the glorious city next, and probably no man now, however wise he might profess himself, could make you discredit what your director has told you. The city—the city, is fixed in your eye, and onward you go, hasting to your rest.

Now, if we find, on examination, that all the events or signs that God has given us, which were to precede the judgment day and the setting up of his everlasting kingdom, have actually transpired, or come to view, what are we to look for next? Most clearly, the judgment of the great day! Let us, then, examine the chapter before us.

Verses 1-3. *“In the first year of Belshazzar, king of Babylon, Daniel had a dream, and visions of his*

*head upon his bed: then he wrote the dream, and told the sum of the matters. Daniel spake and said, I saw in my vision by night, and behold the four winds [denoting commotions] of the heaven strove upon the great sea, [waters, denoting people, see Revelation 17:15] and four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another.”*

These four beasts are explained by the angel to be four kings. Verse 17. In verse 23, they are said to be four kingdoms, which shows that the word king, in these visions, signifies kingdom.

Verse 4. *“The first was like a lion, and had eagle’s wings: I beheld till the wings thereof were plucked, and it was lifted up from the earth, and made stand upon the feet as a man, and a man’s heart was given it.”*

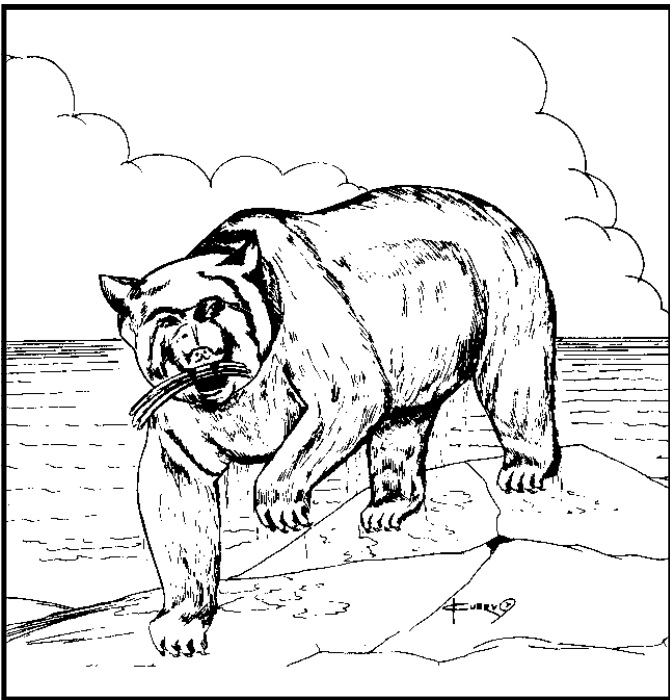


*Babylon 606-538 B.C.*

Babylon, as described in this vision, is here fitly represented by a lion, the king of beasts, denoting the glory of that kingdom, and corresponds with the head of gold in Chapter 2. The eagle’s wings represent the rapidity of its conquests, and the soaring pride of its monarchs. *“For lo, I raise up the Chaldeans, ... [Babylon] they shall fly as the eagle that hasteth to*

eat.” [Habakkuk 1:6-8] The plucking of his wings may refer to the humiliation of the proud monarch of Babylon [Chapter 4:31-37], or to the cowardice of Belshazzar, who, instead of driving away his foes like a lion, shut himself up in the city, feasting and drinking with his lords, till he was killed, and the kingdom given to the Medes and Persians.

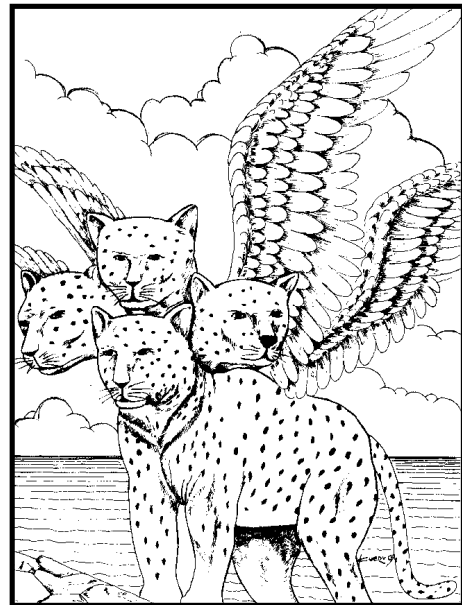
Verse 5. “And behold, another beast, a second, like to a bear, and it raised up itself on one side, [representing two lines of kings, one much longer than the other] and it had three ribs in the mouth of it, between the teeth of it; and they said thus unto it, Arise, devour much flesh.”



*Medo-Persia 538-331 B.C.*

We have already seen that the Medo-Persian kingdom succeeded Babylon. It is clearly the kingdom here described. It was noted for cruelty and thirst of blood. The ribs in its mouth may denote the union of Media, Persia and Chaldea. It subdued many and populous kingdoms. Ahasuerus, or Artaxerxes, reigned over one hundred and twenty-seven provinces. See Esther 1:1.

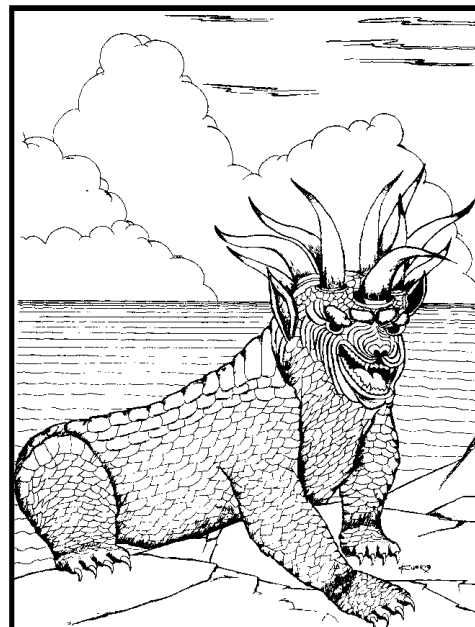
Verse 6. “After this I beheld, and lo, another, like a leopard, which had upon the back of it four wings of a fowl; the beast had also four heads and dominion was given to it.”



*Greece 331-168 B.C.*

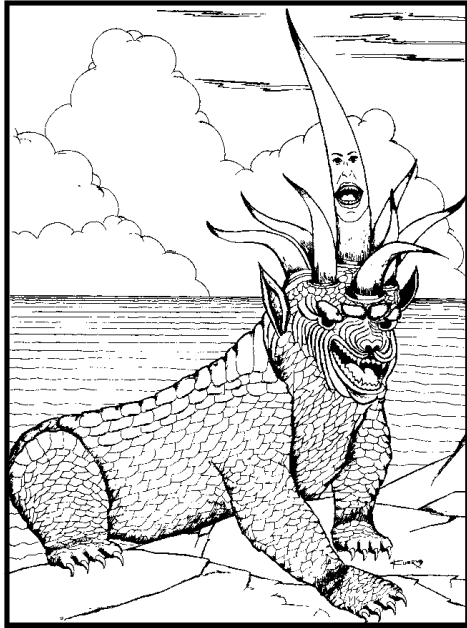
There can be no dispute with respect to this being Grecia; four wings denoting the rapidity of its conquest under Alexander; the four heads, its division into four parts after Alexander died and his posterity were murdered.

Verse 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.”



*Pagan Rome 168 B.C. - 476 A.D.*

Verse 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."*



### *Papal Rome*

These verses will properly claim our attention when we come to consider the angel's explanation.

Verses 9, 10. *"I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool; his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him; thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened."*

We have here a most vivid description of scenes connected with the judgment. If not, it cannot be found in the Scriptures of truth.

Verse 11. *"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."*

Nothing is said of "the dominion" of this beast being "taken away," as is said of the others. The others lost their dominion after a time, but their subjects

survived and were transferred to the succeeding governments, but the very body [subjects] of this fourth kingdom is destroyed, and given to the burning flame.

Verse 12. *"As concerning the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away: yet their lives were prolonged for a season and time."*

Babylon, Media and Persia, and Grecia, successively lost the dominion, but the lives of the respective nations were prolonged, being merged in the succeeding governments.

Verses 13, 14. *"I saw in the night visions, and behold one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed."*

Thus we see the kingdom of God is not set up till the judgment; hence no room for a temporal millennium before the judgment, and before the kingdoms of this world are destroyed.

Verses 15-18. *"I Daniel was grieved in my spirit in the midst of my body, and the visions of my head troubled me. 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. These great beasts, which are four, are four kings, which shall rise out of the earth. But the saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom forever, even forever and ever."*

Mark well the fate of the fourth beast. He is utterly destroyed. And the saints of the Most High take the kingdom, and possess it, not a thousand years only, but forever, even forever and ever.

Verses 19-25. *"Then I would know the truth of the fourth beast, which was diverse from all the others, exceeding dreadful, whose teeth were of iron, and his nails of brass; which devoured, brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with his feet; 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. I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the Most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom. 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. And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise; and another shall arise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings. And he shall speak great words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws; and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time.*"

### 1. The fourth beast, or fourth kingdom

There is but little dispute about what is here meant by the fourth kingdom. No kingdom that has ever existed on earth will answer to it, except the Roman kingdom. That has been truly diverse from all kingdoms, especially in its forms of government, which were not less than seven—being, at different times, Republican, Consular, Tribune, Decemvirate, Dictatorial, Imperial, and Kingly. It was at length divided into the Eastern and Western empires; Rome proper being in the Western empire.

### 2. The ten horns

Between the years A. D. 356 and 483, it was divided into ten kingdoms as noticed in remarks on chapter 2; thus the *"ten horns are ten kings"* [kingdoms] that arose out of this empire.

### 3. The little horn

What is the character of the horn here spoken of? First, it speaks great words against the Most High; and, second, it makes war with, and wears out the saints. The same character is elsewhere described. See Revelation 13:6, 7. *"And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. And it was given unto him to make war with the saints and to overcome them."* Daniel says, *"he prevailed against them."* Now see 2 Thessalonians 2:3, 4. *"That day*

*shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God."* Daniel's "little horn," Paul's "man of sin," and John's blasphemous beast, are clearly identified.

It must be admitted that such a power has arisen, and that it is Papacy. The titles the Popes have assumed, of "Most Holy Lord," and their pretensions to pardon sin, even before its commission, if we had nothing else, sufficiently establish the blasphemous character of that power. Pope Innocent III, writes—*"He [Christ] hath set one man over the world, him whom he hath appointed his vicar on earth; and as to Christ is bent every knee in heaven, in earth, and under the earth; so shall obedience and service be paid to his vicar by all, that there may be one fold and one shepherd."* Again, Pope Gregory VII, says, *"The Roman Pontiff alone is by right universal. In him alone is the right of making laws. Let all kings kiss the feet of the Pope. His name alone shall be heard in the churches. It is the only name in the world. It is his right to depose kings. His word is not to be repealed by any one. It is to be repealed by himself alone. He is to be judged by none. The church of Rome has never erred; and the Scriptures testify it never shall err."* Surely here is a power diverse from all others, and proud and blasphemous enough to answer the character of the little horn.

It is said of this horn that *"he shall think to change times and laws."* It is evident that the laws here spoken of are the laws of the Most High; for his work is to oppose God. The changing of human laws would not be here noted as a distinguishing characteristic of the man of sin. No: his distinguishing acts are against God and his saints. In fulfillment of this part of the prophecy, the Roman apostasy has removed the second commandment from the Decalogue, has changed the Sabbath of the fourth, from the seventh to the first day of the week, and has divided the tenth, to make up the number of ten commandments. See Catholic Catechisms.

### 4. The time when the little horn, or Papacy, arose

It did not arise before the ten horns; hence, it did not arise prior to 483, when the tenth horn came up.

Three of the first horns must be plucked up before it in its rise. It came up among the ten horns, and three of those horns fell before it. It must have been established at the very point where the third horn fell.

In the year of our Lord 493, the Heruli in Rome and Italy were conquered by the Ostrogoths. In 534, the Vandals, who were under Arian influence, were conquered by the Greeks, for the purpose of establishing the supremacy of the Catholics. The Ostrogoths, who held possession of Rome, were under an Arian monarch, who was an enemy to the supremacy of the Bishop of Rome; hence, before the decree of Justinian [a Greek emperor at Constantinople] could be carried into effect, by which he had constituted the Bishop of Rome head of all the churches, the Ostrogoths must be plucked up. This conquest was effected by Justinian's army in the month of March, 538; at which time, the Ostrogoths, who had retired without the city, and besieged it in their turn, raised the siege and retired, leaving the Greeks in possession of the city; thus the third horn was plucked before the Papacy, and for the express purpose too of establishing that power. [See *Gibbon's Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*.]

The facts answer well to the prophecy. Here is the letter of Justinian to the Bishop of Rome, A. D. 533:

"Justinian, pious, fortunate, renowned, triumphant, emperor, consul, &c., to John, the Most Holy Archbishop of our city of Rome, and Patriarch.

"Rendering honor to the apostolic see, and to your holiness, (as always was and is our desire) and, as it becomes us, honoring your blessedness as a father, we have laid without delay before the notice of your holiness all things pertaining to the state of the church. Since it has always been our earnest study to preserve the unity of your holy see, and the state of the holy churches of God, which has hitherto obtained, and will remain, without any interfering opposition; therefore we hasten to subject, and to unite to your holiness, all the priests of the whole East. As to the matters which are presently agitated, although clear and undoubted, and, according to the doctrine of your apostolic see, held assuredly resolved and decided by all priests, we have yet deemed it necessary to lay them before your holiness. Nor do we suffer anything which belongs to the state of the church,

however manifest and undoubted, that is agitated, to pass without the knowledge of your holiness, who are the head of all the holy churches. For in all things (as had been said or resolved) we are prompt to increase the honor and authority of your see."

"The authenticity of the title," says Mr. Croley, "receives unanswerable proof from the edicts of the 'Novellae' of the Justinian code. The preamble of the 9th, states, 'that as the elder Rome was the founder of the laws; so was it not to be questioned, that in her was the supremacy of the pontificate.' The 131<sup>st</sup>, on the *Ecclesiastical Titles and Privileges*, chapter 2, states: 'We therefore decree that the most holy Pope of the elder Rome is the first of all the priesthood, and that the most blessed archbishop of Constantinople, the new Rome, shall hold the second rank, after the holy apostolic chair of the elder Rome.'" - *Croley*, pages 114, 115.

Imperial Rome fell about A. D. 475, and was in the hands of the barbarians. Thus it continued till the conquest of Rome by Belisarius, Justinian's general, 536 to 538, when the Ostrogoths left it in possession of the Greek emperor, March, 538. Thus the way was open for the dragon to give the beast his power, and his seat, and great authority. Revelation 13:2.

### 5. The length of time this power was to continue

Daniel says, "*a time, times, and the dividing of time*." John says, [Revelation 13:5] "*Power was given unto him to continue forty and two months*." He was to make war upon the saints—the church; and in Revelation 12:6, we are told, the woman, the church, fled into the wilderness 1260 days; and at the 14<sup>th</sup> verse, that it was for "*a time, and times, and half a time*." Here then we have the period of the continuance of this power given us in three forms of expression, which settles the point that the time, times, and dividing of time is 42 months, or 1260 prophetic days or years.

### 6. Did the continuance of the Papal Dominion, as a horn of the beast, cease at the end of that period?

From 538, 1260 years would extend to 1798. Did any thing transpire that year to justify the belief that the dominion of Papacy was taken away that year? It is a historical fact, that, on February 10<sup>th</sup>, 1798, Berthier, a French general, entered the city of Rome

and took it. On the 15<sup>th</sup> of the same month the Pope was taken prisoner and shut up in the Vatican. The Papal government, which had continued from the time of Justinian, was abolished, and a republican form of government given to Rome. The Pope was carried captive to France, where he died in 1799. Thus, he that led others into captivity, went into captivity; and he who killed with the sword, those he was pleased to call heretics, was himself killed (subdued) with the sword; i.e., his dominion was taken away by war. See Revelation 13:10. Verse 26. *"But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and destroy it unto the end."* See 2 Thessalonians 2:8. *"Whom the Lord shall consume with spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming."*

That the Pope was restored, or a new one chosen, is admitted. But that he has power to depose kings and put to death the saints now, is denied. When he was a horn on the beast, he deposed kings at pleasure, for centuries, and silenced heretics by the flame, the rack, prison, and the sword. Can he do it now? No. Nor has he been able to do it since 1798. Papacy is compelled to tolerate Protestantism. Hear the Pope himself on that subject. Here is his letter, dated Sept., 1840, at Rome.

"ENCYCLICAL LETTER OF OUR MOST HOLY LORD GREGORY XVI, by Divine Providence Pope, to all Patriarchs, Primates, Archbishops, and Bishops.

"GREGORY XVI. POPE.

"Venerable Brethren, - Health and the apostolic Benediction.

"You well know, Venerable Brothers, how great are the calamities with which the Catholic Church is beset on all sides in this most sorrowful age, and how pitifully she is afflicted. You know by what a deluge of errors of every kind, and with what unbridled audacity of the erroneous, our Holy Religion is attacked, and how cunningly and by what frauds, heretics and infidels are endeavoring to pervert the hearts and minds of the faithful. In a word, you know there is almost no kind of effort or machination which is not employed to overthrow, from its deepest foun-

dations, if it were possible, the immovable edifice of the Holy City.

"Indeed, are we not (oh, how shameful!) compelled to see the most crafty enemies of the truth, ranging far and wide with impunity; not only attacking religion with ridicule, the church with contumely, and Catholics with insults and slander, but even entering into cities and towns, establishing schools of error and impiety, publishing in print the poison of their doctrines, skillfully concealed under the deceitful veil of the natural sciences and new discoveries, and even penetrating into the cottages of the poor, traveling through rural districts, and insinuating themselves into familiar acquaintance with the lowest of the people and with the farmers! Thus they leave no means unattempted, whether by corrupt Bibles in the language of the people, or pestiferous newspapers and other little publications, or caviling conversation, or pretended charity, or, finally, by the gift of money, to allure ignorant people, and especially youth, into their nets, and induce them to desert the Catholic faith.

"We refer to facts, Venerable Brethren, which not only are known to you, but of which you are witnesses; even you, who, though you mourn, and, as your pastoral duty requires, are by no means silent, are yet compelled to tolerate in your diocese these aforesaid propagators of heresy and infidelity; these shameless preachers, who, while they walk in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravening wolves, cease not to lay in wait for the flock and tear it in pieces. Why should we say more? There is now scarcely a barbarous region in the universal world, to which the well known Central Boards of the heretics and unbelievers have not, regardless of expense, sent out their explorers and emissaries, who either insidiously, or openly and in concert, making war upon the Catholic religion, its pastors and its ministers, tear the faithful out of the bosom of the church, and intercept her approach to the infidels.

"Hence it is easy to conceive the state of anguish into which our soul is plunged day and night, as we, being charged with the superintendence of the whole fold of Jesus Christ, and the care of all the churches, must give account for his sheep to the Divine Prince of Pastors. And we have thought fit, Venerable

Brethren, to recall to your minds by our present letter the causes of those troubles which are common to us and you, that you may more attentively consider how important it is to the church, that all holy priests should endeavor, with redoubled zeal, and with united labors, and with every kind of effort, to repel the attacks of the raging foes of religion, to turn back their weapons, and to forewarn and fortify the subtle blandishments which they often use. This, as you know, we have been careful to do at every opportunity; nor shall we cease to do it; as we also are not ignorant that you have always done it hitherto, and confidently trust that you will do hereafter with still more earnest zeal.

“Given at Rome, at St. Mary the Greater, on the 18th of the Kalends of September, of the year 1840, the tenth of our pontificate.

GREGORY XVI. POPE.”

Now let us see whereabouts we are in the prophetic chain. Have we passed the Lion—Babylon?

Yes. Have we gone by the Bear with three ribs in his mouth? Yes. Has the sign of the Leopard with four wings of a fowl and four heads been passed? It has. The dreadful and terrible beast, with ten horns,—has he been seen? Yes. Have we got past the little horn having eyes like the eyes of a man? That is among the things numbered with the past. What comes next? The Judgment, and God’s everlasting kingdom.

(This article was adapted from pages 19-36 of the book entitled *The Four Universal Monarchies of the Prophecy of Daniel, and God’s Everlasting Kingdom*, by James White, published in Rochester, New York.)

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