

The Divine Programme of The World's History Chapter VI. The Daniel Programme – Part III.



Continued from [Chapter VI. The Daniel Programme – Part II.](#)

It should be realized that during the period of its dominion, and while the exploits of Nebuchadnezzar were engaging the minds of men, Greece and Rome—much more Spain, France, and Britain—were merely occupied by nomadic tribes, and not known even by name to the kingdoms of the East. The birthplace and nursery of mankind was the sphere in which the first empires were developed. The two rivers of Paradise, the Tigris and Euphrates, had numerous and populous cities all along their courses; and Mesopotamia was the busy, rich, and influential part of the world, when Europe had not yet emerged from obscurity, and was unknown even by name to the Assyrians and Babylonians.

How wonderful the contrast with the present state of things! What remains of all this ancient wealth and power? The mounds of Babylon, the ruins of Nineveh, the shattered temples of Mesopotamia, a few traditional sites and names, broken tablets and buried inscriptions, and a history contained for the most part in a few chapters of the Word of God.

The spirit which inspired Daniel foresaw the transitory nature of the glory of the then existing empires; his predictions dwell very briefly on them, mention them only in a verse or two, and pass on rapidly to the more important dominion of the fourth empire. *An uninspired writer would have done the reverse*—dwelt on the then absorbing present at length, and paused lightly over the dim, uncertain future.

But things are not what they seem. The glory of Babylon was the passing incident, the mighty king would soon be forgotten. The true greatness is moral, not material. The fame of Daniel remains; his writings are pondered and studied to this day; the record of the faith and fortitude of the Hebrew children stimulates and influences mankind even now; while the doings of Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar, except in as far as their histories were a fulfilment of prophecy, are simply matters of literary curiosity.

THE SECOND, OR MEDO-PERSIAN, EMPIRE, represented by the breast and arms of silver, and by the bear which raised itself up on one side, is in the subsequent vision (chap. viii.) represented as a ram having two horns, interpreted as “the kings of Media and Persia” (ver. 20). History shows us that Media was originally the stronger power of the two, but that it yielded

to the ascendant of Persia in the days of the talented and enterprising young Cyrus. The way in which he rapidly obtained empire is well described by Herodotus, recalling the words of this prediction that "no beasts could stand before him, neither was there any that could deliver out of his hand, but he did according to his will and became great" (ver. 4). He says of his prosperity in war: "Wherever Cyrus turned himself to march, it was impossible for that nation to escape." Xenophon also describes in detail his conquests:—

"But Cyrus, receiving the tribes of Asia in a similar state, under their own laws, and starting with a small army of Persians, ruled the Medes and the Hyrcanians by their own consent; and subverted the Syrians, Assyrians, Arabians, Cappadocians, both the Phrygians, the Lydians, Carians, Phoenicians, Babylonians; and ruled also over the Bactrians, and Indians, and Cilicians: in like manner over the Sacae, and Paphlagonians, and Mariandyni, and many other tribes, whose very names one can scarcely mention. And he ruled also over the Greeks in Asia, having come to the sea coast, and over the Cyprians and Egyptians. He reigned, therefore, over these nations, which were neither of the same language with himself nor with each other; and yet he was able to range over so great a territory by the fear he inspired, so that he struck all with dread, and none assailed him; and was able to infuse such a desire into the minds of all men to obtain his favour, that they consented continually to be ruled by his judgment. And he, subverted so many tribes as it is troublesome to recount, in whatever direction we start from the royal palace, to the east and west, north and south."

THE THIRD, OR GRECIAN, EMPIRE is represented in the image by "the belly and thighs of brass," and in Daniel's own vision by "a leopard with four wings of a fowl and four heads." Both are remarkably suitable emblems for the Grecian empire. Brass is frequently used as a symbol of eloquence, a feature in which Greece surpassed all other nations, and one which was applied by the Greeks to themselves. Theodoret writes: "The prophet has very fitly compared Alexander to the leopard, for swiftness, speed, and variableness."

The empire of Greece in another part of the prophecy is compared also to a he-goat with a notable horn on his head, on the breaking of which four other horns appear. Rapidity of conquest, irresistible power, and geographical origin are all expressed in the words:

"A he-goat came from the west on the face of the whole earth, and touched not the ground. He ran unto the ram in the fury of his power, smote him and brake his two horns. There was no power in the ram to stand before him; he cast him down to the ground and stamped upon him, and there was none that could deliver the ram out of his hand. Therefore the he-goat waxed very great; and when he was strong, the great horn was broken."

The history could not be more exactly symbolised. Its period is that following the close of Scripture history. Thucydides tells the story and traces the struggle between the he-goat and the ram. The rapidity of Alexander's conquests in Asia was marvellous; he burst like a torrent on the expiring Persian empire, and all opposition was useless. The gigantic armies collected to oppose him melted like snow in the sunshine. The battles of Granicus B.C. 334, Issus in the following year, and Arbela in B.C. 331,

settled the fate of the Persian empire, and established the wide dominion of the Greeks.

The entire and wonderful career of Alexander the Great was comprised in twelve brief years and seven months; he was only thirty when he drank himself to death. From the straits of Gibraltar to the banks of the Indus, ambassadors came to congratulate him on his glory and to seek his friendship. He had himself traversed Asia victoriously from the Hellespont to India, stamped upon the Persian ram, destroyed its power, and none could deliver out of his hand. But when the world lay at his feet, and its suppliant embassies came seeking his favour,—“when the he-goat was strong, the great horn was broken.”

The connection of this great conqueror with the Jewish people is peculiarly interesting. The story is related by Josephus, and there seems no ground for questioning its truth. The Jews had taken an oath of allegiance to Darius, and did not feel at liberty to provision the troops of Alexander engaged in the siege of Tyre as he had ordered them to do. He was enraged, but could not at once punish them. As soon as he was at liberty, he started on this errand, however; and the fate of Jerusalem would have been that of Tyre but for a remarkable providential deliverance.

Jaddua, the high priest, warned of God in a dream, opened the gates and decorated the city, and dressed in his official robes, and with the priests and people dressed in white following him, he went forth to meet Alexander. On seeing them, the conqueror's anger was at once abated, and he told Parmenio, his general, that while still in Macedonia he had in a dream seen this person Jaddua, who had promised him victory. He entered Jerusalem in company with the priest, who then showed him this very prophecy of Daniel (then between two and three hundred years old), thereby greatly encouraging his hope of overthrowing the Persian empire. Alexander not only did no harm to the Jews and their city and temple, but granted them immunities and gave them gifts.

“When the Book of Daniel was shown him wherein Daniel declared that one of the Greeks should destroy the empire of the Persians, he supposed that himself was the person intended.” —(Antiq. Bk. XI. viii. 5.)

It is interesting to observe that in the two visions we are specially considering, the whole history of this heroic period from Cyrus to Alexander, a period more celebrated probably than any other in history, is again passed over in a few verses. Profane historians and poets have dwelt on the glorious epoch which included the conquests of Cyrus, Cambyses, and Darius, the wars of Greece, the expedition of Xerxes, the battles of Marathon, Thermopyle, and Salamis, the names of Miltiades, Themistocles, Aristides, Cimon, and Pericles, the struggles of Athens and Sparta, of Sparta and Thebes, the eloquence of Demosthenes, and the victories of Alexander. Arts and arms, taste and genius, conspire to make the era memorable for ever in the eyes of men. And yet how briefly does the Spirit of God dismiss the whole narrative. Alexander's empire was divided on his death among his generals, and formed the four kingdoms of Asia Minor, Syria, Greece, and Egypt. The mutual relations of these kingdoms are given in a later prophecy (chaps. x. and

xi.), which we must not here attempt to consider fully. The prediction of the fourfold division was fulfilled, when Ptolemy Seleucus, Lysimachus, and Cassander shared Alexander's dominions between them, and assumed the title of kings.

THE FOURTH, or iron, kingdom symbolised the great EMPIRE OF ROME, which was to exist in two different stages: the first united with a strength like that of iron, which would devour the whole earth and break it in pieces; the second divided into ten, the iron sharing the weakness of clay. The first or unbroken stage covers a period of about six centuries, from the conquests of Scipio, Sylla, and Pompey to the fall of the last emperor of Rome, Romulus Augustulus, A.D. 476. Jerome at the beginning of the fifth century clearly perceived, not only the fulfilment of the first part of the prediction, but the commencement of the second, which was observable even in his day, though abundantly more clear afterwards. He says:—

“But the fourth kingdom, which clearly relates to the Romans, is iron, which breaks in pieces and subdues all things. But its feet and toes are in part iron and in part clay; which is proved very plainly at this time (A.D. 400). For as in the beginning nothing was harder and stronger than the Roman empire, so in the end of things nothing is weaker.”

Marvellous was the announcement in the days when it was given, before even Greece had risen into notice, and when Italy was the home of only a few feeble and constantly warring tribes, that an empire born among those barbarians was to extend its sway over the East, and be endued with a firmness of which oriental monarchs knew nothing. So little known was Rome even two hundred years later that Herodotus, in describing the earth with all its towns and cities, rivers and mountains, etc., never once mentions either the city of Rome or the Tiber on which it stands. For five centuries from its foundation there was very little indication that the Roman power would ever become a great one. Even when the empire of Alexander was falling into decay, Rome was nearly brought to destruction by the Punic wars; and not till just before the end of the Macedonian monarchy were the Romans sufficiently free from domestic enemies to enter on a career of conquest. But then indeed it fulfilled to the letter the remarkable predictions in the prophecy, carried its victorious arms throughout the world by conquest, and by its singular power of governing subdued all nations and attained dimensions that had never before been equalled, and a degree of power which has never been paralleled since. When the victories of Trajan carried the power of Rome to its height, all nations were merely vassals to the mistress of the world.

Gibbon's description of the might and majesty of the Roman empire should be read in the light of the prophecy in order to a real appreciation of the wonderful fulfilment of the latter. After reviewing in detail the different countries subjected to its sway, he says:—

“This long enumeration of provinces, whose broken fragments have formed so many powerful kingdoms, might almost induce us to forgive the vanity or ignorance of the ancients. Dazzled with the extensive sway, the irresistible strength, and the real or affected moderation of the emperors, they permitted themselves to despise, and sometimes to forget, the outlying countries which

had been left in the enjoyment of a barbarous independence; and they gradually usurped the licence of confounding the Roman monarchy with the globe of the earth. . . . That empire was above two thousand miles in breadth, from the wall of Antoninus and the northern limits of Dacia to Mount Atlas, and the Tropic of Cancer. It extended, in length, more than three thousand miles from the Western Ocean to the Euphrates. It was supposed to contain above sixteen hundred thousand square miles, for the most part of fertile and well-cultivated land. The arms of the republic, sometimes vanquished in battle, always victorious in war, advanced with rapid steps to the Euphrates, the Danube, the Rhine, and the ocean; and the images of gold, or silver, or brass, that might serve to represent the nations and their kings, were successively broken by the iron monarchy of Rome.

"The empire of the Romans filled the world; and when that empire fell into the hands of a single person, the world became a safe and dreary prison for his enemies. The slave of imperial despotism, whether condemned to drag his gilded chain in Rome and the senate, or to wear out a life of exile on the barren rock of Seriphus, or the frozen banks of the Danube, expected his fate in silent despair. To resist was fatal, and it was impossible to fly. On every side he was encompassed with a vast extent of sea and land, which he could never hope to traverse without being discovered, seized, and restored to his irritated master. Beyond the frontiers his anxious view could discover nothing except the ocean, inhospitable deserts, and hostile tribes of barbarians of fierce manners and unknown language, or dependent kings who would gladly purchase the Emperor's protection by the sacrifice of an obnoxious fugitive." (Gibbon: "Decline," chaps. i. and iii.)

We have seen that Daniel's fourfold image and the vision of the four beasts both represent the Roman power as continuing in existence up to the time of the second advent, and as being destroyed and succeeded *only by it*. They represent the fourth, or Roman empire, as rising on the fall of the Grecian, and as occupying *the whole interval* between that date and the close of the times of the Gentiles. There is no break or gap in *the image*, and the fourth *beast* it is distinctly said continues *till* the establishment of the kingdom of the Son of man and of the saints.(Dan, vii. 26, 27.)

Now the old empire of Rome ended in the fifth century; has any other form of power exercised from Rome arisen, and is it now in existence, and has this revived power of Rome been exercised over a commonwealth of ten kingdoms? This is evidently an exceedingly interesting and most important part of our inquiry into the fulfilment of this Daniel programme, because if history has realized this part of the foreview as exactly as the former portion, the fulfilment must embrace our own times, since the tenfold condition of the Roman world is to continue to the end of the age. Now it is one thing to read of a fulfilment in the past, and another to see it with our own eyes in the present. The Canon of Ptolemy and Gibbon's history of the Decline and Fall are doubtless good and trustworthy evidence; but, after all, "seeing is believing," and there is nothing like experience for producing conviction.

Present phenomena must needs impress the mind more than past; hence the importance of the inquiry, *Was* the Roman world divided into ten kingdoms on the fall of the empire? Has this division continued from that day to this

clearly traceable? Is it evident even now? What were the ten kingdoms at first? What have they been ever since? And what are they at present? The answer to these inquiries is profoundly interesting, because among other reasons it must needs afford an indication of our present position in the stream of time with regard to the second advent. That indication may be to some extent indefinite, but it must be there, and it is the clearest information on the all-important subject which is attainable.

The programme presents five episodes—the four empires and the tenfold commonwealth—and then follows the second advent. The four empires are past. When we have examined history on the subject of the tenfold commonwealth, we shall see how much of that is also past, and be able to judge to some extent how much remains; and this, though not the main object of our investigation, is a deeply interesting incidental result. To trace the fulfilment of the prophecy as an evidence of the inspiration of Scripture is our object; but who can fail to welcome any light on the subject of our Lord's return?

The first question that arises for consideration is, *In what sphere* are we to look for the ten kingdoms? Shall we seek for them in the whole extent of the Roman empire at the time of its widest dominion? or in that part of its territory which was properly Roman as distinguished from the countries belonging to previous empires subjugated by Rome?

A very little consideration will show that prophecy regards the four empires as being as distinct *in territory* as *in time*; as distinct in geographical boundaries as in chronological limits. They rise in a definite sequence; the supreme dominion of one does not in point of *time* overlap the supreme dominion of the following one, nor is the *territory* of a former "beast" or empire ever regarded as belonging to a later one, though it may have been actually conquered. Each has its own proper theatre or body, and the bodies continue to exist after the dominion is taken away.

This is distinctly stated, both in connection with the fourfold image and with the four beasts. In the first case the stone falls upon the clay and iron feet only, but the iron legs, the brazen body, the silver breast, and the golden head, are all by it "broken to pieces *together*." Now the *empires* represented by these have long since passed away. They cannot therefore be "broken to pieces" by the second advent. But the *territory* once occupied by them is still existing and still populous, and exposed to the judgments of the day of Christ just as much as Rome itself.

Similarly we read that the three earlier beasts did not cease to *exist* when the fourth arose. "Their *dominion* was taken away, yet their *lives* were prolonged for a season and time" (Dan. vii. 12) That is to say, the first three empires are regarded as co-existing *with the fourth* after their *dominion* has ended. This proves that they are regarded as *distinct in place* as well as in time. They continue to be recognized as territorial divisions of the earth after the disappearance of their political supremacy.

Now the eastern empire of Rome which it acquired by conquest occupied precisely the same territory as the Grecian empire had done, and *its* conquests in Asia occupied the territories which originally formed the

Babylonian and Medo-Persian empires. None of this territory belongs to "the legs of iron." It constitutes the golden, silver, and brazen portions of the image. It cannot be regarded as forming any part of the empire proper and peculiar to Rome.

The ten horns or kingdoms of the fourth empire must none of them be sought in the realms of the third, second, or first, but exclusively *in the realm of the fourth*, or in the territory PECULIAR to ROME, and which had never formed part either of the Grecian, Medo-Persian, or Babylonian empires. Sir Isaac Newton says on this point:

"Seeing the body of the third beast is confined to the nations on this side the Euphrates, and the body of the fourth beast is confined to the nations *on this side of Greece*, we are to look for all the four heads of the third beast among the nations on this side the Euphrates, and for all the eleven horns of the fourth beast among the nations on this side of Greece. Therefore we do not reckon the Greek empire seated at Constantinople among the *horns* of the fourth beast, because it belonged to the body of the third."

Our question then becomes more definite and takes this form—Was *the territory peculiar to Rome*, the territory which is sometimes spoken of as the Western Empire, and of which Rome itself was the capital, *divided* on the fall of the old empire into ten kingdoms? *It is notorious that such was the case*. From the rise of the Roman empire to its fall in the fifth century it was one and undivided; since its decline and fall as an empire, the territory peculiar to Rome has been broken up into many independent sovereignties, bound together into the one family of Latin Christendom by a common submission to the popes of Rome. The number of distinct kingdoms has always been about ten—at times exactly ten, sinking at intervals to eight or nine, rising occasionally to twelve or thirteen, but averaging on the whole ten. The prophecy distinctly predicted that the number would not be constantly or invariably ten. It represents a little horn springing up among the ten, then there must have been eleven. It represents that three of the horns were plucked up before this little horn, then there could have been for a time eight only. Fresh horns must however have taken the place of the uprooted ones, for at the close of the beast's history the number is represented as still *ten*.

Hence the number of the kingdoms was to be generally, but not rigidly or unavailingly, ten; there would as a rule throughout the whole period be ten kingdoms, occupying the sphere of the western empire of Rome; but the number would be elastic, sometimes less, sometimes more, but always about ten, so that no *other* number of horns would as correctly represent the facts of the case.

Alexander's empire was represented by one notable horn, the dynasties that arose amidst its broken fragments by *four* horns; but Rome was to break up into a larger number, and ten different kingdoms would appear upon the scene, and occupy even till the end, the territory belonging to the fourth beast, still having Rome as in some sort their centre and bond of union, for they were to be horns of the *Roman* beast.

Such are the symbols, and they are the more remarkable because they foretell

a state of things which had never existed in the world at the time when the prophecy was given, and which never did exist till a thousand years afterwards. Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome in its first phase, all sought and obtained universal dominion, and could brook (tolerate) no rival power. The prophecy foretold that in the distant future another state of things should arise, and that co-existing side by side, a family of ten kingdoms should divide the heritage of Rome, and while no longer in subjection to it as provinces, should yet, as independent kingdoms, continue to have a common connection with Rome.

The fact that the portion of the prophecy devoted to the detailed history of these horns is two or three times as long as that devoted to the history of the undivided empire, suggests that their actual history might probably extend over a much longer period than that of the undivided empire; and there is no question that they continue in existence until the coming of Christ, and the establishment of His millennial kingdom.

They rise *on the fall of the empire*, for there is no gap in the image, and no break in the continuity of the history of the fourth beast, no indication whatever that any interval is to exist between the united and the dismembered conditions of the Roman world. The iron legs run *right on to the ten toes*, and the story of the beast is continued without a break in the story of the ten horns.

What now have been the facts of history? Was the Roman empire on its fall divided into a number of separate kingdoms, and has it continued to be so ever since? Has the number of such kingdoms averaged ten? Have they retained a common connection with Rome? And how many such kingdoms now occupy the scene?

The ten kingdoms must first of course be sought among the Gothic dynasties of the fifth and sixth centuries by which the empire of the West was overthrown; and then at intervals ever since. Should we find that Europe has for ages been united under one monarch, or should we on the other hand find that it has been divided as a rule into thirty or forty kingdoms, we shall be driven to conclude that the prophecy has failed of fulfilment. But should we on the contrary find that amid incessant changes the number of the kingdoms of the European commonwealth has, as a rule, averaged ten, we must surely admit that this portion of the prophecy is as much fulfilled as the earlier portion of the four undivided empires. What further evidence of fulfilment can be desired, than that the thing predicted has come to pass?

As it would be impossible to note the exact number of kingdoms for each year of the thirteen or fourteen centuries which have since elapsed, we must content ourselves with taking a census each century.

The historian Machiavel, *without the slightest reference to this prophecy*, gives the following list of the nations which occupied the territory of the Western Empire *at the time of the fall of Romulus Augustulus, the last emperor of Rome*.

The Lombards, the Franks, the Burgundians, the Ostrogoths, the Visigoths, the

Vandals, the Heruli, the Sueves, the Huns, and the Saxons; *ten in all*.

After a time the Huns disappeared, but other powers arose and obtained a home in the domains of old Rome. The changes were incessant, as horde after horde of barbarian invaders pressed in on every side to share the spoils; but still the number of established kingdoms was again and again ten. It never rose to twenty or thirty, it never fell to two or three. Charlemagne in his day reduced it for a time, and attempted, like Napoleon in a later age, to restore unity; both utterly failed, and after a very few years the normal ten kingdoms reappeared.

The following list gives the contemporary kingdoms existing in Western Europe at intervals of a hundred years apart, from the 9th to the 19th centuries. It is extracted from a much longer series in "The Four Prophetic Empires," by the Rev. T. R. Birks, and is introduced by the remark that a measure of uncertainty must exist as to whether some of the States should be included, as "it is sometimes doubtful whether a kingdom can claim an independent sovereignty on account of the complex and varying nature of its political relations." But as exactly as it can be estimated from the records of history, the following lists present the members of the family of kingdoms as they appeared from century to century. Where a note of interrogation follows a name, it implies that there are some elements of doubt as to whether it should be included or not.

A.D, 860.

Italy, Provence, Lorraine, East France, West France, Exarchate, Venice, Navarre, England, Scotland. Total, 10.

A.D. 950.

Germany, Burgundy, Lombardy, Exarchate, Venice, France, England, Scotland, Navarre, Leon. Total, 10.

A.D. 1050.

Germany, Exarchate, Venice, Norman Italy, France, England, Scotland, Arragon, Castile, Normandy (?), Hungary (?). Total, 9 to 11.

AD. 1150.

Germany, Naples, Venice, France, England, Scotland, Arragon, Castile, Portugal, Hungary, Lombardy (?). Total, 10, or perhaps 11.

A.D. 1250.

Germany and Naples, Venice, Lombardy, France, England, Scotland, Arragon, Castile, Portugal, Hungary. Total, 10.

A.D. 1350.

Germany, Naples, Venice, Switzerland (?), Milan (?), Tuscany (?), France, England and Scotland, Arragon, Castile, Portugal, Hungary. Total, 9 to 12.

A.D. 1453.

Austria, Naples, Venice, France, England, Scotland, Arragon, Castile, Portugal, Hungary, Switzerland (?), Savoy (?), Milan (?), Tuscany (?), Total, 11 to 14.

A.D. 1552.

Austria, Venice, France, England, Scotland, Spain, Naples, Portugal, Hungary, Switzerland (?), Lombardy (?). Total, 9 to 11.

A.D. 1648.

Austria, Venice, France, Britain (?), Spain and Naples, Portugal, Hungary, Switzerland (?), Savoy, Tuscany, Holland. Total, 8 to 11.

A.D. 1750.

Austria and Hungary, France, Savoy and Sardinia, Venice, Tuscany, Spain, Portugal, Switzerland (?), Naples (?), Britain (?), Holland. Total, 8 to 11.

A.D. 1816.

Austria, Bavaria, Wurtemberg (?), Naples, Tuscany, Sardinia, Lombardy (?), France, Belgium, Spain, Portugal, Britain (?), Switzerland (?). Total, 9 to 13.

An examination of this list reveals the surprising fact, which would only become more apparent were the list lengthened ten times, so as to present a census of each decade instead of each century, that, amidst unceasing and almost countless fluctuations, the kingdoms of modern Europe have from their birth to the present day *averaged* ten in number. They have never since the break-up of old Rome been united into one single empire; they have never formed one whole even like the United States. No scheme of proud ambition seeking to reunite the broken fragments has ever succeeded; when such have arisen, they have been invariably dashed to pieces. Witness the legions of Napoleon buried beneath the snows of Russia, the armadas of Spain wrecked by Atlantic storms, and all the futile royal marriage arrangements by which monarchs vainly sought to create a revived empire. In spite of all human effort, in defiance of every attempt at reunion, the European commonwealth for thirteen or fourteen centuries *has* numbered on an average *ten kingdoms*.

And the division is as apparent now as ever! Plainly and palpably inscribed on the map of Europe this day, it confronts the skeptic with its silent but conclusive testimony to the fulfilment of this great prophecy. Who can alter or add to this tenfold list of the kingdoms now occupying the sphere of old Rome?

ITALY, AUSTRIA, SWITZERLAND, FRANCE, GERMANY, ENGLAND, HOLLAND, BELGIUM, SPAIN, and PORTUGAL.

Ten, and no more; ten, and no less! The Franco-Prussian war and the unification of Italy have once more developed distinctly the normal number of the kingdoms of Europe.

Nor is this all. The most marked feature of this prophecy is neither the four beasts nor the ten horns of the fourth, but the little horn with eyes and mouth that came up among them; it is neither the four empires nor the ten kingdoms, but the one supremely influential and singularly wicked dynasty that rises with, and rules over, the latter; exalts itself, blasphemes God, wears out His saints, and ultimately brings down Divine judgment on the beast and all his horns, itself included; i.e., on apostate Latin Christendom, and

its centre—ROME.

What was this little horn? To answer this question we ask another. What was the central ruling power in the European commonwealth of nations throughout the thousand years of the dark ages from the sixth to the sixteenth centuries? It was a power that ruled from Rome as did the Caesars. It was the succession of Roman pontiffs, the line of tiara-crowned monarchs who for more than twelve centuries governed papal Rome; who ranked as temporal sovereigns as well as high priests in the Church, and who united under their sway the separate kingdoms of Latin Christendom. Every feature of the prophecy was fulfilled in their dynasty, and in no other. Those features are six in number. The prophecy lays its finger on the *place* where we are to find the great enemy—Rome; *on the point of time* in the course of history at which we may expect to see him rise—the fall of the empire and the division of the Roman territory into a commonwealth of kingdoms; it specifies the nature of the power—politico-ecclesiastical, a horn, and yet an overseer or bishop; its character—blasphemously self-exalting, lawless, and persecuting; it measures its duration—“a time, and times, and the dividing of time” (or 1,260 years); and it specifies its doom—to have its dominion gradually consumed and taken away, and then be suddenly destroyed for ever by the glorious epiphany of Christ and the introduction of the kingdom of God on earth.

The proof that the Papacy is the power intended is strictly cumulative. If it answered to one of these indications, there would be a slight presumption against it; if to several, a strong one; if to the majority, an overwhelming one; while if it answer to all, then the proof that it is the power intended becomes irresistible. There is not a single clause in the prophecy that cannot be proved to fit the Roman Papacy exactly, except the last, which is not yet fulfilled.

Rome, which in her pagan phase defiled and destroyed the literal temple of God at Jerusalem, in her papal days defiled and destroyed the anti-typical spiritual temple of God—the Christian Church. Was it not worthy of God to warn that Church beforehand of the coming of this dreadful anti-Christian power, and to cheer her in all the sufferings she would have to endure from its tyranny by a knowledge of the issue of the great and terrible drama? Was it not right that the Roman power, pagan and papal, should occupy as paramount a place on the page of Scripture as it has actually done on the page of history? The eighteen Christian centuries lay open before the eye of the omniscient God, and no figure stood out so prominently in all their long course as that of the great antichrist. The pen of inspiration sketched him in a few bold, masterly strokes; and there is no mistaking the portrait. The prophecy identifies the greatest power of evil that has ever arisen in the earth, and unmask the most treacherous and deceptive foe which the Church has ever had to meet; for if the ten horns be the kingdoms of modern Europe, there can be no question as to what the little horn is.

Throughout Western Europe and throughout the dark ages all men revered, served, and obeyed the popes of Rome, whose dominion was exceeding evil, and whose pretension was the blasphemous one to be *quasi Deus*—as God on earth. The idolatry of ancient Babylon was revived under this modern Babylon in another form, and the judgment that descended on the former will ere long

descend on the latter according to this prophecy. We must, however, refer to another work for the full exposition of the subject, as space forbids our going further into it here. (See our works, "Romanism and the Reformation from the Standpoint of Prophecy," and "The approaching End of the Age," part iii, "Foretold and Fulfilled." (Hodder & Stoughton.))

We have now reviewed the predictions of the course of Gentile empire in the earth and the leading events of the last twenty-five centuries. Is there any harmony between the two? The reply must needs be, never did key fit a complicated lock better than Daniel's foreview fits this extended series of facts! We have not paused to point out the precise agreement which actually exists between the minor items of the programme and the corresponding parts of the history, as in this brief sketch space compels us to confine ourselves to the broad outlines only. This we regret, for we are painfully conscious that such an outline must needs fail to exhibit the full correspondence between the prophecy and its fulfilment. No skeleton can convey the life-like appearance of the man. Vague and slight must be the impression produced by such brief reminders of long-lasting, important, and influential historical episodes. We are so apt to live in our own days and the days of our immediate ancestors, and to lose sight of the far-reaching family traditions of our race; yet we are the outcome of all that long past, and when we go into its records sufficiently to realize what it was, we are impressed with its absolute similarity to the present in all essential features.

The men and women of Egypt and Assyria were precisely what the men and women of Europe in this nineteenth century are. We see them in all their domestic, social, and public life, in their fashions and foibles, their virtues and vices, their work and their worship, their ambitions, hopes and fears, and we realize that conquest and captivity, barbarian inundations, bloody persecutions, political struggles, religious revivals, and similar changes, meant to them precisely what they would mean to us. The revolutions of history, the changes of dynasty, the ascendancy of one race over another—these seem little matters when we merely read of them, but what would they be if we experienced them? Babylon, Persia, Greece, Rome, the Gothic invasions, the papal tyranny and the dark ages, the Reformation, the French Revolution—are these things mere words to us, or do we conceive the realities they recall? Who would imagine from the outlines of the four continents in a student's blank map the variety, beauty, wealth, and glory of the world? Every square inch of the map means a thousand square miles perhaps of land and water, mountain and valley, city and town and village; it means forests, lakes, caverns and mines, rocks bearing gold and silver, corn fields and flowers, pastures and gardens, countless living creatures, and millions of mankind, each man and woman of those millions being as precious as we ourselves are in the sight of God, and equally redeemed by the death of Christ.

So as to history. These four Gentile empires mean a hundred generations of mankind, each one of which numbered millions of individuals. These historical changes so little to us were to them all important. Marvellous is the variety and magnitude of the events condensed into the words Babylon, Persia, Greece, Rome, with its second still extant stage, Latin Christendom. And God foresaw

each and all. He marked the ravages of these wild beasts; He noted how they would destroy wonderfully in the earth; He anticipated their oppressions and persecutions of His people; every page of the long and terrible story lay naked and open to His eye. His wisdom saw fit to suffer so long the reign of monsters, but His purpose to destroy this evil state of things and to follow it by one as blessed as this has been the reverse, is revealed for the comfort of His people and the vindication of His providence. The four empires are but the brief and passing introduction to the fifth, to the eternal kingdom of the Son of man and of the saints.

It is most important to observe that the introduction of Christianity into the world as a *religion* at the time of the first advent of Christ is *not* the fulfilment of this last blessed prophecy, though it is often alleged as such to the great weakening of the prediction, as if it taught that human history was to wind up with Christianity as we now have it become universal! This is not what Daniel's programme presents as the outline of the future, but very far from it. The symbol of the falling stone cannot predict this reality, first because of its own intrinsic *nature*, and secondly because of the *period* at which it is placed in the prediction.

As to the first point, *its nature*. The sudden descent of a stone massive enough to crush a great image to powder and annihilate it utterly would be a most inappropriate symbol, and one wholly inapplicable to represent the slow and gradual spread of the healing, saving faith of Christ. He came at His first advent, not as a mighty victor overthrowing the hosts of evil, but as a helpless babe, a suffering witness to the truth, and a dying Saviour of mankind; and He sent forth His disciples as sheep amid wolves. It is an insult to Divine intelligence to suppose that *such* a symbol would have been selected to foreshadow *such* an event.

A sudden and awful catastrophe making an end at once and for ever of all monarchies—the symbol of what happened to the world, when “Jesus of Nazareth went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil,” and saying, “I came not to judge the world, but to save it”? Impossible. Besides, after the catastrophe the stone becomes a mountain and fills the whole earth, *taking the place of the image*. This did not happen after the first advent. A spiritual religion spread among men, it is true, but not by *force*. Christianity destroyed no kingdoms or nations. Force was arrayed against it. The Roman empire sought to destroy the faith of Christ. The blood of the martyrs was the seed of the Church, but neither Christ nor His disciples tried to overthrow the Roman empire. The fall of the stone cannot possibly represent something thus wholly distinct and even contrasted in character. Its gradual cutting out without hands, while the image still stood in all its imposing majesty, its silent and mysterious formation by an unseen power in preparation for its subsequent descent, may indeed represent the present spiritual process of the separation of the Church of Christ out of the world, and its spiritual union with Him through the invisible power of the Holy Ghost. But *the fall* of the stone must represent something very different, even the coming of the Lord from heaven hereafter with ten thousand of His saints in glory and judgment. The first advent and the introduction of Christianity into the world *did not do to Gentile empires what the fall of*

the stone did to the image. The thing prefigured is a sudden crushing blow of final judgment. Nothing of the kind has ever happened under the influence of Christianity. Its operation and its results have been of another kind altogether. Mohammedanism overthrew kingdoms in abundance, though it never filled the earth, but Christianity never overthrew one. The empire of the Caesars, under which it was born, stood firm for centuries after its birth, and Gentile empire still exists as much as in Daniel's day.

And, secondly, the first advent did not occur *at the time* predicted in these prophecies. The stone falls on the clay-iron feet of the image. The kingdom of the mountain, the kingdom of the God of heaven, is in both visions set up at the end of the last or *tenfold state* of the fourth monarchy and is in itself a fifth, more universal and more enduring than they all. It does not *co-exist with the Roman power*, but it *follows it* in chronological sequence.

Now the tenfold condition of the Roman world did not commence until the sixth century, and the first advent took place five hundred years too soon for *it* to fulfil this prediction, The ten-kingdomed state continues still, so the fifth monarchy, or kingdom of the mountain, cannot have commenced as yet. It is a future manifested kingdom of God on earth, which is predicted here—the same kingdom which had previously been predicted to David, the universal and eternal kingdom of the Son of David and Son of God—"the kingdom of the Son of man and of the saints."

Is then the first advent silently ignored in Daniel's programme of the future? Though only five hundred years distant from his own day, do his comprehensive foreviews take no notice whatever of so all-important an event? On the contrary, Daniel's programme devotes an entire chapter to the great theme, or rather Daniel's God granted him a distinct and supremely important revelation about it.

The first advent, as we shall presently see, forms *the sole subject of a separate prophecy*, but this prediction of the four empires does not introduce it at all. It were altogether beneath its inherent dignity to mention the supreme event of time and of eternity as a mere incident in the history of the fourth empire. Incarnation and redemption are properly passed by in silence *here*, where *the succession of earthly monarchies* is the subject; but the *second* advent of Christ *to judge and rule the world as King*—to establish the kingdom of God—is presented as the grand terminus of all Gentile dominion. His is the fifth monarchy—the mountain that fills the whole earth and stands for ever—and it is introduced by the sudden and complete destruction of the image whose very dust is blown into oblivion.

Continued in [Chapter VI. The Daniel Programme – Part IV. The Prophecy of the Seventy Weeks](#)

All sections of The Divine Programme of The World's History By H. Grattan Guinness

- [Introduction](#)

- [Chapter I. The Adamic Programme. – Part I](#)
- [Chapter I. The Adamic Programme. – Part II](#)
- [Chapter II. The Noahic Programme. – Part I](#)
- [Chapter II. The Noahic Programme. – Part II.](#)
- [Chapter II. The Noahic Programme. – Part III.](#)
- [Chapter III. The Abrahamic Programme – Part I.](#)
- [Chapter III. The Abrahamic Programme – Part II.](#)
- [Chapter III. The Abrahamic Programme – Part III.](#)
- [Chapter IV. The Mosaic Programme – Part I.](#)
- [Chapter IV. The Mosaic Programme – Part II.](#)
- [Chapter V. The Davidic Programme. – Part I.](#)

- [Chapter V. The Davidic Programme. – Part II.](#)
- [Chapter VI. The Daniel Programme – Part I.](#)
- [Chapter VI. The Daniel Programme – Part II.](#)
- [Chapter VI. The Daniel Programme – Part III.](#)
- [Chapter VI. The Daniel Programme – Part IV. The Prophecy of the Seventy Weeks](#)
- [Chapter VII. The Christian Programme – Part I.](#)
- [Chapter VII. The Christian Programme – Part II.](#)
- [Chapter VII. The Christian Programme – Part III.](#)
- [Chapter VII. The Christian Programme – Part IV.](#)
- [Chapter VII. The Christian Programme – Part V. The Apocalyptic Section of the Programme](#)