

Daniel 7:11-12

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The boastful horn and its beast are killed by God and burned up. The other beasts lose their dominion, but are allowed to live.

Daniel is witnessing a vision. There is a courtroom set up, with many thrones. On the judge's throne sits the Ancient of Days, God. His throne is surrounded by fire and shoots fire out from it, representing God as the ultimate judge. Before him is a beast with many horns; one of the horns has eyes and the mouth of a man, and boasts of its power and greatness. This horn is likely a human king. Daniel reports that he *kept looking*.

The scene has two opposing figures. There is the glorious, fiery throne with God the Judge sitting upon it; His hair and robe are gleaming white; thousands of angels surround Him. Yet the strange, ugly horn growing from a monstrous beast is there; it makes boasts of itself. It is so boastful that Daniel turns his attention back to the horn *because of the sound of the boastful words which the horn was speaking*.

God the Judge puts an end to this. As Daniel looks at the boastful horn on the beast, *the beast is slain*. Not only is the beast killed, but *its body is destroyed and thrown into the burning fire* flowing from God's throne. This could be a heavenly picture of the event described in Revelation 19:20. There the vainglorious king who is to come, who opposes God's people and who is described as the "beast", is thrown alive directly into the lake of fire.

The *rest of the beasts* from earlier in the vision are still present. Their judgement is shown to Daniel as well. He sees that *their dominion is taken from them*; each beast represents an earthly kingdom. Each kingdom will fall. However, *an extension of life is granted to them* by God for an *appointed period of time*. Although these kingdoms will not rule over the earth forever, they will not be completely destroyed like the horned beast was. Instead, each kingdom is allowed to live on for a limited period of time.

This could apply to the period of time between when the vainglorious king of Revelation, known as the "beast," is vanquished by a conquering return of Jesus, and the end of the current earth. It could also recognize that the spirit of each empire still lives within Rome. During the Roman era, there has been at times highly centralized authoritarian rule, as with Babylon. There has also been sprawling and vast bureaucracy and tax collection, as with Persia. And there has been rapid and vicious military might, as with Alexander and his Greek empire.

These are all earthly empires full of men to whom God extends mercy. They simply rise in authority and then fall, according to God's choosing. Though no longer empires, they are allowed to exist. The boastful horn who emerges from the fourth beast/kingdom receives no such mercy. That king and his regime will be totally crushed, and will disappear under God's judgement.

This judgement is seen in Revelation as well, where *the beast* is “thrown alive into the lake of fire which burns with brimstone” (Revelation 19:20). If this is describing the same event, it could indicate that the lake of fire is an extension of the river of fire surrounding God’s throne. The lake of fire consumes both death and Hades (Rev 20:14). So it could be that the misery of those damned to an eternity in the lake of fire is connected with evil and rebellion experiencing the unveiled holiness of God. Like bacteria destroyed by the ultraviolet light of the sun.

Biblical Text

11 Then I kept looking because of the sound of the boastful words which the horn was speaking; I kept looking until the beast was slain, and its body was destroyed and given to the burning fire. 12 As for the rest of the beasts, their dominion was taken away, but an extension of life was granted to them for an appointed period of time.