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Chapter 6

The Ten Horns, the Little Horn, and the Three Uprooted Horns

The identification of the ten horns of Daniel 7 is firmly established in history. In his excellent work *Horae Apocalypticae*, the historian Elliott provided two lists of the ten nations into which the Western Roman Empire disintegrated. His second list stated **these ten to be the Alemanni, Anglo-Saxons, Franks, Burgundians, Visigoths, Suevi, Ostrogoths, Heruli, Bavarians and the Vandals.** In his first list **Elliott had substituted the Lombards for the Bavarians.** A study of Gibbon's classic *Rise and Fall of the Roman Empire* indicates that the Lombards hold the rightful place in the ten. (See Uriah Smith, *Daniel and Revelation*, Signs Publishing Company, Melbourne, pp. 135, 136).

If, as the Reformers contended, the little horn represented the Papacy, then history must testify to this fact. In 538 the emperor of the Eastern Roman Empire, Justinian, bestowed the title of Universal Bishop upon Pope Vigilius. The popes, by an act of self-appropriation, had long before taken the religio-political title of Pontifex Maximus after Emperor Gratian ceased to use that imperial title in 375. History must also testify to the identity of the three horns (kingdoms) that would be uprooted at the time of the rise of the papal power.

We have noted that the Ostrogoths, Vandals and Heruli have vanished from Europe, leaving no trace in the twenty-first century. (See chapter entitled, "The Little Horn Among the Ten Horns.") But when did this loss of entity take place? Amazingly all three vanished shortly after the time in which they had reached the zenith of their power. Their decline in each case was dramatic, unexpected and sudden. This prophecy thus is a most compelling one.

Odovacar, the Heruli leader, had, only sixty-two years before 538, unseated the last emperor of the Western Roman Empire in 476. This led to the fall of that mighty empire. At this pinnacle of power Odovacar had extended his nation into a domain where Emperor Zeno of the Eastern Roman Empire would tolerate no more usurpation of Imperial power by the Heruli.

Emperor Zeno commissioned Theodoric, the king of the Ostrogoths, to deal with this Herulian affront to the Empire. Theodoric needed no urging from Zeno for he, too, was envious of Odovacar's success. Zeno's command was motivated by a second consideration. The Ostrogoths then occupied territory close to Constantinople and the Emperor hoped that

by this military distraction he could ease the pressure he received from the powerful Ostrogoths. The conquest began in 487 and after fifty years the Heruli were quelled, never again to rise as a nation. The first of the three horns had been uprooted. "[By] mid 6th century they [Heruli] vanished from history" (*Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 1990 edition, art. Heruli).

Justinian became Emperor of the Eastern Roman Empire in 527. A man of religious inclinations, he instituted "holy" wars against the Vandals and the Ostrogoths, the latter of which were then in control of Rome. Procopius, Justinian's campaign historian revealed that Justinian's motivation was to "protect the Christians." By Christians he meant Catholics. He was protecting the Catholic faith against Arian invaders. The Arians taught that Christ was altogether human and not divine.

The Vandals were a teutonic race related to the Burgundians and Goths. In 439 the Vandals captured Carthage, the third most significant city in the Roman Empire, and held it until 533. The Vandals in the fifth century became the leading maritime power in the Mediterranean. In 455 their king, Gaiseric, conquered Rome and appropriated its wealth to himself. With the exception of one king, Hilderic, the Vandal rulers were Arians. When Hilderic's cousin, Gelimer, imprisoned him, Justinian found an excuse to attack. Under Justinian's general, Belisarius, the Vandals were overthrown in 536. "After this," the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 1963 edition, Vol. 22, p. 973, reports, "the Vandals disappeared from history." The second horn had been uprooted just two years prior to Pope Vigilius exercising the title of Universal Bishop which Emperor Justinian had accorded by the words creating him "head of all the holy churches." Another historical work described the demise of the Vandals in the words, they "disappeared as a mist" (C. W. Previté-Orton, *Shorter Cambridge Medieval History*, 4th edition, *University Press* 1953, Volume 1, p. 189).

But a third horn, the Ostrogoths, held a stranglehold on Italy, the conquest of which they had made at the behest of the Emperor Zeno in destruction of the Heruli tribe. In 538 Justinian's forces evicted the Ostrogoths from Rome. They were

extinct before 554. (*Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 1990 edition, art. Goths)

The destroyers of the Heruli, Vandals and the Ostrogoths thought they were carrying out their own purposes. But in reality they were fulfilling the word God had given through His prophets, a word proclaimed at a time when none of these nations existed, a millennium prior to their prophesied demise.

It is little wonder that the apostle Peter wrote, as the date for his martyrdom approached:

We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. (2 Peter 1:19—21)

Thomas Hodgkin in his history, *Italy and Her Invaders*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1899, Volume 4, page 250, rightly declared that Catholic soldiers "dug the grave of the Gothic monarchy." The last of the three uprooted horns had met its demise, never to rise again. The way was now open for the Papacy to rule western Europe. The 1260 year period of Papal rule had commenced.

In the destruction of the Ostrogoth kingdom we see God's foreknowledge displayed, for all the advantages at first appeared to be on the side of the Ostrogoths, the army of Justinian being ripe for annihilation. Procopius in his *History*, Vol. 5, chapter 16, page 11, recorded

that Emperor Justinian's army, led by Belisarius, received scant opposition as they marched virtually unopposed into Rome in 536. But his army boasted no more than 5000. The Ostrogoths counter-attacked with 150,000 and laid siege to Rome. With a thirty-to-one superiority in forces the Ostrogoths appeared to possess every advantage.

But God had foreseen the fearful tactical error the forces of the Ostrogoths were to make. Reasoning that if they blocked the fourteen aqueducts which provided Rome's water supply they would soon force Belisarius into surrender, the Ostrogoths had not counted the environmental consequences of their action. As Andrews University Professor of Church History, Dr. Mervyn Maxwell reported,

The torrents that poured from the broken aqueducts created a quagmire that bred malarial mosquitoes and caused epidemics. The large Gothic army was so grievously reduced by disease that in March 538 Belisarius with his small force was able to defeat it handily. (*God Cares*, Pacific Press, Boise, Idaho, 1981, Volume a, page 146)

That which no man could have foreseen, the God of heaven knew.

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