

# The fourth Kingdom

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- [ 0 : 0 0 ]     Good morning. Welcome here as we have gathered to worship, to gather as the body of Christ, as God's children.
- What a privilege it is. We're in July, a second today, and time keeps moving very fast, it seems like.
- But this morning we want to continue in our series on eschatology, on the end times where I left off last Sunday.
- And thank you, Brother Frank, for reading out of Daniel 7. Do we ever feel like we're not in control? Or we're losing control? I hope so.
- Because every believer, every believer needs to be under control of God, of the Holy Spirit.
- [ 1 : 2 5 ]     So in that sense, we lose control by giving up of self. But it's the Spirit of God controlling us. But as we perhaps look at our world situation, what's going on, we may feel like we're losing control.
- Where is this all going? And rightfully so. But this message, I think, will help us to understand where things are going.
- And I've entitled it The Fourth Kingdom. And as last week, we looked at the image that Nebuchadnezzar had. And the visions that now Daniel receives as well.
- And so to connect the two. And, you know, we wonder, why does evil persist?
- Why does it seem to gain strength? Why does it seem to gain strength? You know, there's some teachings out there that the church is going to make the world a better and better place.
- [ 2 : 4 7 ]     And to usher in the coming of Jesus. Not according to Scripture. That is false.
- And as we'll see in what Daniel has revealed, that it's just the opposite. God is allowing evil to climax, to come to a head, where he will crush it and conquer it once and for all, and set up his own kingdom.
- And so as we think about these things, as we go through life, whether we're young as children or teenagers or parents or grandparents, we think.
- And as we see things happening around us, we need to think. What is happening? What is God doing? And so it's good for us to understand.
- We're going to just focus on the passage that was read for us. And so last week we had Daniel chapter 2, and we had the image of the beast.
- [ 4 : 1 1 ]     And here, phase 2 of that image is portrayed for us in the form of four animals, beasts.
- And John, if you want to bring that up for us, that image. I'll just quickly point that out. So last week we had the head of gold, and the chest and arms of silver, and the belly and thighs of bronze, and the legs of iron.
- Well, that was Nebuchadnezzar's vision of God showing him the succession of world governments. Today we're going to look at chapter 7.

Daniel has a vision, and he sees these four beasts, the lion, the bear, the leopard, and the terrible and frightening beast. And so we learn that they correspond, that the head of gold, which we talked about last time was Babylon, is represented by the lion.

The chest, the silver, which is the Medes and the Persians, is also represented by the bearer. And the bronze, the belly and the thighs, which is the Greeks or Greece, and represented by the leopard in Daniel's vision.

[ 5 : 37 ] And then the legs of iron, and the feet and the toes of clay and iron, and the terrible beast. And so we see it's one thing God is teaching, but through different visions.

So, just very briefly, we'll look at the first three again. And Daniel just re-emphasizes chapter 7, verse 2.

Daniel spoke, saying, I saw in my vision by night, and behold, the four winds of heaven were stirring up the great sea, and four great beasts came up from the sea, from the nations, from the sea.

And so we have the first one that Daniel sees is like a lion.

A lion, and we know it's identified as Babylon. A lion is usually seen as the king of beasts, majestic, powerful, and it's that head of gold that reigned over the world in Daniel's time.

[ 7 : 10 ] And we know from the year 605 down to 539, the Babylonians ruled.

And so represented by a lion, an animal that gives a picture of that. Eagle's wings, eagle also. It's a picture of strength in birds as they soar, of swiftness, and there too, picturing the Babylonians.

And in chapter 2 last week, we had clear identification. Daniel said to Nebuchadnezzar, And you are that head of gold. You are that head.

And so very clear there. Then the next animal. And suddenly, another beast, a second, like a bear, and it was raised up on one side, had three ribs in its mouth, between its teeth, and they said thus to it, Arise, devour much flesh.

So a bear is pictured in the second kingdom, the Medes and the Persians, the Medo-Persia kingdom, represented by a bear and the silver.

[ 8 : 29 ] And so a bear, are we scared of bears? We meet bears. We like to run or hide or stand paralyzed, but bears are known to be animals that are fierce, and they attack.

And thus the picture of the Medes and the Persians as they conquered the Babylonians. It's a rightful picture. And this kingdom is identified in chapter 8, verse 20, as the Medes and the Persians.

A clear identification in Scripture, even though history tells us that this all happened. But Scripture itself as well. So there's no mistaking of the second kingdom.

And so from 539 down to 330, they ruled the known world, the second one. Interesting that God repeats the visions, right, in different forms to confirm, even to different people.

First to a pagan king, Nebuchadnezzar, and now to Daniel, a man that loved God. A greatly beloved Scripture says of him.

[ 9 : 58 ] And that's the bear. Verse 6, After this I looked, and there was another like a leopard, which had on its back four wings of a bird, the beast's four heads, and a dominion was given to it.

Now we think of a leopard, what do we think of? Speed. It's swiftness. Sneakiness as well.

Okay, ready to pounce. And this is the image that the kingdom of Greece, the third one, which is the belly, the bronze, and then in Daniel's vision, the leopard.

So, in 330, when Greece overtook and conquered the Medes and the Persians, they did that with speed.

And Alexander the Great, you may have heard of him or read about him or learned about him in school, Alexander the Great, he was relentless and swift in conquering the world and taking over the kingdom.

[ 11 : 16 ] And, by the time he was in his early 30s, he kind of said, there's no challenge left in life. I've conquered all there is to conquer. And he died in his 30s, very young.

And, but the description here is that he had on his back four wings of a bird. The beast had four heads and dominion was given to it.

Well, when Alexander the Great died, the kingdom of Greece was turned over to his four generals under him.

Four heads of his armies, I guess you could say. And, and they split the kingdom into four. And they each ruled over part.

And so the four wings are represented here in this third beast. This too is all history. It's all happened already. We know it's written down that this came to pass.

[ 12 : 22 ] And so Daniel, Daniel gets to see this vision. And then, then there's the fourth beast. And after this, I saw in the night visions and behold, a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, exceedingly strong.

It had huge iron teeth. It was devouring and trampling the residue with its feet. It was different from all the beasts that were before it and it had ten horns.

So, the first initial description that we have of this fourth beast is that it's dreadful and terrible. Dreadful and terrible.

Exceedingly strong and iron teeth to crush and to break into pieces. the strength of iron.

The strength of iron. And, it's a description of, and we know this from history from the Roman Empire who officially took over in 63 before Christ.

[ 13 : 34 ] And, and the fourth kingdom started and it was the Roman Empire who ruled through the time of Christ and for another at least 400 or 400 years they were the world empire.

And, and it was Rome. Fierce and dreadful and like iron. And so, we'll, we'll give our, our thoughts this morning to the fourth beast fair amount.

So, as, as Daniel sees this, I want to jump down to verse 15 in our text. Daniel 7. And it says, I, Daniel, was grieved in my spirit within my body and the visions of my head troubled me.

Daniel, in the first year of, of, of Belshazzar, as, as our chapter introduces him, this is, this is approximately 55 years after Nebuchadnezzar, after the first vision.

Daniel has been imported from, from, from Israel as a, as a, young man.

[ 14 : 58 ] He interprets the vision for the, for Nebuchadnezzar, and now, roughly 55 years later, leaves this vision. So, he may be 70, in his early 70s, at this point.

And, and the scripture says, he was grieved in the spirit and, and troubled as, as he saw this vision, as he saw this fourth beast.

And it, and it really troubled him. In chapter 8, as, as Daniel receives another vision, in verse 27, and it says, and I, Daniel, fainted and was sick for days.

And afterward I rose and went about the king's business. I was astonished by the vision. So, these visions are affecting Daniel in his old age in a way that's, it's, I think it makes his stomach turn.

He says, it's sick for days. It, it has a powerful effect. So, what did Daniel all see that affected him so much?

[ 16 : 17 ] And, and so, let's, let's have that. So, John, let's put up the timeline just very briefly. If, so we have, I realize this is hard to see.

I got him to digitize our timeline and, and, and, so we just have the last portion of the Old Testament and so, this is the birth of Christ right here and, this is the beginning of the Babylonian Empire.

So, the fall of Israel will be right there and then the Babylonian kingdom is right there and then we have the Persian kingdom and then the Greek kingdom and then we have the Roman Empire starting.

And so, on our timeline that's, that's how it looks and I realize from there you probably don't make a lot of sense of it but it's, it's all in perspective and it's, it's all happened behind us already.

None of this is before us. It's behind us and it's already happened. So, thank you John. All right, so we're going to continue to look at the fourth kingdom.

[ 17 : 39 ] Now, I want to go back to, to chapter two and just to look at the description of the fourth kingdom and starting in verse 40.

The fourth kingdom. And the fourth kingdom shall be as strong as iron and as much as iron breaks in pieces and shatters everything and like iron that crushes the kingdom will break in pieces and crush all others.

Whereas you saw the feet and toes partly of potter's clay and partly of iron, the kingdom shall be divided and the strength of the iron shall be in it, just as you saw the iron mixed with ceramic clay.

And as the toes of the feet were partly of iron and partly of clay, so the kingdom shall be fragile, or sorry, be partly strong and partly fragile. And as you saw iron mixed with ceramic clay, they will mingle with the seed of men, but they will not adhere to one another, just as iron does not mix with clay.

So the last kingdom, we have different parts of it. Can you bring up that image again? And so we have the legs of iron and then the feet and the toes and the bottom, they're made of a mixture of iron and of clay.

[ 19 : 21 ] How many of us have worked with iron? A number of us. What characterizes iron? Hardness and strength.

And you bang your head on it and it hurts. And so iron is strong and it's hard and it's heavy and it's cheap. How about clay, potter's clay?

What's characteristic about clay? Moldable? Fragile? After it's baked, it's fragile.

And iron, you drop it, nothing happens. And clay, you drop a clay pot, what happens? It shatters. Can you mix the two?

You can't mix the two. And so what we have here is this last kingdom is displayed in two parts.

[ 20 : 26 ] The first part is the legs of iron. Not mixed, just iron. And that seems to be displaying or depicting the first stage of the Roman Empire.

fire. That is during the time of Christ, starting in 63 B.C., before Christ, and going on for 500 years.

The legs of iron, the strength of the Roman kingdom, kingdom. And even through the Gospels, and through Paul's writings, we read of some of the persecution under Rome.

The hardness. And we read about Nero and the martyrdom of the church, killing the saints.

That's a depiction of Rome. And yet, that government came to an end. That world government. And from that time to this day, we have not had a one world government.

[ 21 : 39 ] But then we have, we move on to the feet. And we have a different description. And the feet, it's not on here, but the feet are made of a mixture of iron and of clay.

And our description says, partly strong, partly fragile. And we have ten toes on the feet and we have the description of ten kings coming out of this kingdom.

So there seems to be a revived Roman empire. This kingdom will come back to life with ten kings.

Ten, perhaps, regions, so to speak. And it will be partly strong and partly weak or fragile like clay. It says further that as you saw the iron mixed with ceramic clay, they will mingle with the seed of men.

So this kingdom with the ten kings will, I understand this, they will bring in nations that are not part of the Roman empire.

[ 23 : 01 ] And they will mingle with the seed of men to bring about peace in the world, to draw it together. And it will mingle with the seed of men, but it won't be a strong kingdom because they won't agree.

they're so different. And so we have that element of iron and clay. And then Nebuchadnezzar is in his vision, and in those days God will set up his kingdom.

And that is the return of Christ. And so that's a very, very brief seeing. So let's go back to chapter seven. And that's and I'm going to read quite a bit of chapter seven.

I was considering the horns. This is in verse eight of chapter seven. I was considering the horns and there was another horn, a little one coming up among them before whom three of the first horns were plucked out by the roots.

And there in this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man and the mouth speaking pompous words. And so as Daniel was considering the vision, he's thinking about it and he's looking at the ten horns that are coming out of this kingdom.

[ 24 : 29 ] And he says, and then as there was ten kings ruling the world, there was another one. There was another king that came forward and it says he plucked out three of the ten.

And it says, plucked out by its roots. They're eliminated. You know, when you pull out plants by their roots, then they stop to grow.

When you just break off the tops, then they and they're plucked out by their roots. And this 11th king pushes out three kingdoms and he comes in with the other seven and rules over them.

And we'll see this matches with Revelations chapter 13. And so this is what Daniel is considering. This little horn, the king that starts low and comes up and pushes out three other kingdoms.

Who is this? And what is its strength? And a further description of this king, of this 11th king, is pompous words.

[ 25 : 58 ] It says, and there were, in verse 8, and there were in this horn, and there in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking pompous words.

So this 11th king is a human descent, eyes like a man, and speaking pompous words. Now what does pompous words mean?

arrogant and boastful. He'll talk big things.

Boastful and arrogant. Absolutely. And in the New Testament, we know he will boast, and he will elevate himself to be like God, and say, I am God.

But Daniel has already reading or having visions about this. Okay, let's move on to verse 17 in chapter 7.

[ 27 : 07 ] Those great beasts which are four are four kings which arise out of the earth, but the saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom and possess the kingdom forever and ever and ever.

keep that thought in mind. We have a picture of four human governments, but what's going to happen after?

God will set up his kingdom and the saints inherit and rule with him. no matter what we see before us, what we go through, in Christ we're going to win.

We are victors. Why? Because God has determined this is the way it's going to work. God's plan will not be changed.

This is so comforting to know that God's plan will not be changed. Satan cannot steer God's plan astray.

[ 28 : 27 ] He has tried and tried and tried and failed and failed and failed. God is always one step ahead or a few.

So the saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom and possess the kingdom forever and ever. There's no truth about the fourth beast which was different from all the others, exceedingly dreadful with its teeth of iron, its nails of bronze, which devoured broken pieces and trampled the residue with its feet.

So Daniel was curious about this fourth beast because it's so fierce. It's troubling. And I'm imagining Daniel is looking ahead at the toes, at the feet, part of this image, the fourth beast, the revived Roman Empire.

And he's wanting to know. Verse 20, And the ten horns that were on its head, and the other horn which came up before, which three fell, namely, that horn which had eyes, and the mouth which spoke pompous words, whose appearance was greater than his fellows.

So further description of this eleventh king, his appearance is greater than that of fellow man. See, he will be attractive in the world.

[ 30 : 08 ] He'll speak big things, boastful. He'll be very attractive, very sly.

And I was watching, and the same horn was making war against the saints and prevailing against them.

Until the ancient of days came, and a judgment was made in favor of the saints of the Most High, and the time came for the saints to possess the kingdom.

And so as we fit this together, in Revelation, the tribulation period, the second half, the last three and a half years, and we're going to turn there in a bit to Revelation 13, but there the saints are given over to the Antichrist.

And the Antichrist will be given authority to persecute them. And it's going to be a hard time. And it says for three and a half years, for 42 months, the saints will be given over to the Antichrist.

[ 31 : 24 ] And that's where the number 666 and everything will come in. And so Daniel is already shown all of this. So 500 years before Christ, he already was made to understand what would happen.

It was clear to him. So I was watching and the same horn was making war against the saints and prevailing against them. Until the ancient of days, God or Jesus Christ, came and judgment was made in favor of the saints of the Most High, and the time came for the saints to possess the kingdom.

So this will continue until Jesus Christ comes back down on the Mount of Olives. That is the second coming. And then the saints are going to win.

And the enemies of God will be destroyed. And so that's what we are told here. Verse 23, Thus he said, The fourth beast shall be a fourth kingdom on earth, which shall be different from all other kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, trample it, and break it in pieces.

The ten horns are ten kings who shall rise from this kingdom. And another shall rise after them. He shall be different from the first ones, and shall subdue three kings.

[ 32 : 58 ] It's the third time that we're told he's going to knock out three of them. He shall speak pompous words. There's that again, the boastfulness.

He shall persecute the saints of the Most High. He shall persecute the saints of the Most High. Am I off now? And it says, And then the saints shall be given to his hand for a time and times and half a time.

So for a year, two years, and half a year. For a total of three and a half. For a time, time, times, and half a time. But the court shall be seated, and they shall take away his dominion to consume and destroy it forever.

And then the kingdom and dominion and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven shall be given to the people, the saints of the Most High. His kingdom and all dominions shall serve and obey him.

This is the end of the account. As for me, Daniel, my thoughts greatly troubled me, and my continents changed, but I kept the matter in my heart.

[ 34 : 20 ] And I can't help think, poor Daniel. He's an old man. He won't live to see any of this, yet God has chosen him as a vessel to reveal.

And it says his continents changed. He was troubled at what he was seeing, the fierceness of it. And so it's definitely talking about the time of the end, just before the return of Christ.

And so let's turn to Daniel or Daniel, Revelations chapter 13. And this is where John, the Apostle John, is shown the vision of the end.

And we'll start in verse 1 and read through verse 7. And then I stood on the sand of the sea, and I saw a beast rising up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and on his horns ten crowns, and on his heads a blasphemous name.

Now the beast which I saw was like a leopard, his feet were like the feet of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. dragon gave him power, and his throne and great authority.

[ 35 : 56 ] And then I saw one of his heads as if it had been mortally wounded, and his deadly wound was healed, and all the world marveled and followed the beast.

And so they worshipped the dragon, who gave authority to the beast, and they worshipped the beast, saying, who is like the beast, who is able to make war with him. And he was given a mouth speaking great things, pompous, great things, and blasphemies, and he was given authority to continue for forty-two months, three and a half years.

And then he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God to blaspheme his name, his tabernacle, and those who dwell in heaven. It was granted to him two to make war with the saints and to overcome them, and authority was given over every tribe, tongue, and nation.

So this last kingdom, the last segment of it, interesting the description in verse two, the beast coming out of the sea, the same as Daniel's vision, out of the sea, and out of the nations, and it says here, that this beast was like a leopard, his feet like a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion.

A lion, a bear, and a leopard. So we have in this last, last human government on this world, so this is yet future, we have the fulfillment of all humanity coming together under the governance of the Antichrist.

[ 37 : 49 ] And all the other kingdoms that Daniel saw, that Nebuchadnezzar saw, back before Christ already, what all they represented, it all together is represented in this last one.

And it's the fulfillment of evil. It's the climax of it. And so, fallen man, fallen man without Jesus Christ, is inherently evil.

And we serve the God of this age. If we don't serve Jesus, then we are agents of the God of this age, Satan.

And what happens here with this last beast, it says that the dragon, Satan, the dragon, gave him his power.

And so, Satan will indwell the Antichrist during this last stretch, the last three and a half years.

[ 38 : 59 ] And we will have the fulfillment of evil like never before in history. evil. And that is going to end time as we know it for this world.

So God's going to bring it to an end by the return of Christ who will come and then crush the Antichrist, the false prophet, and he will bind Satan for a thousand years.

sin. You know, we think of the number 666. And many people have tried to calculate that number.

Don't waste your breath with that. The number 6 is the number of imperfection. It's the number of Satan. It's the number of sinful man.

It's our number. The number 7 is holiness. Completion. It's the number of God. And so Satan's number is 666.

[ 40 : 07 ] 666. And we see it all climaxing. And so we read of this mark of the beast, 666.

it's the fulfillment of Satan having his way here on earth. And so that's the explanation of what that means.

And so God is showing us what's going to come upon this world. Now I believe according to scripture that the church is removed prior to this.

but one third of the Jews will come to faith. Those that survived the tribulation period, they will come to faith and many Gentiles will come to faith.

And they will face the persecution under the mark of the beast. As they're given over to his hand.

[ 41 : 14 ] And there will be martyrdom like never before on this world. As God's judgments fall. So that is kind of putting together what Daniel was seeing, complementing what Nebuchadnezzar had seen.

Take away from the message today, saints shall inherit the kingdom. them. Don't lose sight of that.

Don't let go. We are victors in Christ. No matter what you may be facing, no matter what trials, what hardships, God will see you through.

and he has plans for you to inherit with Christ the kingdom. And it is revealed to us that we understand, that we don't give up, that we press on, that we press on in the midst of trials and persecutions.

that we don't give up. God is faithful. He keeps his promises. It is sure.

[ 42 : 50 ] It cannot alter. The millennial kingdom is coming. And as sure as God exists, that kingdom is coming.

And just as sure, the saints will inherit it. God is so, as we look at these topics of the coming reign of evil, or that's already beginning in our day, but it's climaxing, let us not look at it with fear.

If we know Christ, we need to look through it and beyond it, fear. But not to cower in fear. Fear speaks of imperfection that we don't know where we stand in Christ.



but as we're in Christ, we overcome that fear with boldness, with understanding, with clarity of mind.

And so, may the Lord bless you as you meditate on these things, as you think these things through, and look to him, not fearfully, but with joy, looking ahead to what's coming.

[ 44 : 09 ] Let's pray. Heavenly Father, as we contemplate eternity, your plans for humanity, your plans of a coming kingdom which will be free of evil.

Lord, it's, in our minds, it's almost too good to be true, and yet, Lord, these are your thoughts, these are your plans, this will surely come to pass.

And so, Father, as we walk these days on earth, help us to look beyond, to grasp hold of what's beyond eternity, to hold on to it, to not let go.

We just praise you, Lord, that you are in control, that you are sovereign. In Jesus' name, amen.

Amen.