

# Pentwater Bible Church

*Ezekiel Message 84*  
*May 21, 2017*

## Israel & Surrounding Invading Nations

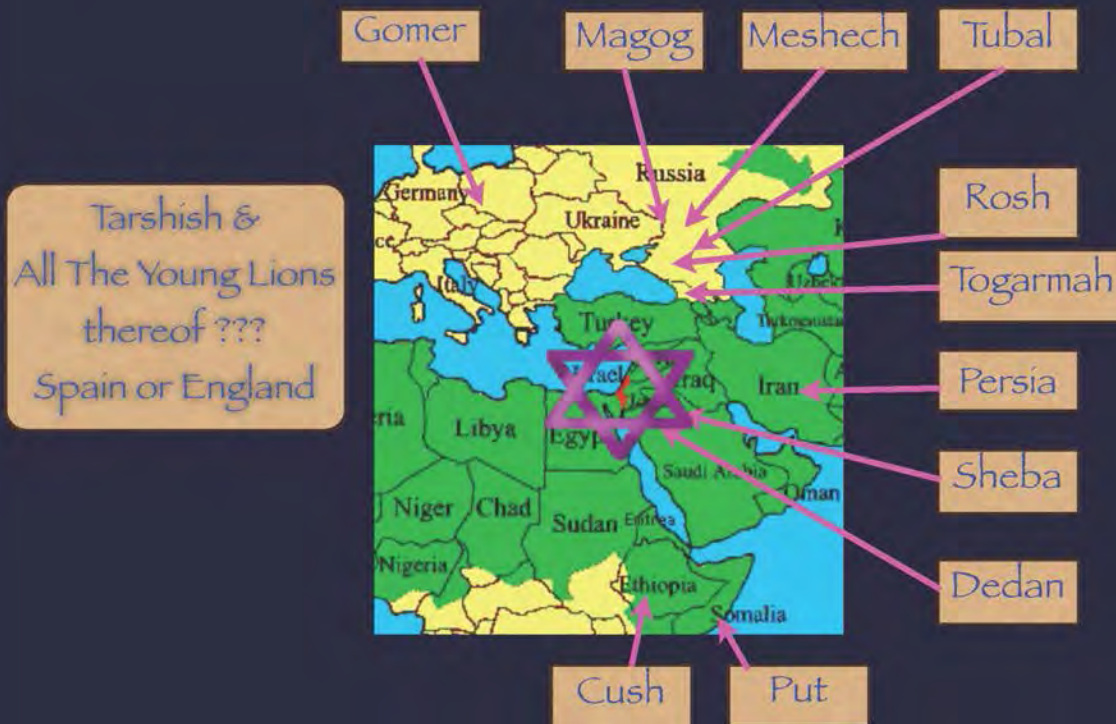


Chart by Daniel Woodhead

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# Pentwater Bible Church

The Book of Ezekiel

Message Eighty-Four

THE GOG & MAGOG INVASION PART IV

May 21, 2017

Daniel E. Woodhead



The Four Visions Daniel Saw, Daniel 7:1-14:

The first vision was Nebuchadnezzar's. This one from Daniel chapter 7 is Daniel's vision. This is God directly giving him this vision. Normally it is best to read line by line and then explain. Because of the complexity it is appropriate to read the entire passage first and then go through the details in order to render an explanation. Some of this can be confusing when the text describes beasts, images, numbers of body parts, horns, and some movements regarding these images. This then is the second passage of the four we will be reading in the section of the Times of the Gentiles.

Daniel 7:1-14

*<sup>1</sup>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. <sup>2</sup>Daniel spake and said, I saw in my vision by night, and, behold,*

*the four winds of heaven brake forth upon the great sea. <sup>3</sup>And four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another. <sup>4</sup>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 to stand upon two feet as a man; and a man's heart was given to it. <sup>5</sup>And, behold, another beast, a second, like to a bear; and it was raised up on one side, and three ribs were in its mouth between its teeth: and they said thus unto it, Arise, devour much flesh. <sup>6</sup>After this I beheld, and, lo, another, like a leopard, which had upon its back four wings of a bird; the beast had also four heads; and dominion was given to it. <sup>7</sup>After this I saw in the night-visions, and, behold, a fourth beast, terrible and powerful, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth; it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with its feet: and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns. <sup>8</sup>I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another horn, a little one, before which three of the first horns were plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great things.*

*<sup>9</sup>I beheld till thrones were placed, and one that was ancient of days did sit: his raiment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like pure wool; his throne was fiery flames, and the wheels thereof burning fire. <sup>10</sup>A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousands of thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened. <sup>11</sup>I beheld at that time because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake; I beheld even till the beast was slain, and its body destroyed, and it was given to be burned with fire. <sup>12</sup>And as for the rest of the beasts, their dominion was taken away: yet their lives were prolonged for a season and a time.*

*<sup>13</sup>I saw in the night-visions, and, behold, there came with the clouds of heaven one like unto a son of man, and he came even to the ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. <sup>14</sup>And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all the peoples, 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 (ASV, 1901).*

#### THE FIRST VISION, FOUR WINDS AND FOUR BEASTS

This vision was given to Daniel in approximately 550 B.C. then the text follows with a description of the *first vision*. It starts out stating that the various beasts arise out of the Great Sea (the Mediterranean). According to other OT Scriptures this is a representation of the Gentile world (Isaiah 17:12-13; Matthew 13:47-50; Revelation 13:1; 17:1, 15). The Sea is then stirred by four winds (v.2). The number of the winds is the same as the Gentile empires which is four. The winds themselves point to God's sovereignty and providence as it is He who controls the weather. The text moves on to describe four beasts which arise from this sea. Each one according to the description to follow is

different from the other. As we notice all four represent Gentile empires and all four arise out of the Great Sea and as seen represents the Gentile world.

#### THE FIRST BEAST – LION LIKE AND EAGLE WINGED

The first beast is like a lion but it has wings like an eagle. This is a representation of the Babylonian Empire (Jeremiah 4:7; 48:40; 49:19,22; 50:17; 44; Ezekiel 17:3).



The Babylonian gates of Ishtar, are now in the British Museum. The University of Chicago also has some artifacts of Babylon. Their symbol was a winged lion. They had that on the Gates of Ishtar. The Babylonians also impressed it upon the ceramic covered bricks they used on the walls of their Temples and around their city.

The latter part of verse four is probably a reference to Nebuchadnezzar's experience recorded in Daniel 4:1-37. Recorded in Daniel 4, is a scene wherein Nebuchadnezzar is filled with pride while considering all that he had done and all he had built, and Babylon was the splendor of the ancient world. In doing this he was

brimming with pride. This was after him having seen what Daniel can do and after knowing Daniel's God and after believing that Daniel's God was very, very, powerful. By denying Daniel's God, the Lord changed him to behave like unto an animal. This is the outcome of a life filled with pride. He ate grass, he walked on all fours, and his nails grew exceedingly long. He was out of his normal mind for seven years.

As much as possible that a man could become a beast, Nebuchadnezzar become one. And as much as a beast could become a man, the same thing happened to Babylon. So did Babylon eventually lose its beast-like nature as it moved from lust-of-conquest to the building of culture. They excelled in the arts of divination, astronomy, astrology, accounting, mathematics and private and commercial law. Most of what we use today in Business and Commerce Law came from Babylon.

#### THE SECOND BEAST HAD RIBS FOR DINNER

The second beast is bear-like and represents the Medo-Persian Empire (v.5). The bear is lopsided, being raised up on one side; for although the Medes and the Persians were confederate, the Persians were by far the dominant power and it was a lopsided alliance. Furthermore the bear is found to have three ribs in its mouth, having devoured the flesh. Historically, these ribs represent the three kingdoms conquered by the Medo-Persian forces giving them their empire status; Lydia, Babylon, and Egypt. The bear is less

majestic than the lion and is bulky and weighty. Medo-Persia conquered by sheer force of numbers. They had this huge army, much larger than the other countries they conquered

#### THE THIRD BEAST, LEOPARD LIKE WITH 4 WINGS AND 4 HEADS

The third beast is like a leopard and it represents the Greek Empire (v.6). The leopard is less majestic than the lion and less grand than the bear but is swifter than both. With leopard-like swiftness Alexander the Great conquered the Medo-Persian Empire and greatly extended the Hellenistic Empire. He conquered it quickly. There are many scholarly articles written about him and how fast he moved as well as the military strategies he employed. He developed the military phalanx and some other characteristics such as 16 ft. spears that really allowed him to prevail. He just didn't live very long; he died in Babylon in his early 30's. So with leopard-like swiftness Alexander conquered the Medo-Persian Empire and extended the Hellenistic Empire.

The four wings represent the swiftness of Alexander in conquering all other empires and the four heads represent the four generals who after the death of Alexander took control of Alexander's Empire and turned it into four kingdoms. When Alexander died he didn't have a succession plan. He was too young to have developed one. He thought he was going to live forever, but he died in his early 30's. Just before he died his advisers asked him, "Who's going to take over? You conquered all this. What happens now?" He just said, "Give it to the strong; give it to the strong." So he had generals that fought over it and four took complete control:

- Ptolemy was over Egypt, Israel, and Arabia Petrea – that's on the east side of Israel
- Seleucus was over Syria, Babylon, and as far to the east as India
- Cassandra was over Macedonia and Greece;
- Lysimachus was over Thrace and Bithinia.

#### THE FOURTH BEAST WAS DREADFUL, TERRIBLE, AND STRONG

This beast is radically different from the others. The *second vision* that Daniel had is found in verses 7-8, which describes the fourth beast. Unlike the others, it is nondescript that is it takes no specific animal or recognizable form. While the others are given animal-like descriptions, there isn't anything to this one at all, it's just a beast. This fourth beast is described as being diverse, and emphatically different from all the others. It completely subdues and breaks in pieces all that precedes it. It appears to be more ferocious than the previous three empires. The fourth beast has ten horns. But while it begins with ten horns, an eleventh horn arises - *the little horn*. This eleventh horn uproots or pulls out three of the ten horns. Having uprooted three horns, now only seven of the original remain, and the little horn which was the eleventh now becomes the eighth.

Once again, as in Daniel two, the uniqueness of the Fourth Empire is emphasized; it is stated that this empire will go through several stages. The fourth beast does represent a Fourth Gentile Empire.

Nowhere in the text does it say that those other previous empires cease to exist. For example Greece is still a sovereign country today. They don't have a prominent political role in the world scene. The Medes and the Persians are still there today. They are now the Kurds and Iranians. Even though we see Iran raising its head, it doesn't have world dominance. It's still a relatively minor player. It's trying to get nuclear power. It does have an army and they are trying to be a world power, but they are not in control of the entire world. Babylon still exists. It was being rebuilt by Saddam Hussein prior to his execution. If you could get to Babylon today you could see a lot of what he had restored. There are still people living there in Babylon. It's a very minor place.

#### THE THIRD VISION, THE ACTIVITY IN HEAVEN

The *third vision* is found in verses 9-12 and this vision takes place in Heaven. In verses 9-10 the vision is of the Throne Room of God the Father who is described under the title of the Ancient of Days. This is the only spot in the Bible where He is referred to as the Ancient of Days. It is very clear who he is; He is a Judge, and the books of judgment are opened. There are myriads of Angels present – thousands upon thousands, 10,000 X 10,000 that are in front of Him and He is carrying out these judgments through the angels.

What is being judged is the Fourth Gentile Empire (vv.11-12). In verse 11, it is the fourth beast, particularly the little horn that is judged and destroyed. As for the other three (v.12), two things are stated; first, their dominion was taken away; and second, their lives were prolonged for a season and a time. This means that they have not been completely eradicated but continue albeit without the dominating power they had over the entire world. The third vision is of God the Father ready to initiate judgment against the Fourth Gentile Empire. He's not actually conducting judgments, but He's ready to initiate the judgment.

#### THE FOURTH VISION AND THE KINGDOM OF GOD

The *fourth vision* is found within verses 13-14. It describes the setting up of the Kingdom of God following the destruction of the Fourth Gentile Empire. The sequence is that of the Second Coming of Jesus as the Son of Man on clouds (v.13) followed by the Messianic Empire known as the Messianic Kingdom (v.14).

Of the four visions described the major emphasis is on the fourth one. Now Daniel asks for an interpretation of the four kingdoms. He wants to know, who's going to possess the Kingdom. He sees that possession of the Kingdom will only be temporary. Whereas the four beasts rose out of the sea, here they arise out of the earth in this vision. Coming out of the sea emphasizes their Gentile identity. But, coming out of the earth identifies their humanity. None of the first four empires are divine.

So Daniel requests further interpretation. It is not clear who he is requesting this from but it is presumably the Angels that are before the throne of God. In making this request, he describes what he saw regarding the four beasts. It is important to note how the diverseness of this fourth beast continues to be emphasized. Throughout the scriptures it is emphasized as being "diverse" – different from the others. This beast is not given an

animal-like characteristic. But Daniel wants to know what it means so he pushes for a meaning. So in requesting this, he is given further information on the activity of the Little Horn that causes the three horns from the original 10 to be pulled out or eliminated and the Little Horn becomes the eighth horn.

#### DANIEL SEEKS CLARIFICATION ON THE FOUR BEASTS

Daniel 7:15-27

*<sup>15</sup>As for me, Daniel, my spirit was grieved in the midst of my body, and the visions of my head troubled me. <sup>16</sup>I came near unto one of them that stood by, and asked him the truth concerning all this. So he told me, and made me know the interpretation of the things. <sup>17</sup>These great beasts, which are four, are four kings, that shall arise out of the earth. <sup>18</sup>But the saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever. <sup>19</sup>Then I desired to know the truth concerning the fourth beast, which was diverse from all of them, exceeding terrible, whose teeth were of iron, and its nails of brass; which devoured, brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with its feet; <sup>20</sup>and concerning the ten horns that were on its head, and the other horn which came up, and before which three fell, even that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spake great things, whose look was more stout than its fellows. <sup>21</sup>I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; <sup>22</sup>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.*

*<sup>23</sup>Thus he said, The fourth beast shall be a fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all the kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces. <sup>24</sup>And as for the ten horns, out of this kingdom shall ten kings arise: and another shall arise after them; and he shall be diverse from the former, and he shall put down three kings. <sup>25</sup>And he shall speak words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High; and he shall think to change the times and the law; and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and half a time. <sup>26</sup>But the judgment shall be set, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end. <sup>27</sup>And the kingdom and the dominion, and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High: his kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him. <sup>28</sup>Here is the end of the matter. As for me, Daniel, my thoughts much troubled me, and my countenance was changed in me: but I kept the matter in my heart (ASV, 1901).*

#### THE FOUR BEASTS

After Daniel requested the interpretation in verses 15-16, he is given a summary of interpretation in verses 17-18. In verse 17, this angel tells him that they're the four beasts

that represent four kingdoms that we saw in the four segments of the image from Daniel chapter 2. Nevertheless, it is the servants of the Most High who will possess the kingdom, for whatever will be possessed by the four Gentile empires will be only temporary (v.18). We have seen for example, that the Jews, the servants, have possessed the city of Jerusalem only temporarily from time to time. Whereas in Daniel 7: 2, the four beasts arose out of the sea, here in Daniel 7:17 they arise out of the earth. Coming out of the sea emphasizes their Gentile identity. Arising out of the *earth* emphasizes their humanity; these are human, not divine kingdoms. The imagery here demonstrates that these things don't last.

#### THE DIVERSENESS OF THE FOURTH BEAST

Having received this summary interpretation in verses 19-22, Daniel requests further interpretation regarding the fourth beast. In making this request Daniel describes what he saw regarding the fourth beast. In verse 19, its diverseness is pointed out. It is important to note how the diverseness of the Fourth Empire is continually emphasized. For this diverseness Daniel seeks a meaning. He further wishes to know the meaning of the ten horns (v.20a) and finally the little horn (vv.20b-22). In requesting this, Daniel is given further information regarding the activity of the little horn; he causes three of the ten horns to fall (v.20b); he speaks great things (v.20c); he wars against the saints and is allowed to prevail over them (v.21). But finally he is personally defeated by the coming of the Ancient of Days. Once the judgment is passed on the little horn by the Ancient of Days, he will be done away with and the kingdom will pass over to the saints. The saints are the nation of Israel, not the Church. This is the Old Testament and the Church was not born yet (Acts 2). The ten horns are ten nations that will encompass this *stage* of the Empire of Imperialism, yet future to us.

#### THE LITTLE HORN

The little horn is the Antichrist who will appear someday on earth. The Bible does not reveal where or when. He will sign a covenant with the nation Israel. It will be some type of covenant allowing the nation Israel to rebuild their Temple. We don't know what it is or exactly what it's about but he signs it with the majority of the Jews. Not all the Jews, but enough to get it signed – that begins the Tribulation. The Tribulation begins when the covenant is signed and it's a seven-year covenant. Although the covenant is not designated as a seven-year covenant that is how long it lasts. We know that at some point in time, the Tribulation is going to start. The seven-year war is going to start with this covenant that gets signed. Daniel talks about the Ancient of Days judging him, the Antichrist, and he gets thrown into the lake of fire at the end of time.

NEXT MESSAGE: THE PROPHECY AGAINST THE GOG & MAGOG INVASION PART V  
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