



Overcoming The Dragon

Part Five

In the last part of this study we looked at the beast which comes up from the sea in Revelation chapter thirteen. We said the heads of this beast represent world empires, and that the “ten horns” on the beast represent ten “kings” who will arise in the final hours of this age. We also said these ten kings are referred to in Daniel’s visions of the four beasts, and also, in the dream King Nebuchadnezzar had of the statue of a man.

In Nebuchadnezzar’s dream, the statue was made of different metals. Each metal represented a different world empire. Bible scholars agree concerning the identity of the first three metals: the head represents Babylon; the chest represents Medeo-Persia; the thighs represent Greece.

However, there is some disagreement over the identity of the fourth metal: the legs of iron, and the feet and toes of iron and clay. Some believe the legs of iron represent Ancient Rome, while the feet and toes represent a *revived* Roman Empire in the last days. This revived Roman Empire is assumed to be the European Union. Others—like Matthew Henry and John Wesley—viewed the whole lower half of the statue as pertaining to Ancient Rome.

We do not believe this view can be supported by the Scripture itself because Daniel says very clearly the ten toes represent ten *kings*, and that in the days of *these* kings Messiah (ie: the Stone cut out of the Mountain) will destroy their kingdom and establish His own kingdom.

*And as **the toes of the feet** were part of iron, and part of clay, so **the kingdom** shall be partly strong, and partly broken. And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay. And **in the days of these kings** shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.*

Daniel 2:42-44

In order to maintain that the whole lower part of the statue represents Ancient Rome, brother Henry, Wesley, and other scholars point out that Jesus *did* come during the days of Rome, and He *did* establish His everlasting kingdom—at least in the spiritual sense.

But since the kingdoms being referred to in the dream were visible kingdoms which reigned over the whole earth, it’s only reasonable to assume that the kingdom Messiah (the “Stone”) sets up will, likewise, be a visible kingdom which will reign over the whole earth. Therefore, we believe the days of the ten toes are a reference to the *last* days, just before the return of the Lord.

The only problem with this interpretation is that when Daniel describes the legs of iron, and the feet and toes of iron and clay, he refers to them all as *one* kingdom. In Daniel 2:28, he calls the legs, feet and toes “*the fourth kingdom*”. Again, in verses 41 and 42, he calls the whole lower part of the statue “*the*” kingdom.

How can the whole lower part of the statue be *the* fourth kingdom, while at the same time be divided into two different kingdoms which exist thousands of years apart? The answer comes as we examine the statue visually.



Aside from the fact that the kingdoms are represented by different kinds of metals on the statue, do you notice any *other* kind of difference between the first three and the fourth kingdom? The fourth kingdom is represented by two legs; it's *divided*.

This is a perfect picture of what happened to Ancient Rome. The Roman empire was divided into two parts—East and West. This initial division has *never* been reversed. To this day, everyone recognizes the world is divided between the East and the West. Indeed, right now the East and the West are in a war of survival. This war is being called “a clash of two civilizations”.

No empire ever arose to conquer Rome and become the *next* great world empire. The last true *world* empire was the Roman empire—the fourth kingdom. After the initial division of Rome into East and West, the empire finally collapsed and *new nations* were formed from that whole territory. Many of those nations still exist today.

So what the statue is showing is first, the initial division of Ancient Rome into East and West. Then a *further division* into smaller individual nations (ten toes), many of which exist to this day. This is how the lower half of the statue can represent *both* Ancient Rome, and also, individual nations in the last days.

Just as the toes of iron and clay do not mix, so the nations which came from the territory of Rome do not mix. They cannot get along with each other; they never have been able to get along. But an attempt will be made by these nations in the last days to “mix” with each other by uniting under the sovereignty of the Final Empire.

Daniel is shown the rise of the one who will eventually become the leader of this empire in his visions of the four beasts. The four beasts represent the same kingdoms that were part of the great statue.



Lion
Babylonian Empire



Bear
Medeo-Persian Empire



Winged Leopard
Grecian Empire



Beast w/ Ten Horns
Final Empire Of Antichrist

After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it: and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns.

Daniel 7:7

The fourth beast corresponds to the feet and toes of the statue. We do not believe it represents Ancient Rome at all because Daniel said it would be “*diverse*” from all the other beasts. Although Rome was much stronger *militarily* than the previous empires—just as iron is stronger than gold, silver and brass—it’s culture and religion were not so different from Greece that it could be called diverse (different) from the previous empires.

Greece and Rome shared many of the same god’s—though the Romans renamed them. They shared much of the same culture—which eventually became known as Greco-Roman culture. Greece became the first Democracy in history, while Rome was established as a Republic. But again, the difference between the two systems was not so different that Rome could be viewed as “*diverse from all the beasts that were before it*”.

The fourth beast will be *very* different from the old world empires, and it will be *exceeding* dreadful. It has only one head with ten horns, which means you can’t divide it into two parts and say one represents Ancient Rome and the other represents a *revived* Roman Empire in the last days. The whole beast arises in the last days, and the ten horns on its head represent the same group of kings as the ten toes on the statue. In the last days, these kings or nations will unite to form the last great world empire. Speaking of this beast, Daniel says:

Then I would know the truth of the fourth beast, which was diverse from all the others, exceeding dreadful, whose teeth were of iron, and his nails of brass; which devoured, brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with his feet; And of the ten horns that were in his head, and of the other which came up, and before whom three fell; even of that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spake very great things, whose look was more stout than his fellows. I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; 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.

Daniel 7:19-22

The fourth beast has traits that were found in both the Roman and the Grecian empires. It has “*teeth of iron*”. Iron represents Rome. Rome was the strongest military power

that had ever risen in the history of mankind at that time. So the teeth of iron may symbolize the fact that like Rome, this last empire will be the strongest military power ever known to man.

It also has “*nails of brass*”. Brass represents the kingdom of Greece. The claws of brass may speak of *the swiftness* with which the beast will break in pieces and trample on those nations (or individuals) who oppose it. Greece was known for the fact that Alexander The Great conquered the entire world in just a few years—a feat nobody had ever accomplished before. That’s one reason the symbol of Greece was a *winged* leopard in Daniel’s visions. It represents *rapid* conquest.

As we said, the ten toes on Nebuchadnezzar’s image, the ten horns on the fourth beast, and the ten horns on the beast from the sea, are all referring to the *same group* of kings or nations in the last days, through whom the spirit of Antichrist will establish Satan’s last world empire. We can be sure of this because they are all in power at the end of this age.

~ The ten toes of the statue are in power *until* Messiah comes and destroys them (*Dan. 2:44*).

~ The ten horns on the fourth beast are in power, and are making war on the saints and overcoming them *until* the Ancient of Days comes (*Dan. 7:21-22*).

~ The ten horns on the seven-headed beast are in power, and are making war on the saints and overcoming them as well, *until* the Lord comes and slays them (*Rev. 19:19-21*).

When John is shown the final world empire, he is shown various levels of power *behind* the thing. First he sees the beast rise out of the “sea”—which represents the nations of the earth. It’s the nations who are calling for a one-world government, which will give them the peace, prosperity and security they want.

Then the angel tells him it’s not the political leaders of the nations who are building this empire. Rather, it’s a demonic prince from the bottomless pit who’s building it. But even that’s not the end of the matter. There is yet one more layer of power behind even this demonic prince: it’s the power of the Dragon

*And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and **the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority.***

Revelation 13:2

This is why the Dragon *also* has seven heads. They represent the authority he has been given to form those ancient world empires. It’s to show that he has always

been the root and true source of power behind them all. The Dragon was the power behind the prince of Persia, who was the power behind the human king of Persia. The Dragon was the power behind the Prince of Greece, who was the power behind Alexander the Great. Likewise, it will be the power of the Dragon behind the prince of the last world empire, which will in turn, be the power behind the king who will eventually become the head of *that* empire.

Also, the reason *both* the Dragon and the beast from the sea have seven heads is because the beast from the sea is merely a *reflection* of the Dragon. This beast bears *the image* of the Dragon. Each of its heads—six of which represent ancient empires—were a partial manifestation of the wicked nature and character of the Dragon.

The last head will be the *full manifestation* of Satan’s nature and will include aspects of the former heads. So when John describes the beast, he says it has the body of a Leopard (Greece), the paws of a Bear (Persia; which is modern day Iran), and the mouth of a Lion (Babylon).

Aspects of the empires of Rome and Greece seem to hold a prominent place in both the fourth beast in Daniel and the seven-headed beast in Revelation. One brother has suggested this could be because the final kingdom is comprised not of the *old territory* of Rome, but rather, of Greco-Roman culture—that is, Western culture.

*And **they overcame him** by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.*

Revelation 12:11

Regardless of whether we are dealing with a demonic prince from the bottomless pit, or human kings of nations, or an apostate Church System, or a one-world government, or a one-world religious order; *behind them all* is the power of the Great Red Dragon—and this is the power we must overcome if want to rule and reign with Jesus.

The above passage is familiar to many of us. I personally hear it quoted often. But most of those who quote it do not seem to realize exactly *who* John was talking about when he penned these words. Therefore, we need to take a fresh look at this passage again, in its proper context:

*And she [the Woman clothed with the sun] **brought forth a man child**, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and **her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne.** And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days.*

And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.

Revelation 12:5-11

The first thing we want to point out is that in Revelation chapter twelve there are at least three different groups of Christians. In the above passage we read of the “Woman” and the “manchild”. Later (*vrs 17*) we find another group called “the remnant of her seed”. We know these people are Christians because they: “...keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ”. So all three of these groups of people are believers.

The next thing we want to point out is *when* the Dragon and his angels are cast out of heaven. According to this passage, they are cast out of heaven *after* the manchild is caught up to God. Indeed, it is the catching up of the manchild that causes the Dragon to be cast out.

After the Dragon is cast out of heaven, a voice says: “*And they overcame him...*” In other words, it was the group represented by the *manchild* who overcame him. The “they” being referred to is *not* the Woman—she has to be flown into the wilderness and protected. Neither was it the “remainder of her seed”—this group is still on the earth where the Dragon can reach them, for it says he goes off to make war with them, and he is confined to the earth.

Speaking of the group that gets the victory over the Dragon, John says they overcome him through:

- ~ *The blood of the Lamb*
- ~ *The word of their testimony*
- ~ *They loved not their lives unto the death*

As we consider these three areas, please keep in mind that we are *not* talking about people getting saved. When John said they overcame the Dragon by the blood of the Lamb, he's not talking about a *past experience* of trusting the blood of Jesus for salvation. He's explaining how these people overcame the Dragon *after* they were born again.

He's talking about a *present reality*, where we avail ourselves of the power that's in the blood on a daily basis to totally overcome sin, self, and Satan.

And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

Revelation 7:14

In this passage we see that *God's people* —after they have been born again through the blood of Christ—can still wash their robes in that blood and make them “white”. But why would *Christians* have to wash their robes in the blood of the Lamb after their initial salvation? Don't our robes automatically *stay* white and clean? Absolutely not!

They can get soiled—and many times they *do* get soiled. They get soiled when we live and walk in the flesh, or when we follow after the things of this world. They get defiled when we involve ourselves with unclean spirits, either directly or through our relationships. This is why Jesus said what He did to the people in the church of Sardis:

Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy.

Revelation 3:4

When we come to Jesus we receive a new (spiritual) robe that is clean and white. A big part of our Christian life is learning how to *keep that robe clean*. When we allow our garments to get soiled, we must go to the Lord afresh, and cleanse them in His blood by confession and repentance.

Most of the believers in the church of Sardis had defiled their garments and were *not worthy* to walk with Jesus in white. But there were a few in that fellowship who had learned how to keep their garments clean—and Jesus said they *were* worthy to walk with Him in white.

This is what John is talking about when he says they overcame the Dragon by the blood of the Lamb. They overcame him by *learning how* to keep their garments clean. They overcame him by learning how to *live a life* of holiness unto God and separation from the world.

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