

Finally, There will be a Fourth Beast, That Breaks and Smashes Everything

Daniel 2:40-43 and 7:7-8

DIG: How does this kingdom seem different than the other three kingdoms? What is the significance of the four beasts coming out of the earth as opposed to coming out of the sea earlier? What person does this stage focus on? What is unique about him?

The rest of the image represents the fourth Gentile empire that goes through several stages, three of which are mentioned in **Daniel 2:40-43**. The first stage is the united stage in **Daniel 2:40**. But in **2:41**, this united stage gives way to the two-division stage that still has the strength of iron. Eventually, however, the two-division stage gives way to the ten division stage, seen in the ten toes in **2:42** and **43**.

The fulfillment in the *decrease* factor is also seen in the character of each empire's authority and rule. For example, Babylon had absolute monarchy with the king above the law. The second kingdom was the Medo-Persian Empire, which was inferior to the Babylonian Empire because the king was not above the law because he did not have the power to change his own decree. Third was the Greek Empire that had no dynasty to rule, they merely ruled by force of conquest. Fourthly, Roman imperialism began with republicanism but eventually degenerated into mob rule. And in the last stage of **the Empire of Imperialism**, the antichrist will be known as **the man of lawlessness (Second Thessalonians 2:3)**. So there will be a *decrease* in the character and authority of the rule of law as you move from one empire to the next. However, the strength of the metals in Nebuchadnezzar's statue would *increase* in each successive kingdom, and **the imperialists** would be the strongest kingdom of all. Unlike the others, it is not named. While the others are given animal-like descriptions, none is given for this one. **The fourth beast** is described as being diverse, very **different** from the others. It will be the fourth Gentile Empire to dominate Jerusalem.

Daniel had a second vision, and he described it like this: **At night I looked, and there before me was a fourth beast - terrifying and frightening and very powerful (Daniel 7:7a)**. The apostle John also saw this same **beast coming out of the Gentile nations (Revelation 13:1-10)**, when he was imprisoned on the island of Patmos. **The fourth beast, like the legs of iron, represented the imperialists**. But unlike the other beasts, Daniel cannot relate it to anything he is familiar with. The first beast was not a lion, but it was lion-

like, the second beast was not a bear, but it was bear-like, and the third beast was not a leopard, but it was leopard-like. **The fourth beast** was unique. *There really was something different about that one. It had large iron teeth and bronze claws (Daniel 7:7b).* Therefore, **the legs of iron** in **Daniel Chapter 2**, correspond to **the iron teeth** in **Daniel Chapter 7**. This empire didn't simply conquer its victims, it **crushed, devoured and trampled them underfoot**, which emphasized vengeance. **It was different from all the former beasts, and it had ten horns (Daniel 7:7c).** So **the ten toes** in **Daniel Chapter 2**, and **the ten horns** in **Daniel Chapter 7** represent the ten kingdoms stage, and **Daniel 7:8** points to the antichrist stage.

This fourth kingdom has five stages. Here, in **Daniel 2:40-43**, it mentions three of them: the united stage, the two division stage, and the one world government stage. In **Daniel 7:7-8**, it points to the last two stages, the ten division stage and the antichrist stage. This fourth Gentile kingdom and all five of its stages represent **the Empire of Imperialism**.