

# Pentwater Bible Church

*Revelation Message 25*

*February 18, 2024*



The Number of the Beast is 666 By William Blake Cir unknown

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Revelation Message Twenty-Five

THE MID TRIBULATION EVENTS

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All mysteries have been revealed in Scripture up to this point (Revelation 10:7) except the mystery of the seven climatic judgments that will destroy the satanic mystery of the man of sin. This only was not revealed to the Old Testament prophets or explained until the book of Revelation.

## THE ONE WORLD GOVERNMENT

By this time the world will have descended into a single worldwide government. The Antichrist will come to power as an extremely charismatic political world leader among the then ten individual divisions of the world either economic or geographic.

The Lord Jesus, the Messiah made reference to a group of Gentile world Empires who would control Jerusalem and the entire world starting in 586 B.C. He referred to these times of the Gentiles as ending at some point in time. The Gentile control of Jerusalem and world government in general is going to end. It's not going to last forever. It will end when He returns to set up His worldwide government in Jerusalem at the Second Coming. Images were given to the prophet Daniel in chapters 2 and 7 of his book referencing these world empires. The descriptions which are written in the 7th chapter characterize four beasts coming out of the Great Sea. The first three have animal characteristics of a lion, bear and leopard, representing Babylon, MedaPersia and Greece. The fourth is a beast that has no animal like description and can be called nondescript. This beast is referred to as dreadful and terrible with iron teeth. It is breaking and devouring the residue of the other beasts.

Many commonly hold that the "Fourth Empire" is the Roman Empire. It is also common to infer that because the Roman Empire died that there must be a Revived Roman Empire still coming. We know from Daniel chapter two that the "Stone Made Without Hands" which will be the Lord's Messianic Kingdom will destroy this empire.

The Scripture doesn't teach any cessation of this Fourth Empire prior to the establishment of the Messianic Kingdom. The Scripture teaches that the Empire, the Fourth Empire, continues until the Messianic Kingdom. It doesn't show a break. In actuality, the Empire that the Bible is talking about is something more generic than Rome. It is an imperialistic form of government which the Romans founded.

## IMPERIALISM

Imperialism is simply a policy where one government extends its influence or power through negotiations, diplomacy or military force. Most of the Western powers are imperialistic governments. There is nothing particularly wrong with being an imperialistic government. That's the characteristic of the type of government instituted by the Romans. It was Rome that brought imperialism into the world. What the Romans would do (and they did it much stronger than what others are doing today) is to place their own people in a country that would control the conquered

people's government. But they would let that government run itself. So, in the case of Jerusalem, the Sanhedrin were still active, but they had to report to Pontius Pilate. The Romans limited the scope of the subjugated countries activities. For example, the Israelites were forbidden to carry out capital punishment. This is one of the reason Jesus had to be judged by Pilate. The Jews wanted to crucify Him but they needed the permission of the Romans. By in large, the Romans wanted peace. They wanted this Pax Romana which they claimed to be implementing within their empire.

That's the form of government they implemented and the first stage of this was the Roman Empire, what the Bible calls the "Fourth Empire" – the Empire of Imperialism.

Both Daniel passages make it clear that the Fourth Gentile Empire begins with the end of the Third Empire (Greek) and continues until Messiah comes to set up His Kingdom. There is no break or gap in the imperialist form of government on the earth from the initiation of the Roman Empire until Christ returns. Nowhere in Scripture is this stated. This Roman Empire, this Fourth Empire, This Empire of Imperialism will go through five successive stages. We need to study those to see where history fits in this exposition.

#### FIVE STAGES OF THE 4TH EMPIRE – THE EMPIRE OF IMPERIALISM

##### AGE OF IMPERIALISM – UNITED STAGE

The United Stage-Rome is the first stage of the Imperialist Form of government. The first stage or the United Stage started about 63 B.C and lasted until A.D. 364. Rome had a long history going back into the 700s B.C. Rome was founded, perhaps by Romulus and Remus. It suffices to say, the empire began under Julius Caesar started in about 63 B.C. and lasted until about A.D. 364. That was the First Stage, or the United Stage, of the Fourth Empire.

##### AGE OF IMPERIALISM – TWO-DIVISION STAGE

The second stage or the Empire of Imperialism was the Two Division Stage. This stage was foreseen by the Daniel chapter two visions in the Legs of Iron but not in the Daniel chapter seven visions. It began in A.D. 364 when Emperor Valentinian divided the Roman Empire into an east and west division. There was an earlier division in AD 285, which did not last long. The emperor Constantine in AD 312-314 reunited the empire for a short period. However, the AD 364 division was permanent. The Western Headquarters were in Rome and the Eastern Headquarters in Constantinople (modern day Istanbul, Turkey).

The first split came in AD 285 when the emperor Diocletian decided that the Roman empire had become too large to be efficiently ruled by one man. So, he initiated a split of the empire into Western and Eastern branches, keeping the eastern part for himself because it was richer in goods and trade. For the western territory he appointed Maximian, who was subject to Diocletian.

A civil war broke out across both parts of the empire in 306. In 314, Constantine was the victor and reunited the Empire under a single ruler. The emperor Constantine efforts to reunite the empire were accomplished through the Battle of the Milvian Bridge against Maxentius. He reportedly had a vision where he saw a cross in the sky and the Latin inscription, "With this sign you will

conquer.” He embraced Christianity and his men became Christians as well. The capitol he established was in Constantinople, which is modern day Istanbul, Turkey in the eastern part.

In 337 Constantine died and civil war erupted between his three sons, who divided the empire into three different parts. Valentinian emerged as victor and single leader in 364. He immediately divided the empire again, giving the eastern half to his brother Valens. Succession rebellions in the west eventually forced the Eastern emperor Theodosius I to quell the rebellions and become a single ruler of a unified Roman empire again. He decreed Christianity to be the state religion, which effectively brought on the Dark Ages as the Church merged with the state. He was however the last emperor to rule both East and West. After his death in 395, his two sons inherited the East and West respectively. This was the final and permanent division of the Roman Empire. The Western half wouldn't last long, finally falling in 476 with the sack of Rome. The Eastern half would exist another 1000 years, becoming known as the Byzantine empire.

#### THE EASTERN LEG

When Constantinople fell, the political rulers, scribes, and scholars fled north into Russia and infiltrated the government there, where they set up an imperialist form of government. The rulers called themselves Czars, which is Russian for “Caesar.” Later Russia began calling itself the Third Roman Empire. This is seen in Daniel chapter 2 with the two legs of the Nebuchadnezzar vision.

They started calling the rulers there, Czars. The word “Czar” in Russian just means “Caesar”, the same exact Roman word. “Czar” and “Caesar” –means the same exact thing. That was the Eastern Division. Russia even started calling itself the “Third Roman Empire.” We know what happened in Russia. The balance of power shifted. It moved from the Russian czars into the Communists and ultimately into the Soviet block of countries. The power then shifted from there after the quiet revolution they had, which was called Glasnost (listen) coupled with Perestroika (restructuring). The power shifted again back to Russia and to the CIS, the Commonwealth of Independent States. So, the power transfer shifted, but it stayed within Eastern Block from Constantinople up into Russia.

There are more power transfers going on right now. The country of Russia is in great turmoil. It hasn't lost its power; it hasn't lost its military prowess; it hasn't lost its world status. It's still extremely strong. An autocrat is now running it by the name of Vladimir Putin. He was the former head of the Soviet KGB, the secret state police. But the power is starting to shift into the Islamic entities. They're starting to get a great deal of power in the Eastern Sphere. There will continue to be uncertainty in the leadership of the eastern power block. It is difficult to predict the incremental stages of the development of the power transfers.

#### THE WESTERN LEG

The Western Division of power remained in Rome from 364 until 476 when Rome fell. Now Rome fell and where did that controlling power go? The people that had power and want power and understand it and know how to get it, are not going to let it go. It's not just going to dissipate. Somebody's going to grab it. From there it shifted to France, especially the power gained by Charlemagne in A.D. 800. He called his domain the Holy Roman Empire of the

Frankish Nation. In 962 Otto I of Germany defeated the Franks and set up the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation. The leaders called themselves Kaiser, which is German for “Caesar.” Since then, especially after World War I, the western balance of power has been centered in the democratic nations of the west. So, the Two-Division Stage, which began in A. D. 364, continues to this day and there may be some shifting yet to come before the east-west balance becomes the third stage. The Two Division Stage we have now is ultimately going to evolve into the One World Government.

#### FUTURE ALLIED INVASION OF ISRAEL

There will be a time yet future where the Russian and also the Muslim nations encircling Israel will ally to invade Israel. The text of Ezekiel chapters 38 and 39 states, that God causes the Jews to win the battle. The Jews do not suffer any casualties but the invading Russian and Muslim nations all lose their political power on the world stage. This causes the Divided Stage to end and that gives way to the One World Government Stage.

#### THE TEN-DIVISION STAGE

The Ten-Division Stage was seen in both Daniel 2 with the ten toes and in Daniel 7 with the ten horns. This stage is clearly stated to come out of the One World Government Stage. The Bible is silent as to why and exactly how the division occurs. These ten kingdoms will cover the entire earth and not be limited to some specific continent such as Europe. They will begin sometime before the Great Tribulation and continue into the middle of the Tribulation.

Some view the United Nations as being a possible precursor. Perhaps that is the genesis for the divisions. The Bible just states that the ten divisions are going to cover the entire earth. Some even consider the Club of Rome’s recommendation that the world be divided up into ten administrative districts to avoid economic collapse. The Club of Rome is a global think tank and center of worldly innovation and initiative. It is a futurist organization, comprised mostly of liberals that take the view that there isn’t any pre-ordained plan for the earth. These two, the invasion and ten division stage occur in the last stage of the Church age of Laodicea described in Revelation chapter three.

#### THE ANTICHRIST STAGE

The Antichrist Stage is going to follow the Ten Kingdom Stage. He is going to rise to power. We don’t know how he rises to power; we are not given that. But Daniel chapter seven describes him as the eleventh horn that plucks out three of the previous ten. So somehow, he is going to eliminate three of the ten kings. We don’t know how he is going to do that either, but he does. The other seven submit to his authority. Once this submission occurs, he has total control of the world’s last Gentile Empire, which has its headquarters in Babylon. He signs an agreement of some sort with the nation Israel that starts the timing of the Tribulation. That’s the fifth and final stage of Gentile Imperialism and that’s what the Bible speaks about in the book of Revelation.

So, Revelation chapter ten introduces the reader to the events of the middle of the Tribulation.

1. The Second Worldwide Conflict—Daniel 11:40–45.
2. The Antichrist Killed

3. Satan Cast Down to the Earth—Revelation 12:7–12
4. The Resurrection of the Antichrist—Revelation 13:3
5. Three Kings Killed—Seven Submit
6. Destruction of Ecclesiastical Babylon—Revelation 17:16
7. The Death of the Two Witnesses—Revelation 11:7–13
8. The Worship of the Antichrist—Revelation 13:3–10
9. The False Prophet—Revelation 13:11–15
10. 666: The Mark of the Beast—Revelation 13:16–18
11. The Seven-year Covenant Broken
12. The Abomination of Desolation
13. The Persecution of the Jews
14. Midtribulation Announcements
15. The Seventh Trumpet: The Third Woe Judgment—Revelation 11:14–19

## THE SECOND WORLDWIDE CONFLICT

Daniel 11:36–45.

*<sup>36</sup> And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods; and he shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished; for that which is determined shall be done. <sup>37</sup> Neither shall he regard the gods of his fathers, nor the desire of women, nor regard any god; for he shall magnify himself above all. <sup>38</sup> But in his place shall he honor the god of fortresses; and a god whom his fathers knew not shall he honor with gold, and silver, and with precious stones and pleasant things. <sup>39</sup> And he shall deal with the strongest fortresses by the help of a foreign god: whosoever acknowledgeth him he will increase with glory; and he shall cause them to rule over many, and shall divide the land for a price. <sup>40</sup> And at the time of the end shall the king of the south contend with him; and the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pathrough. <sup>41</sup> He shall enter also into the glorious land, and many countries shall be overthrown; but these shall be delivered out of his hand: Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon. <sup>42</sup> He shall stretch forth his hand also upon the countries; and the land of Egypt shall not escape. <sup>43</sup> But he shall have power over the treasures of gold and of silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt; and the Libyans and the Ethiopians shall be at his steps. <sup>44</sup> But tidings out of the east and out of the north shall trouble him; and he shall go forth with great fury to destroy and utterly to sweep away many. <sup>45</sup> And he shall plant the tents of his palace between the sea and the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him (ASV 1901).*

Whatever kind of peace may have existed between the Antichrist and the ten kings ruling the Ten Kingdoms of the world is now shattered as the Antichrist begins his move to take political control of the world. He is referenced in verse 36 above. Thus, the second worldwide conflict of the Tribulation begins with the Antichrist's declaring war on the ten kings.



In his war against the ten kings, the Antichrist moves out in all directions in conquest. He is seen moving against the north (vv. 40, 44), the south (vv. 40, 42–43), and the east (v. 44). The three kings he will succeed in killing (Daniel 7:8, 20, 24) will be the king of the north (Syria), the king of the south (Egypt) and the king of the east (Mesopotamia). His conquest of Egypt opens the door for his conquest of Africa (vv. 42–43). He will also invade Israel, the glorious land (v. 41 and also mentioned in Revelation 11:1–2), setting the stage for the Abomination of Desolation, to be discussed later in this chapter.

Although eventually the Antichrist will gain political control of the whole world, three countries will escape his domination: Edom, Moab, and Ammon (v. 41). All of these three ancient nations are under one government today: the Kingdom of Jordan.

Daniel states where the Antichrist will plant his headquarters during this Midtribulation war. A more accurate translation of this verse would be:

He shall plant the tents of his palace between the seas at the glorious holy mountain. The word for tent refers to a military tent of a general, and the word for palace to a royal tent. It is a royal tent of a military general (the Antichrist) that is set up. It is set up between the seas, meaning between the Mediterranean Sea and the Dead Sea. Furthermore, it is at the glorious holy mountain, meaning the Temple Mount, or Mount Moriah or Mount Zion. This will set the stage for several mid-tribulational events.

#### THE ANTICHRIST KILLED

Daniel 11:45

*<sup>45</sup>And he shall plant the tents of his palace between the sea and the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him (ASV 1901).*

Revelation 13:3

*<sup>3</sup> And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast (KJV).*

The seventh head (Daniel 7:8), which is the Antichrist, is smitten unto death. The phrase, as though it had been wounded unto death, does not simply mean apparent death, for it is also used of Messiah in Revelation 5:6. This is simply an idiom for a resurrected individual and real death is here meant. So, in the course of this conflict between the Antichrist and the other ten kings, the Antichrist is killed.

NEXT WEEK: REVELATION MSG. XXVI

Please call or e-mail with any questions or comments

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