

# **REREADING PROPHECY**

## **The Forthcoming Edition**

**SERIALIZED**

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### **Chapter Four No Rome**

The nations or kingdoms represented by the four metals of the statue Nebuchadnezzar saw in vision are located within Eden's boundaries, geographical and spiritual. The identities of these kingdoms are found in Scripture, and Rome is not mentioned. The kingdoms are Babylon, Media Persia, Greece, and the kings of the North and of the South. All of these kingdoms reigned over the geographical regions enclosed by pre-Flood Eden's boundaries; they reigned from Nebuchadnezzar until the Seleucid king Antiochus Epiphanes placed a statue of Zeus in the temple at Jerusalem. These kings' reign over the temple was then broken by the physically circumcised sons of light. So when Eden went from being a physical region to being the mental topography encompassing the mindsets of all spiritually circumcised descendants of Abraham, the kings and kingdoms of Nebuchadnezzar's image went from being the shadow of spiritual Babylon to being the spiritual kingdom itself. Eden goes from being a land of human kingdoms to being the topography of heavenly kingdoms that reign over the subconscious minds of humanity. Biblical prophecy is, ultimately, about what occurs to the spiritually circumcised descendants of Abraham, each created in the image of, and after the likeness of God. Prophecies about Damascus (Isa chptr 17) or Cush (chptr 18) or Egypt (chptr 19) are, therefore, ultimately about mindsets within the mental topography through which born-again disciples journey.

To the saints at Ephesus, the Apostle Paul writes, "And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience" (Eph 2:1-2). Thus, the course of this world is governed by the prince of the power of the air, the spirit [or spirit being] that is at work in all sons of disobedience. Therefore, the prince of the power of the air reigns over sons of disobedience, an identifier that formerly included those who have been made alive in Christ (vv. 3-5). God consigned all of humanity to disobedience (Rom 11:32), so He could have mercy upon whom He pleased. Hence, the prince of the power of the air is the Adversary of mercy. And God has given humanity to this prince of the power of the air so that He, God, could create a war between mind and flesh, between the law God placed in the mind and heart of the person upon whom He has mercy and the law of sin and death that continues to reside in the flesh of this same person (Rom 7:25). Why God creates this war was a mystery the Apostle Paul didn't understand when he wrote his epistle to the saints at Rome. But the unsealing of endtime prophecies has also unsealed this mystery. God creates this war to cause called disciples to continually chose righteousness as if on a journey as the developing new man crucifies the old self that he or she was when liberated from mental bondage to sin. This new creature will choose righteousness, will fail to stay with his or her choice, then will have to again choose righteousness, will fail when the appetites of the flesh overcome his or her mind, then will have to choose righteousness again and again, fail less frequently, choose righteousness again and so on until this new creature reaches maturity in Christ through the creation in him or herself of the determination to always choose righteousness. A disciple's struggles against the appetites of the flesh develop righteous character. God doesn't desire that any disciple lose a single battle, but losses will occur. These losses are covered by

grace, but unconditional surrender to the appetites of the flesh blasphemes the Holy Spirit. And this drawn and called disciple, liberated from sin and figuratively exiting Egypt, will after more struggling than necessary (struggling that develops a new creature within the same tabernacle of flesh that left sin) arrive in spiritual Judea, where the disciple will live as a Judean. Either that, or this son of God will stop along the way, will stop and marry local woman [religions], will take upon himself or herself the customs of that land, and will be cast into the lake of fire when his or her judgment is revealed. Discipling a born-from-above infant is just this simple: the spiritual infant's teacher will lead the infant to Judea, where the infant will grow to maturity living as a Judean. Or the infant's teacher is a worker of iniquity/lawlessness that Christ will deny knowing when the teacher's judgment is revealed (Matt 7:21–23).

Literary critics, whether Formalists or Deconstructionists or any other “ists,” look for consistency within a narrative— and use inconsistency to open up texts, thereby either toppling the text or revealing the informing assumptions upon which the text has been constructed. The figurative structure of Holy Writ causes metaphors to spawn additional metaphors. What Holy Writ reveals is a dimension [heaven, or the supernal realm] that can only be approximated through metaphor. At best human beings, as if points on a two-dimensional plane, can only see shadows of what occurs in this heavenly dimension that stands as otherwise undetected height to points on a plane. These points will feel the absence of light as the shadow of a co-existing third dimension falls across the plane, but these points cannot observe height. Likewise, human beings confined within four-dimensional time feel the presence or absence of light [life] as this light from the heavenly realm affects mental landscapes. Thus, the inconsistency inherent with metaphors calving metaphors is absorbed through narrative repetition. Just as *spawning* and *calving* convey a similar sense of procreation, metaphor inconsistency within Holy Writ is not either contradiction or sloppiness, but an attempt to circumvent the inadequacy of human language to convey that which is not of this world.

For example, the head of gold of the image Nebuchadnezzar saw in vision would be superseded by a kingdom with two arms of silver. Daniel writes that the night Babylon fell, “Darius the Mede received the kingdom” (Dan 5:31 NRSV). Without leaving the writings of Daniel, prophecy pundits will identify the kingdom that arose after Nebuchadnezzar as the Medes and Persians. Of course, secular history confirms this, but in his vision Nebuchadnezzar didn't see a river diverted, or troops entering Babylon under the city's walls. If he had, defense measures would have been taken to prevent such an entry. Rather, the metonymic image that the king saw stood as an informing metaphor that converts figurative height into the linear passage of time. But this height is also a representation of the hierarchical organization of the prince of the power of the air's governing structure. So this one metonymic image straddles both a physical and a spiritual metaphor. If a prophecy pundit only reads the image as a physical metaphor, the pundit misses the more important metaphor. The pundit is physically or naturally or carnally minded.

No history book is needed for a disciple to go from Nebuchadnezzar being his image's head of gold to the Medes being his image's chest of silver. The prophet Daniel, writing about his second vision, says, “In the third year of the reign of King Belshazzar... I looked up and saw a ram standing beside the river. It had two horns. Both horns were long, but one was longer than the other, and the longer came up second” (Dan 8:1–3 NRSV). The archangel Gabriel interprets the ram for Daniel: “As for the ram that you saw with the two horns, these are the kings of Media and Persia” (v. 20), with the longer horn being Persia, for the Medes rose to power first. Daniel writes, “That very night [of the handwriting on the wall] Belshazzar the Chaldean king was killed. And Darius the Mede received the kingdom, being about sixty-two years old” (Dan 5:30–31).

Because of who identifies the ram as Media Persia, and because Daniel records the overturning of the Chaldean throne, the identification of the arms and chest of silver is certain. Pundits don't need to speculate about the identity of the kingdom represented by the silver of the image Nebuchadnezzar saw in vision. And the archangel Gabriel interprets the ram metaphorically, without assigning any further

identity to whom the kings of Media and Persia are other than saying that the vision is for the time of the end, not for Daniel's generation. The prophet Daniel, however, lives through the transition from Chaldean to Medo-Persian rule over Babylon, so the metonymic ram doesn't have a simple mimetic correspondent, meaning there is no one-to-one allegorical representation. Each horn of the ram— not the ram itself— exists as a kingdom, the shorter horn representing Media and the longer horn representing Persia. So the ram becomes the animal or beast that supports the kingdoms that reign together.

To repeat, Daniel doesn't live at the time of the end; yet he lives to serve Persian kings. If the ram corresponds solely to the ancient Medo-Persian Empire, then the archangel's words about the vision being for the time of the end have no recognizable meaning.

In Daniel's vision of the ram that is Media and Persia, he sees, "As I was watching, a male goat appeared from the west, coming across the face of the whole earth without touching the ground. The goat had a horn between its eyes. It came toward the ram with two horns... and it ran at it with savage force. I saw it approaching the ram. It was enraged against it and struck the ram, breaking its two horns" (Dan 8:5-7 NRSV). Again the archangel Gabriel interprets: "The male goat is the king of Greece, and the great horn between its eyes is the first king" (v. 21). The goat itself is the king of Greece, and the horn between its eyes is the first king of the king of Greece, implying that there will be more than one king, that the king of Greece outlasts its horns, that its horns like the horns of the ram are outgrowths of the king. For example, a cow horn is not the cow. So the first king of Greece— analogous to a cow horn— is not the **king of Greece**, that a kingly power exists behind the first king, that the first king derives his ability to rule from this kingly power.

The angel who brought Daniel his long vision of the exploits of the kings of the North and of the South says, "Now I must return to fight against the prince of Persia, and when I am through with him, the prince of Greece will come" (Dan 10:20 NRSV). This angel isn't fighting with humans, but rather with other angels. The identifying terms "king" and "prince" are interchangeable as far as the assignment of meaning is concerned. "Horns" are, thus, used for two levels of representation, the first being for subordinate spirit beings, and the second being for nations controlled by these angelic beings or demons. The first level of representation can be described as metaphoric, while the second is metonymic, with both degrees of representation being figurative language.

Again, in the third year of Cyrus, king of Persia (Dan 10:1), Daniel had a vision of what would happen to Israel "in the latter days" (v. 14). The word of knowledge was brought to Daniel by an angel who said, "The prince [*sar*] of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days, but Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I was left there with the kings of Persia" (v. 13). This prince of the kingdom of Persia is not a human being, who would tremble and fall into a deep sleep in the presence of the angel bringing Daniel the word of knowledge (vv. 5–10). Rather, this prince of Persia, one of the kings of Persia with whom the angel was left, was an angelic being of equal or greater strength than the one sent to bring Daniel the word of knowledge. The archangel Michael, a chief prince, had to intervene in this struggle between angels that lasted twenty-one days. Therefore, since the two horned ram of chapter eight metaphorically represented kings of Media and Persia that would reign in the latter days (Dan 8:17), which is also the timeframe for Daniel's word of knowledge, the ram primarily represents the rulers of Persia who withstood the angel. It secondarily represents human kings and kingdoms. Kings Darius and Cyrus become, then, the shadows of those powerful angelic beings in the same way that King Nebuchadnezzar was the shadow of Satan. This is seen when the angel bringing Daniel the word of knowledge says, "And as for me, in the first year of Darius the Mede, I stood up to confirm and strengthen him" (Dan 11:1). So how the visions of Daniel have been sealed with their shadows providing satisfactory fulfillment of the prophecies can be easily seen. For human beings do not physically contend with angels for twenty-one days. Rather, they tremble before them.

Continuing down the image that Nebuchadnezzar saw in vision, the "middle and thighs of bronze" (Dan 2:32) comprise the kingdom "which shall rule over all the earth" (v. 39). Note, the thighs or loins

are bronze. The division of Babylon occurs in the bronze region of the hips and loins when the single great horn of the he-goat that tramples the ram (Dan 8:5–7) is broken (v. 8). As with the figure of a male human, the division of the kingdom occurs in the pelvic region where it could be said that a single horn arises— and where it could be said that this single horn mentally rules over all the earth through the appetites of the flesh.

The division of the image occurs where and when the erect single horn is broken. The division doesn't occur where the legs change from bronze to iron. The division occurs in the bronze groin region, and extends down through the bronze loins or thighs. So the division occurs above the iron portion of the image's legs— this division cannot be represented by the eastern/western division of the Roman Empire, that division occurring long after the still-unified empire conquers the Greek kingdoms. The Apostle Paul doesn't go to Byzantium when he appears before Caesar; he goes to Rome.

The archangel Gabriel identifies the he-goat that tramples the ram as the king of Greece (Dan 8:21), so without leaving the writings of Daniel, the identities of the second and third kingdoms represented by the image Nebuchadnezzar saw are known. Traditionally, using the historic record to clarify visions of Daniel, prophecy pundits have identified the he-goat that flies out of the west as Alexander the Great, thereby assigning the identity of the he-goat to the single horn, making this second vision of Daniel less an expounding of the image Nebuchadnezzar saw than a separate prophecy. This is a major error; this is identifying a cow horn as the cow.

All of the visions recorded by Daniel pertain to the same subject and to the same time period. Even the king's vision about being cut off from among men for seven years pertains to the spiritual king of Babylon when that old dragon is cast from heaven (Rev 12:9–10). Only Satan doesn't return as king of spiritual Babylon once the toes are crushed. That great spiritual *polis* is never rebuilt once it falls. It becomes the habitations of jackals, and remains so even after Satan is loosed a thousand years later.

Allegedly, Alexander was divinely born (his mother's claim). Probably not true, but such a man was needed to lead the recently united Greek city-states to victory over the Persian Empire, the victory needed for the sealing of the visions of Daniel. Alexander reigned from the Mediterranean to the Cush Mountains, an area that encompasses all of pre-Flood Eden. Thus, Alexander conquered— without reaching either Chile or China— everywhere the children of men dwell just as Nebuchadnezzar, as the shadow of Satan, reigned over everywhere the children of men dwell. Again, the landscape of pre-Flood Eden serves as the shadow or type of humanity's mental topography. The prince of the power of the air reigns over this mental landscape. That old dragon has deceived the whole world, not merely the Near East or the Middle East.

Once again, in Daniel's vision, the he-goat, like the ram for the Persian king, is the king of Greece (Dan 8:21), with the single horn being the first king. The four horns that come up after the single horn is broken are also of the king of Greece; they rise from the stump of the first horn in the manner of how suckers grow from the stump of a tree. (The stump representing Nebuchadnezzar [Dan 4:26] was banded to prevent the growth of suckers, but not so with the broken first horn of the king of Greece.) And the fourth kingdom of Nebuchadnezzar's image comes from the four horns that are never united, but become two legs. This fourth kingdom never has one capital.

The nation of China gets short shrift in Scripture. One leading prophecy pundit of a generation ago taught that the Bible was written from the perspective of Jerusalem and from the perspective of Israel, God's chosen people. He was partially correct, for Jerusalem lies near the center of Eden. Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane the night of His betrayal prayed, "My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will" (Matt 26:39), and "My Father, if this cannot pass unless I drink it, your will be done" (v. 42). Jesus did what the first Adam didn't: He subjugated His will, His desires to His Father's. The first Adam's desire was for his wife. He chose her over doing his Father's will. So the two garden accounts showcase the difference between the physical first Adam in Eden, and the last spiritual Adam in spiritual Eden. If the last Adam had chosen as the first Adam did,

He would have remained with His disciples; there would have been no need to send the Comforter. And He would not have sat down at the right hand of His Father. Human beings would have no Redeemer. Thus, China and Chile do not get mentioned in Bible prophecy for these nations' physical landscapes lie beyond the pre-flood boundaries of Eden. But when Eden went from being a geographical region to being the mental topography of humanity, both nations are included. Both are subject to the broadcast of the prince of the power of the air. Their citizens have been consigned to disobedience, but some have been drawn by God the Father and called by Christ Jesus. These are the ones who have left a mental Egypt, and have arrived in a spiritual Judea where they live/have lived as spiritual Judeans. And with these spiritual Judeans resides the Comforter that the last Adam sent.

Daniel, in the interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream, tells the king that the third kingdom or bronze kingdom "shall rule over the whole earth" (Dan 2:39 NRSV). Many prophecy pundits teach that Rome, the Roman Empire, and/or the Roman Church as incarnations of Babylon will rule the whole earth. So these self-styled experts, while recognizing Greece as the third kingdom, do not find Daniel's interpretation trustworthy, for *rule over the whole earth* is never given to the fourth kingdom, strong as it is. The fourth kingdom first appears as a divided kingdom. Neither leg is able to rule over the other.

Envision the image Nebuchadnezzar saw representing the geographical territory that Babylon conquered—the image stands over, or represents the boundaries of pre-Flood Eden, from Egypt to Assyria. However, long before Nebuchadnezzar became king, the men of Tyre and Sidon (the Phoenicians) were sailing to the outer most parts of the earth. King Ahab of the northern house of Israel, when searching for the prophet Elijah, demanded an oath from every kingdom or nation that the kingdom or nation was not hiding Elijah (2 Kings 18:10). Ahab's wife Jezebel was "the daughter of Ethbaal king of Sidonians" (2 Kings 16:31). Thus, Ahab could well have demanded an oath of every kingdom or nation with which these Phoenicians traded. Therefore, what Daniel tells Nebuchadnezzar about the king ruling over the children of men wherever they dwell (Dan 2:38) is either not true for Babylon never reigned over the western lands to which the Phoenicians sailed, or what Daniel tells the king is a statement that confines the outer most limits within which the children of men dwell to the pre-Flood boundaries of Eden. And indeed, these boundaries—with sin to the south, death to the north, and the tree of life in the center of the garden God planted—form the outer most limits of the mental topography of humanity. What is again seen is that Nebuchadnezzar's image primarily pertains to spiritual Babylon, that nation which falls when the kingdom of world becomes the kingdom of the Most High and of His Christ (Rev 11:15). God commands humanity to come out of fallen Babylon (Rev 18:4), just as under the second covenant mediated by Moses (Deu 29:1) God commanded Israel to choose life (Deu 30:19–20). Leaving Babylon during the Tribulation equates with choosing life, with relocating oneself to Judea to live as a Judean while eating of the tree of life.

Returning now to the third or bronze kingdom to which rule of the world is given, Alexander conquered lands that actually extend beyond the boundaries of Eden, but he still never reached China, nor sailed to Chile. But the values or mindsets of the Greeks have conquered even China, now fast becoming a capitalistic society with Western values. The United States exports democracy to the uttermost regions of the world, this exportation backed by historically unimaginable military strength. Greek philosophy underlies most Western thought. Even the understanding of heaven, hell, and of human beings possessing immortal souls that is taught by most Christian sects comes from Hellenistic thought rather than from Hebraic Scripture. So ancient Greek values still shape Western psyches, especially, those of 20<sup>th</sup>-Century America. These are the values of spiritual Babylon, with the vertical "line" reigning supreme, and these values will continue to influence the mental topography of humanity until spiritual Babylon falls.

But a war in the supernal realm began shortly after the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup>-Century, a war between the spiritual king of Greece and the spiritual kings of Persia. This war is still being fought (December 2004). It took Alexander ten years to defeat the Persians. It will not take the he-goat of Daniel's second vision any longer to trample the ram.

The prophetic importance of the previous paragraph is easily missed: the first horn or great horn of the spiritual king of Greece has not yet been broken. In the heavenly realm, this king of Greece has not yet defeated the kings of Persia although that victory and defeat is historically eminent. The seven years of tribulation, unlike any time that has previously come upon humanity, begin with the breaking of this great horn, the firstborn rebel son of the spiritual king of Greece— and this breaking is not another generation away. Humanity is on a short clock. The toppling of the image Nebuchadnezzar saw now more than two and a half millennia ago begins with God soon delivering a blow to the image's groin, a punch that breaks the great horn.

Alexander died in a drunken debauch. His empire was divvied up among four generals, and didn't go to any heir he might have had. But those four divisions quickly became two, the Ptolemies, and the Seleucids. And despite the Ptolemaic Empire ruling Jerusalem for more than a century, it never reigned over the eastern or northern portions of the geography represented by pre-Flood Eden. Likewise, although the Seleucids ruled over Jerusalem for a couple of decades before the Maccabean rebellion, the Seleucids never reigned over Egypt. Rather, these two empires that arose between Alexander's death and the Maccabean rebellion jointly ruled over pre-Flood Eden. They are, as prophecy pundits are quick to assure Bible students, the referenced kings of the North and of the South of the long prophecy recorded in Daniel chapter 11. However, the Ptolemaic and the Seleucid empires form the spiritually-lifeless, physical shadow of the angelic beings that come to power once the great horn of the king of Greece is broken. The historical account of these two empires seal the word of knowledge given to Daniel so that this word cannot be understood until the time of the end.

In his interpretation of the image Nebuchadnezzar saw, Daniel says that "there shall be a fourth kingdom, strong as iron; just as iron crushes and smashes everything, it shall crush and shatter all these [previous kingdoms]" (Dan 2:40 NRSV). For centuries biblical scholars have identified this fourth kingdom as Rome, and certainly, Rome defeated Greece militarily, then borrowed most of Greece's culture. But Rome was a united empire when it defeated Greece, with most of Rome's geographical conquests lying beyond the boundaries of pre-Flood Eden. Even at the time of Christ, unified Rome's eastern boundary was the Euphrates, not the Tigris rivers. And again, the division of the image Nebuchadnezzar saw occurs in the bronze, or Greek portion of the statue. So to find Rome in the biblical text, a prophecy pundit will, of necessity, have added it to Daniel's visions.

Nowhere in his interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's image does Daniel say that the fourth kingdom shall rule the world. The fourth kingdom appears on the historical stage divided, sharing the pre-Flood boundaries of Eden with itself. Neither leg is able to rule all of Eden. But both legs descend from the third kingdom. As such, the third kingdom continues to rule over the world even after the fourth kingdom crushes and smashes everything (Dan 2:40), but the third kingdom rules by its philosophical paradigms.

In Daniel's vision of the he-goat trampling the ram, "[A]t the height of its power, the great horn was broken, and in its place there came up four prominent horns towards the four winds of heaven" (Dan 8:7 NRSV). These four horns continue until the little horn that springs out of one of them (v. 9) "shall even rise against the Prince of princes./But he shall be broken, and not by human hands" (v. 27). The time frame for the breaking of this little horn is the coming of the Messiah. The time frame when the image Nebuchadnezzar saw topples is: "[I]n the days of those kings [the ten toes of iron and clay] the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed... just as [Nebuchadnezzar] saw that a stone was cut from the mountain not by hands, and that it crushed the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold" (Dan 2:44-45 NRSV — note that all four kingdoms [the iron, bronze, clay, silver, gold] are present when smashed by a cut stone).

Because the angel Gabriel identified the he-goat that tramples the ram as the king of Greece, the identification of the kingdom represented by the bronze belly and thighs of Nebuchadnezzar's image is certain. But in Daniel's second vision, Gabriel doesn't reveal another kingdom replacing Greece. Rather, from the king of Greece comes four horns, or kings, one of which will give rise to a little horn

that makes war with Christ at his return. The four horns carry forward through time from when the first horn is broken to Christ's return. No other kingdom comes after them, except Christ's.

In the word of knowledge that was later brought to Daniel [chptrs 10–12], the angel tells Daniel, Three more kings shall arise in Persia. The fourth... shall stir up all against the kingdom of Greece. Then a warrior king shall arise, who shall rule with great dominion and take action as he pleases. And while still rising in power, his kingdom shall be broken and divided toward the four winds of heaven, but not to his posterity, nor according to the dominion with which he ruled; for his kingdom shall be uprooted and go to others besides these. (Dan 11:2-4 NRSV)

In both visions, the great horn of the he-goat is broken, and the Greek kingdom is divided to the four winds. In the latter vision, the third kingdom is uprooted, this uprooting creating the fourth kingdom of Nebuchadnezzar's image. So the third kingdom is uprooted while continuing to rule the earth, a scenario made possible when ideas are the instruments used to establish both kingdoms— when kingdoms are established by the prince of the power of the air.

Without leaving the Book of Daniel, without wringing meaning from the text as if the Bible were a dishrag to be wrung dry through much wrestling, a person can now assert that the iron legs of the statue Nebuchadnezzar saw in vision represent the joint reigns of the king of the South and the king of the North, their reigns foreshadowed by the Ptolemaic and Seleucid empires. The other two horns or Greek generals— east and west— reign over territory outside of the boundaries of pre-Flood Eden before being absorbed. And here is where wisdom enters: the Apostle Paul writes that the law of sin and death still resides in the members of disciples (Rom 7:25). But “the law of the Spirit of life has set [disciples] free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death” (Rom 8:2) even though “the body [i.e., flesh] is dead because of sin” (v. 10). Christ Jesus mentally liberates born-from-above disciples from the law of sin and death in a manner analogous to how God liberated circumcised Israel from bondage to Pharaoh. Spiritually circumcised disciples leave sin and death as physically circumcised disciples left Egypt, but even though liberated, the body of each spiritually circumcised disciple remains dead because of sin. Thus, with spiritual birth comes the liberation of the mind from sin and death, but death retains its claim on the body or flesh of each disciple. Liberation from death comes when the judgment of each disciple is revealed (1 Cor 4:5) at Christ's coming. Also at His coming, Christ recovers Israel from the north country (Jer 16:15). At this time, “many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life” (Dan 12:2). God says that His servant David shall be king over the resurrected houses of Israel and Judah (Ezek 37:24). So today, while alive in the flesh, disciples are mentally liberated from sin, but they will not be liberated from death until Christ comes. Thus, there has been a separation of sin from death, with liberation from sin occurring through receipt of the Holy Spirit, but with death retaining its dominion over disciples until Christ returns. Just as the law of God that was in the Apostle Paul's mind is of God, so too is the law of sin and death of the prince of the power of the air. This prince is the head of a hierarchical government which includes the kings of the North and of the South. Just as circumcised Israel was liberated from bondage in Egypt, spiritual Israel has been mentally liberated from bondage to sin even though the law of sin and death still dwells in the flesh of each disciple. Therefore, Egypt becomes a representation of sin, an established biblical correspondence. Assyria, now, because Israel will be liberated from this north country upon Christ's coming, becomes a representation of death. And in Daniel's word of knowledge is found “the king of the south shall be strong, but one of his princes shall be stronger than he and shall rule, and his authority shall be a great authority” (Dan 11:5). The word is about the angelic being that represents death (Rev 6:8); for the prince that becomes stronger than the king of the South is the king of the North. Death devours everything— until it is publicly defeated.

The fourth kingdom is not Rome and never was Rome. To make the fourth kingdom Rome is to force onto the prophecy what isn't in the text.

The two legs of iron represent two spirit beings that in turn represent sin and death. These two spirit beings come to power when the erect great horn of the king of Greece is broken. Although a certain sense of irony is contained within these representations, that irony addresses the prophetic language identifying the Church as a woman who goes into hard labor pains when the Tribulation begins. A woman giving birth is no longer interested in anything other than the delivery of the child.

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