

# Daniel 7:23

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Thus he said, The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces.

## Analysis

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The angel continues explaining the fourth beast: "The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces." The emphatic "diverse from all kingdoms" stresses this empire's unique character—not merely another powerful nation but qualitatively different in scope and oppression. The threefold description of destruction (devour, tread down, break in pieces) emphasizes comprehensive devastation exceeding previous empires.

The phrase "devour the whole earth" indicates global dominion—the fourth kingdom achieves worldwide influence previous empires only approached regionally. Rome controlled the Mediterranean world, creating infrastructure, law, and culture affecting subsequent civilizations. Prophetically, this points to a future global system under antichrist exercising unprecedented control through political, economic, and religious means (Revelation 13:7-8, 16-17).

This beast's character—systematic destruction and global reach—demonstrates how human power, unchecked by divine grace, culminates in totalitarian oppression. The pattern escalates: Babylon's regional conquest, Persia's expansion, Greece's cultural dominance, Rome's comprehensive system, and ultimately antichrist's global tyranny. Yet Christ's kingdom will crush all these empires

(Daniel 2:44) and establish eternal righteousness. Believers resist totalitarian claims knowing Christ alone deserves universal allegiance.

## Historical Context

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Rome's empire (27 BC-AD 476/1453) achieved unprecedented extent, organization, and cultural influence. Roman law, language, roads, and administrative systems shaped Western civilization for millennia. Early Christians experienced this comprehensive power through persecution, yet the gospel spread throughout the empire using Roman infrastructure. The "whole earth" from ancient perspective meant the known Mediterranean world Rome dominated.

## Related Passages

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**Colossians 1:16** — All things created through Christ

**Psalm 19:1** — Heavens declare God's glory

## Study Questions

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1. How does the fourth beast's global reach warn about totalitarian systems claiming comprehensive authority over all life aspects?
2. What does Rome's provision of infrastructure for gospel spread teach about God using oppressive empires for redemptive purposes?
3. How should recognizing that Christ's kingdom will crush all earthly empires shape Christian political engagement and ultimate allegiance?

## Interlinear Text

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כִּי	אָמַר	אָמַר	בָּיִתָּא	בָּיִתָּא	רַבִּיעִיא	רַבִּיעִיא	מֶלֶכֶת	מֶלֶכֶת	רַבִּיעִיא	רַבִּיעִיא	תְּהִוֵּה	תְּהִוֵּה
Thus	he said		beast		The fourth		kingdom		The fourth		shall be	
H3652	H560		H2423		H7244		H4437		H7244		H1934	
אָרֶץ	אָרֶץ	אָרֶץ	אָרֶץ	אָרֶץ	תְּשִׁנֵּן	אָרֶץ	מִן	כָּל	מִן	מֶלֶכֶת	וְתַאכֵּל	
earth			which shall be diverse				from	all		kingdom		and shall devour
H772	H1768		H8133				H4481	H3606		H4437		H399
כָּל	אָרֶץ	אָרֶץ	וְתַדְשֵׁב	הָ							וְמִדְקָרֶה:	
all	earth		and shall tread it down								and break it in pieces	
H3606	H772		H1759								H1855	

## Additional Cross-References

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**Daniel 2:40** (Kingdom): And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things: and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise.

**Daniel 7:7** (Parallel theme): 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.

**Luke 2:1** (Parallel theme): And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed.