

## The Bible Speaks

is required for the true interpretation of that which has been revealed (Daniel 5:12, 14).

“The real significance of the historical character of Christianity lies in the fact that it finds the revelation of God not only in nature and in individual experience, but most decisively in history and thereby illumines all history with meaning and hope.” - Jack Finegan, “Christianity and History,” Religion in Life, Volume 13, Number 3, Page 362.

### **8. Were the prophecies necessarily to be understood at the time they were given?**

a. Often they were not understood at all when they were first given. I heard, but I understood not.” Daniel 12:8.

b. As the time for fulfillment approaches, light begins to dawn. In the first year of his reign I Daniel understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah the prophet, that He would accomplish seventy years in the desolation of Jerusalem.” Daniel 9:2.

c. After their fulfillment, understanding is complete. “This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; And it shall come to pass in the last days, said God, I will pour out of My Spirit upon all flesh.” Acts 2:16, 17.

d. The fulfilled prophecy evokes faith and confidence in God and in His word. “Now I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it 1’s come to pass, you might believe.” John 14:29.

### **9. What culpable ignorance did Jesus condemn?**

“O you hypocrites, you can discern the face of the sky; but can you not discern the signs of the times?” Matthew 16:3.

NOTE-In connection with the understanding of prophecy there is a justifiable ignorance, a beneficent veiling of understanding, intended by God to prevent His people becoming unduly apprehensive of the trials and tribulations of the future, and to keep them ever in a state of expectancy. But there is also a culpable ignorance, a failure to understand the message of prophecy when the time has come for it to be known.

### **10. At what time is a great unfolding of prophetic truth promised?**

“Thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.” Daniel 12:4 See also verse 9.

## ***God’s Blueprint of History***

### **1. THROUGH whom was the first detailed panoramic prophecy of world history given?**

“In the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar Nebuchadnezzar dreamed dreams, wherewith his spirit was troubled, and his sleep brake from him.” Daniel 2:1.

### **2. Unable to recall the remarkable vision, for whom did he ask?**

“Then the king commanded to call the magicians, and the astrologers, and the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans, for to show the king his dreams.” Verse 2.

### **3. What confession were they compelled to make?**

“It is a rare thing that the king requires, and there is none other that can show it before the king, except the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh.” Verse 11.

### **4. By whom was the dream and its interpretation made known to the king?**

“Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a night vision.” Verse 19.

### **5. In what words did Daniel inform Nebuchadnezzar of the momentous nature of the dream?**

“There is a God in heaven that reveals secrets, and makes known to the King Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days.” Verse 28.

### **6. What did the king see in his dream?**

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A great image comprised of diverse metals. Read verses 31-35.

### **7. Who was represented by the head of gold?**

“Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. ... Thou art this head of gold.” Verses 37, 38. See also Isaiah 14:4, 6.

NOTE - No metal more appropriate could have been chosen to typify this first world power. Babylon was literally a golden city. Herodotus (Herodotus 1:181,183; 3:11), the Greek historian, who visited Babylon some ninety years after the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, describes his astonishment at the amount of gold lavished upon the sacred temples of the city.

### **8. As Nebuchadnezzar glowed with pride at the divine representation, what rude shock did he receive?**

“After thee shall arise another kingdom.” Daniel 2:39.

### **9. How specifically did Jeremiah enumerate the succeeding kings of Babylon down to the time of its fall?**

“Now have I given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, My servant; and all nations shall serve him, and his son, and his son’s son, until the very time of his land come: and then many nations and great kings shall serve themselves of him.” Jeremiah 27:6, 7.

### **10. What was to be the actual duration of the empire?**

“It shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, said the Lord, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolation.” Jeremiah 25:12.

### **11. On what occasion was Babylon’s imminent doom announced?**

“Belshazzar the king made a great feast to a thousand of his lords, and drank wine before the thousand.” In the same hour came forth fingers of a man’s hand, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaster of the wall of the king’s palace: and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote.” Daniel 5:1, 5.

### **12. How did Daniel interpret the writing to Babylon’s last king?**

“This is the writing that was written, Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin. This is the interpretation of the thing: Mene; God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it. Tekel; Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting. Peres; Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians.” Verses 25-28.

### **13. How speedily was the sentence pronounced upon Belshazzar executed?**

“In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain. And Darius the Median took the kingdom, being about threescore and two years old.” Verses 30, 31.

NOTE-It was in 538 BC, in the reign of Nebuchadnezzar’s grandson and sixty-eight years after the utterance of this prophecy, that Babylon was overthrown by the Medes and Persians. Two years later, or exactly seventy years after the prophecy was given, Cyrus issued his decree liberating the remnant of Israel.

### **14. By what metal was the Medo-Persian Empire represented in the image?**

“His breast and his arms of silver.” Daniel 2:32.

NOTE-As the metal gold most accurately symbolized Babylon, so history reveals the appropriateness of silver as a type of the second world empire. Silver was the principal adornment of the Persian warriors. Silver was the standard of exchange in the days of this empire, as, until recently, a gold standard was in universal use for modern international commerce.

### **15. How would the second world empire compare in glory with Babylon?**

“After thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee!” Verse 39.

### **16. To what new kingdom would Medo-Persia eventually give place?**

“And another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth.” Verse 39.

NOTE-It was inferior in luxury and magnificence, as the Medo-Persian kings considered it best to

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retain their treasures in a more mobile form for use at short notice in the financing of great military expeditions. The Medo-Persian kings were inferior also in that they did not enjoy the same absolute authority as the kings of Babylon. Not the king but “the law of the Medes and Persians” was supreme.

As silver was used for personal adornment by the Persian warriors, so brass was characteristic of the Greek soldier. Brass was used not only for body armor, but also on their headdresses and sandals, as well as for shields, swords, battle-axes, and the tips of spears and arrows. Homer speaks of the “brass-clad Greeks.”

### **17. By what power was Greece ultimately to be overthrown?**

“And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaks in pieces and subdues all things: and as iron that breaks all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise.” Verse 40.

NOTE - The battle of Pydna in Macedonia in 168 BC decided the fate of the Greek Empire and left Rome undisputed mistress of the ancient world. It is remarkable that the rise of the Roman arms was contemporary with a gradual displacement of brazen implements and weapons in favor of iron ones.

The phrase “break in pieces and bruise” seems not only to connote power of conquest but also rapacity, bloodthirstiness, and brutality, which were all abundantly manifest in the Roman campaigns.

## ***The Anarchy of Nations***

### **1. IN what way would the fall of the fourth empire of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream differ from that of the previous world kingdoms?**

“Whereas thou saw the feet and toes, part of potter’s clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided.” Daniel 2:41.

### **2. Into how many fragments was the Roman Empire broken by the barbarian invasions of the fourth and fifth centuries?**

When we examine the period of history immediately succeeding the fall of the Caesars, we find that Western Europe was portioned out among barbarian tribes into ten main divisions corresponding significantly to the ten toes; namely, the Alamanni, Ostrogoths, Visigoths, Franks, Vandals, Suevi, Burgundians, Heruli, Anglo-Saxons, and Lombards.

### **3. What diversity of power and sovereignty would obtain among the broken fragments of the old empire?**

“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.” Verse 42.

NOTE-Gibbon speaks of the “powerful monarchies of the Franks and the Visigoths, and the dependent kingdoms of the Suevi and Burgundians.”

### **4. In spite of attempts on the part of the strong to absorb the weak, how persistent would the divisions be?**

“And whereas thou saw 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.” Verse 43.

NOTE-“The inner powers of repulsion in the ten kingdoms were stronger than the outer compression of Napoleon’s, or Charlemagne’s, or Louis’s sword. We have thus, then, the ten kingdoms always coming up, notwithstanding the efforts of successive despots, conquerors, and heroes to consolidate them. We have the failure of each hero written in blood, and stereotyped upon the page of Europe; in spite of man’s great forces, God’s true word stands still, fulfilled to the very letter.”-John Cumming, Lectures on the Book of Daniel, page 91

### **5. What other attempts to achieve European unity would be equally unavailing?**

“They shall mingle themselves with the seed of men.” Verse 43.

NOTE-The reference here is evidently to alliances affected by intermarriage between the descendants of the various European sovereigns. But these matrimonial alliances proved as transient as

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those secured by force of arms. Although at times they brought together two or more nations for a few years, the spirit of nationalism always proved too great, and before very long the states were independent of each other again. Immediately before the first world war the sovereigns of Europe were almost all connected by marriage with each other. But these ties failed to prevent the outbreak of that terrible cataclysm.

### **6. In what ways have modern European statesmen un~ successfully endeavored to curb the menace of aggressive nationalism?**

By international leagues.

### **7. By what will the divided and warring kingdoms of the modern world ultimately be superseded?**

“And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed.” Verse 44.

### **8. How is the inauguration of the kingdom of God symbolized in Nebuchadnezzar’s dream?**

“Forasmuch as thou saw that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter.” Verse 45.

### **9. Where else is the expression “without hands” used, and what does it signify?**

Divine intervention. “The punishment of the iniquity of the daughter of My people is greater than the punishment of the sin of Sodom, that was overthrown as in a moment, and no hands stayed on her.” Lamentations 4:6. “We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.” 2 Corinthians 5:1.

### **10. What other Old Testament prophets use the term “stone” to symbolize the coming Messiah?**

a. Stone of Israel. “His bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob; (from thence is the shepherd, the stone of Israel).” Genesis 49:24.

b. Foundation stone. “Therefore thus said the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation: lie that believes shall riot make haste.” Isat. 28:16.

c. Stone of judgment. “He shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offense to both the houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.” Isaiah 8:14.

### **11. What claim did Jesus make concerning Himself?**

“He [Jesus] beheld them, and said, What is this then that is written, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner?” Luke 20:17.

### **12. How assured were the disciples that the “stone” represented Christ?**

“This is the stone which was set at naught of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.” Acts 4:11, 12.

### **13. To what does the falling of the stone refer?**

Acquaintance with Bible prophecy shows that the falling of the stone is identical with the second advent of the Messiah in power and glory.

### **14. In what statements is the coming of Christ conclusively associated with the inauguration of His kingdom?**

“When the Son of man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory.” Matthew 25:31. 1 charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at His appearing and HIS kingdom; Preach the word.” 2 Timothy 4:1, 2.

### **15. How completely will the kings and the kingdoms of this world be swept away at the coming of Christ?**

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“Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them.” Daniel 2:35.

### **16. Will any earthly kingdom continue as part of the kingdom of God or merge into it?**

“The kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.” Verse 44.

### **17. How wide is to be the extent of the kingdom of God?**

“And the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.” Verse 35.

### **18. How sure is the fulfillment of every detail of the vision?**

“The dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure.” Verse 45.

### **19. What, then, is the message of the stone?**

“Whosoever shall fall upon that stone shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.” Luke 20:18.

## ***Antichrist Unmasked***

### **1. WHAT symbols are used in the seventh chapter of Daniel for the four great world powers first mentioned in Daniel 2?**

“Daniel spoke and said, I saw in my vision by night, and, behold, the four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea. And four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another.” Daniel 7:2, 3. See also verse 17.

NOTE-The sea typifies the nations of the world (Revelation 17: 15), the winds represent war, strife, and bloodshed (Jeremiah 25:32, 33), and the four beasts, the four successive world powers, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome, which were to bear rule over the earth. See the two preceding studies.

### **2. By what are the divided fragments of the Roman Empire, the fourth world power, here represented?**

“After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; ... and it had ten horns.” “And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise.” Verses 7, 24.

NOTE-The division was fulfilled in the dissolution of the Roman Empire in the fifth and sixth centuries, as a result of the inroads of the northern barbarians. See previous studies.

### **3. What new power is brought to view rising among the divided kingdoms of the iron monarchy?**

“I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn.” Verse 8. “Another shall rise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first.” Verse 24.

NOTE-This new power was to rise within the Roman Empire, subsequent to its division, but it was to form no part of any of the divisions. It was to have a separate existence, as well as to be diverse in nature (verse 24) from the others. Did such a power arise? It surely did. The Roman Catholic Church took its name from the empire. It established its seat in the ancient capital. It adopted the Roman tongue, and the title of its spiritual director Pontifex Maximus, was borrowed from that of the Roman emperors. But, unlike the powers by which it was surrounded, its claim to supremacy was based, not upon force of arms, but upon the pretension of divine ordination. “Roman imperialism still survives, the most imposing of all the political anachronisms, in the palace of the Pontifex Maximus in the Vatican.”

### **4. While at first small and weak compared with the ten kingdoms, what place did Rome quickly assume among the nations?**

“That horn . . . had eyes, and a mouth that spoke very great things, whose look was more stout than his fellows.” Verse 20.