

A NEW WORLD ORDER

Does God really pay attention to what is happening on planet earth, or is He an absentee landlord who started the planet spinning a long time ago and then forgot about us? An ancient king's dream proves beyond the shadow of a doubt that the unseen hand of God is still busy in world history!

DANIEL 2:1-13 — Nebuchadnezzar, king of ancient Babylon, had a disturbing dream one night that he just couldn't ignore. Eager to know what it might mean, he called for his magicians and astrologers to explain it to him. There was just one catch—he wouldn't share the content of the dream with them! "I want you to tell me what I dreamed, and then tell me what it means. If you don't, it will cost you your lives!"

Of course, they couldn't do it, so Nebuchadnezzar ordered that the wise men be rounded up and executed. This order unfortunately included a young Hebrew captive by the name of Daniel who had been placed in the king's court. Daniel pleaded for more time (Daniel 2:14-16), promising Nebuchadnezzar that he would provide both the contents of the dream *and* the interpretation.



DANIEL 2:17-28 — Daniel quickly ran to find his Hebrew friends and spent time praying with them, asking God to reveal the secret of Nebuchadnezzar's dream. They knew, of course, that only God could read Nebuchadnezzar's thoughts (see, for example, I Kings 8:39). God did not fail Daniel, and revealed both the contents and the interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream to him (Daniel 2:19). Daniel appeared before the king the next day and explained the dream to him as promised.

DANIEL 2:31-35 — In the dream, Nebuchadnezzar saw a great statue made up of several different metals: a head of gold, chest and arms of silver, belly and thighs of brass, legs of iron, and feet of iron mixed with clay.

Then in the dream, a great stone—"cut out without human hands" (Daniel 2:34)—smashes into the feet of the image and completely demolishes it. The wind then blows the crumbled statue away, and the stone grows until it fills the whole earth.

DANIEL 2:36-45 — What does it mean? Daniel explains the dream in great detail. Starting at the head of the statue, each successive metal represents a successive empire. The head of gold represents Nebuchadnezzar and his Babylonian empire. "Thou art this head of gold," said Daniel (Daniel 2:38).

Babylon's powerful empire lasted from about 605 B.C. until 539 B.C., when the city was demolished by the Persian general, Cyrus.

The Medo-Persian Empire then ruled from 539 B.C. until 331 B.C., when the Persians were defeated by Alexander the Great and the Greeks, represented by the belly and thighs of brass. In 168 B.C., however, the Greek empire was in turn crushed by the Romans, represented in Nebuchadnezzar's dream by the legs of iron.

The Romans remained the dominant force in the world until 476 A.D., when the Barbarian tribes of Western Europe and North Africa finally brought them to their knees. The Western Roman Empire disintegrated into 10 divisions, represented by the feet and 10 toes of the image. Daniel uses the toes to describe a *divided* iron kingdom (Daniel 2:41).

These Barbarian tribes eventually became the modern nations of Western Europe with the exception of three, which are now extinct:



ALEMANNI: Germans	ANGLO-SAXONS: British
VISIGOTHS: Spanish	LOMBARDS: Italians
FRANKS: French	HERULI: <i>Extinct</i>
SUEVI: Portuguese	VANDALS: <i>Extinct</i>
BURGUNDIANS: Swiss	OSTROGOTHS: <i>Extinct</i>

These Western European nations, according to the dream, would try to “mingle themselves with the seed of men” (Daniel 2:43), or reestablish the unity that was lost when the Western Roman Empire collapsed.

The reunification of the Western Roman Empire is a dream that has failed many, many times. European monarchs attempted to establish unity by means of intermarriage. They each failed miserably. Charles V tried to conquer and unify all of Europe, but was eventually forced to abdicate the throne. Louis XIV of France tried it. Napoleon tried it. The Kaiser tried it. Hitler tried it. And they all failed miserably because God told Daniel that “they shall not cleave one to another.”

Those seven simple prophetic words have controlled the destiny of the Western world for more than 1,500 years now. Europe simply will not reunite into the Western Roman Empire, because God said that it wouldn't. Attempts today continue to fail. The only thing that will unify the Western Roman Empire—and the rest of the world for that matter—is the arrival of the great stone of Nebuchadnezzar's dream, representing a kingdom that God Himself establishes. When will that happen? **MATTHEW 25:31** makes it clear: “*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.*”

We are now living in the toes of the image, in the “days of these kings” (Daniel 2:44). Everything in Daniel 2 has already happened except for one thing—the return of Christ!

We don't know precisely when He is going to come, but we know it's getting close. So here is the important question: Are you ready for that glorious event?

2. Through what agents does God communicate His secrets to mankind? *Amos 3:7.*

The Bible Says: _____

PLEASE READ THE ENTIRE CHAPTER OF DANIEL 2. IN THIS DREAM GOD OUTLINED THE FUTURE TO AN ANCIENT KING. DANIEL 2:29. NOTICE HOW GOD USED DANIEL.

3. Why should this dream be of special interest to us? *Daniel 2:28.*

The Bible Says: "God . . . maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be _____."

4. Who revealed the dream to Daniel? *Daniel 2:27, 28.*

The Bible Says: _____

5. What had the king seen in his dream? *Daniel 2:31-35.*

The Bible Says: "Thou, O King, sawest, and behold _____."

Note: In this dream God outlined the history of this world from the days of Nebuchadnezzar to its very end. By the use of different metals in the image He revealed that there would be four world empires in the succeeding years. History reveals that these empires were Babylon (head of gold), Medo-Persia (chest and arms of silver), Greece (thighs of brass), and Rome (legs of iron). By this image He showed that the fourth world empire would be divided, represented by feet composed of iron and clay.

6. What was represented by the head of gold? *Daniel 2:37, 38.*

The Bible Says: _____

Note: Babylon, with its magnificent display of wealth, was one of the wonders of the ancient world. Its beautiful buildings were interspersed with luxuriant gardens. Indeed it was the capital city of a golden kingdom.

7. How would the second kingdom, Medo-Persia, compare with Babylon? *Daniel 2:39.*

The Bible Says: _____

Note: God, through the prophet Daniel, told Belshazzar that the Babylonians were to be succeeded by the Medo-Persians. *Daniel 5:25-31.*

8. What part of the metal man represented the third kingdom of Greece? *Daniel 2:39.*

The Bible Says: _____

Note: "The battles of Granicus B.C. 331, Issus in the following year, and Arbela in B.C. 331, settled the fate of the Persian Empire, and established the wide dominion of the Greeks." H. Grattan Guinness, *The Divine Programme of the World's History*, page 308.

9. What part of the image represents the fourth world empire, Rome? *Daniel 2:40.*

The Bible Says: _____

Note: "The images of gold, or silver, or brass, that might serve to represent the nations and their kings, were successively broken by the iron monarchy of Rome." Edward Gibbon, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, chap. 38, General Observations at end of chapter, par. 1.

10. As the feet, part iron and part clay, represented a divided condition, what was to happen to the iron kingdom of Rome? *Daniel 2:41.*

The Bible Says: _____

Note: Between A.D. 351 and 476 a series of invasions by barbaric tribes from Europe completely overran the Western Roman Empire and brought it to its end. These tribes included: Saxons (English), Franks (French), Alemanni (German), Burgundians (Swiss), Lombards (Italians), Visigoths (Spanish), Suevi (Portuguese), Vandals, Ostrogoths, and Heruli.

11. What statement of seven words shows that the Old World powers would never be welded back into one great kingdom? *Daniel 2:43.*

The Bible Says: "They shall not _____."

12. At the end of earth's history, what will God set up? *Daniel 2:44.*

The Bible Says: _____

13. What event will mark the setting up of the kingdom? *Matthew 25:31-34.*

The Bible Says: _____

In every age man has looked for a better life in a land where the miseries and troubles of this world will be no more. Whether it be called Utopia, Heaven, or Paradise, man has longed for a place and a time when all sickness, sorrow, and death will end.

In God's plan there is just such a heaven for the faithful. The Bible says that Abraham, the father of the faithful, looked for that type of home. In Hebrews 11:16, speaking of the saints of old, we read: "But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for He hath prepared for them a city."

We will learn about that city in another lesson. It will answer the longing of every heart and settle the problems of every sincere child of God.

As Christ was dying on the cross of Calvary, there was one bright spot in His hour of agony. The dying thief turned to Him for salvation. From the depths of his contrite heart he cried out, "Lord, remember

God and by it he revealed his God to be superior to those of the Babylonians and indeed the Living God.

V. 19 They stood before the king – i.e. they were selected for important government posts.

In refusing the king's rich food they showed that they cared more for God than advancement and now because it was God's desire they became prominent.

V. 20 “*Magicians*” The term may be related to the word stylus, i.e. those who use the stylus– Sacred writers. “*Enchanters*” Priests of Babylon – neither term is used in its strictest sense. They are all “*Wise men.*”

V. 21 Critics claim an inaccuracy at this point, 10:1 revelation is given in the third year of Cyrus. The point is that Daniel lived through into the time of Cyrus. It does not say that he died then. This Chapter was perhaps written in the first year?

Chapter Two

Introduction

Here for the first time we are confronted by prophecy that requires some interpretation– Some basic ground rules need to be considered to avoid error and wild speculation.

1. Read what is written. Don't read into the text what is not there.
2. Interpret each vision separately. Symbols may have different meanings in each (eg. Revelation 12, woman = Israel; Revelation 18, woman = Babylon; little horn, Daniel 7–8)–
3. Don't make more of a symbol, parable, or vision than the writer does. Accept his interpretation where given and let the book interpret the book where possible.
4. The message was intended for those of the prophet's day; what did they understand by it?

5. Prophecy often loses its time perspective. Often only significant events are recorded.
6. Interpret literally unless there is some Biblical or obvious reason not to, and yet realise that a symbol is only a *sign* of a reality and does not reflect the reality in every detail.
7. See if the Bible interprets the prophecy of symbol.
8. Symbols may well be understood by the beholder; contemporary literature may help to understand.
9. See the vision; the main points may become obvious.
10. Distinguish between Scripture interpreting Scripture and using Scripture to support one's own views. See also the additional note on interpretation at the end of this book.

2:1

“*The second year of Nebuchadnezzar*” This is seen by some to be a problem. Probably Babylonian reckoning – would then be third year by Jewish reckoning. 605 part of year = one year, i.e. the accession year. 604, 603 = year one, and two. So probably at the end of the training period for the youths.

Nebuchadnezzar had dreams that disturbed him a great deal. A Chaldean proverb says “Woe and anxiety create only bad dreams.” Nebuchadnezzar ruled over a vast area. His army was responsible for the collection of taxes from subjugated lands. In 604 Ashkelon resisted and the city was reduced to rubble. In 603 ancient records reveal that troops were in the field for several months indicating that all was not well. The dream coming as it did at this time seemed to add to his uneasiness and feeling that all was not well. “*TROUBLED*” *The word is emphatic.* He was deeply disturbed.

2:2–3

The king summoned his wise men and demanded to know the dream. It is not clear as to whether

2:2-3 (Cont.) he had forgotten the content of the dream or simply wanted to make certain that what his counsellors told him was correct. “*Sorcerers*” Probably a group who used herbs and charm potions and sought help from evil spirits. “*Chaldeans.*” is used here in the sense of ‘Experts in Magic love.’ It is said that this usage became popular only after the rise of the Persian Empire.

2:4-11

“Then the Chaldeans said to the king.” “Chaldeans” here used to embrace all the wise men. The reply of the wise men is given in Aramaic. The narrative then continues in the Aramaic dialect through to the end of Chapter 7. “O king live for ever,” Simply Court etiquette.

V. 4 The counsellors request to know the dream that they might interpret it. Extensive dream manuals have been discovered. They consist of dreams and the events that followed. They are extensive and complex. They try to cover every eventuality. Only an expert could find his way through them.

V. 5 “The thing is gone from me.” or “The word from me is sure” R.S.V. “Gone” is probably here used in the sense of “gone forth” i.e. I have decreed. You will tell me the dream, rather than, “It is gone from me,” I don’t remember. Another proverb of Babylon says, “If a man cannot remember the dream he saw, his god is angry with him. If he did in fact forget then the import and impact of the dream remained with him and his forgetfulness may have disturbed him further.

Nebuchadnezzar was lavish in his rewards but he meant every word of this threat. The Babylonians were not what we would regard as civilized in such matters and we gain an insight into conditions that the Jews lived under.

V. 7 The Chaldeans repeated their request and without doubt Nebuchadnezzar was beginning to doubt their abilities. Their business was to make contact with the deities and be enlightened as to such mysteries.

V. 9 Nebuchadnezzar is firm.

V. 10 The Chaldeans try flattery. They suggest that Nebuchadnezzar is too great and powerful and wise to really expect such knowledge from his servants. The indication is that the king is wrong to ask such a thing. They virtually admit that their priestly claims of enlightenment by the deities are false.

2:12-16 The king was furious and demanded the death of the wise men. Daniel and companions though not present were included in the execution order.

V. 14 Daniel’s reaction is remarkable. He appears confident and unshaken. Such confidence can only come from a sure faith that he is where God wants him to be and that God is working out his purposes through him. Because of the manner of his approach, Arioch was willing to listen to him. He respected Daniel.

2:17-18

From childhood Daniel had been taught the history of his people and told of the mighty acts of God in delivering his people and giving them victory. His experiences in Babylon had already verified that God could care for him and so now he naturally turns to prayer and calls on his friends to join him. Note here the Hebrew names used when associated with prayer and God. The Babylonians worshipped the starry heaven. Daniel urges his companions to call on the God of the heavens. (PL). The one who is over all. An appropriate name for God in the context of astral worship. “mystery” – another Persian word. The king’s decree was sure but Daniel knew that even the decree of a king was not final. Even his heart is in the hands of the Lord.

2:19-23

God graciously answered prayer by a “Vision of the night” given to Daniel. The meaning of the term is not clear. It seems to be distinguished from dream. 8:1-3. vision of the day. Visions and dreams are the means by which God communicates to his prophets. The mode is unimportant. The communication is. Spontaneous praise follows the

answered prayer. *“Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever.”* The name of God is His revealed character and nature. It represents what may be known of God, (Exodus 6:3. The patriarchs had known Him as *E1-Shaddai*, God Almighty – by mighty acts of preservation and guidance and in the birth of Isaac. But now He was to reveal Himself as *YHWH*. The Covenant keeping God – merciful – slow to anger – forgiving) Daniel praised God for all that He had shown Himself to be.

Vs. 20 & 22 “To him belong wisdom and might ... He reveals deep and mysterious things.” – as evidenced by the vision.

V. 21 He removes kings – as the dream of the king revealed. A contrast to the fatalistic view of the Babylonians and even today many Christians find it hard to accept that God is in control when it comes to governments or even church politics.

V. 23 *“Praise you God of my fathers”* He senses his continuity with all who have gone before him. It is not just that God has spoken to Daniel but He has spoken to Daniel in the context of His people. He has spoken not just for Daniel but for His people and because He has entered Covenant with them. His revelations and gifts are always given in the context of His people, for His people. Our thrust today seems to be toward visions and revelations to edify the individual without much regard to the body, and only when we commit ourselves to each other as well as to Him will we begin to know many of the things that He has for us.

2:24-30

V. 27 *“Astrologers”* – a new term – those who consider the heavens and make predictions according to the movements of the heavenly bodies. The word is followed by reference to *the “God in heaven who reveals mysteries.”*

“Latter Days” It is important for the sake of proper interpretation to understand what is meant by the term. It is safe to say that it means those days that are referred to in the dream given to the king. As we will see the dream relates to the period from the Babylonian Empire through to the setting up of a Kingdom by the

God of heaven. We could simply read – *“What will be from here on.”* The term then includes much of what we now regard as history. It does not refer exclusively to days which are yet to come from our perspective.

V. 25 Arioch is not backward in capitalizing on the event. His attitude is in contrast to that of Daniel who acknowledges that God is solely responsible for the revelation. V. 30. He is not backward however, in pointing out deficiencies of the Babylonian experts

V. 27. Obviously this didn't win him many friends but it did highlight that his God alone is the revealer of mysteries. We can learn from Daniel how to handle the exceptional experience that God sometimes gives.

Israel was called to be a priestly nation and proclaim the name of God among the nations. Because of their disobedience in one sense they failed miserably. Yet of course by His dealings with them God has still revealed Himself for the nations to see. In Daniel we catch a glimpse of what might have been if all of His people had obeyed Him. We catch a glimpse of what might be if we obey Him.

2:31-35

The dream is told. The king saw a great image. Not an idol but a statue with a human form. It was immense. Its very size and brilliance was overwhelming. The head was of gold. The arms and breast silver, the thighs bronze, legs iron and feet were of iron and clay (the word is used of glazed china). A stone cut by no human hand smote the image and destroyed it. The stone became a great mountain that filled the earth.

It is interesting to note even at this stage a prophetic madness descends upon the commentators and speculation begins with regards to weights and specific gravities of the various metals mentioned? ? ?

THE HEAD OF GOLD

2:36-38

The king is addressed by his correct title, king of kings and yet Daniel does not hesitate to point out the kingdom is his only because God has given it to him. See Jer. 27:5-8. Romans 13

insists that every authority is of God. Even the beasts are subject to His rule, Genesis 1:28f. We will tell? Daniel and friends? Daniel and God? The head of gold represents Nebuchadnezzar– We will see as we continue that reference to a king usually implies his kingdom. King and kingdom are inseparable.

“CHEST AND ARMS OF SILVER BELLY AND THIGHS OF BRONZE” V. 39 Nebuchadnezzar’s kingdom is to come to an end. It will be succeeded by an inferior kingdom, and this will be followed by yet another and this third kingdom will rule over *“all the earth.”* Critics attack this verse, claiming that historically the kingdoms that followed Babylon were more extensive than that of Babylon. Obviously inferior does not refer to size because of the comment regarding the third kingdom. The following kingdoms lacked the central and fine organization which characterized the Babylonian Reign. The visions of Chapter seven may further add to our understanding of the comment.

“LEGS OF IRON AND FEET OF IRON AND CLAY”

V. 40–43 More detailed explanation is given at this point of Iron section of the image. We notice that Daniel interprets as he proceeds.

V. 40 Iron symbolizes strength and the fourth kingdom is one of great strength– It breaks and shatters and crushes all that went before it.

V. 41 Strong though it is yet there is a weakness and it shall be divided. The division is indicated according to Daniel not by the two legs, but by the two ingredients of the feet and toes. Iron and potter’s clay.

Vs. 42–43 It is important to read these two verses correctly.

V. 42 The toes of the feet were partly iron and partly clay. Indicating that the kingdom will be partly strong and partly brittle. The toes then are part of this fourth kingdom as seen by Nebuchadnezzar.

V. 43 *“As you saw the iron mixed with miry clay, they shall be mixed with the seed of men.” RSV has “So they will mix with one another in marriage.”*

The phrase *“Seed of men,”* is a problem but the important thing to note is that it is the iron and clay that are mixed and not the toes of the previous verse. While they are mixed ‘by the seed of men’ yet they will not hold together even as iron and clay do not mix.

THE STONE

Vs. 44–45 A fifth kingdom is yet to arise. Not part this time of the dream image but a kingdom represented by the stone that was cut without hands. (Extra details are here added. The stone was cut from a mountain). – The God of heaven Himself will set up this kingdom. It will not be the work of man (without hands). It will contrast with the other kingdoms mentioned in that it shall never be destroyed. It shall stand forever and its sovereignty shall not be left to another people. This same kingdom will break in pieces all that precede it. *“A great God”* has thus made known to Nebuchadnezzar what shall be hereafter.

THE MEANING OF THE DREAM, ITS INTERPRETATION AND ITS PURPOSE.

2:36–45

V. 30 Indicates that the dream and its interpretation are made known so that Nebuchadnezzar may know the thoughts of his mind. God graciously favoured him with a view of things as they really are. This is part of God’s dealings with the king as we will see, to bring him to acknowledge the Sovereignty of God and bless and praise the Most High, 5:34f.

He is given to understand clearly that his kingdom, while majestic and more magnificent than others, is of limited duration. Three other kingdoms will follow his. They will each differ in their characteristics and yet are together all part of the one immense structure. The Most High will Himself set up a kingdom that is unlike those of the dream image. It will in fact bring about the destruction of those kingdoms and then endure forever.

The dream must have been a tremendous encouragement

to the young men and to all the exiles if it were widely known. If for a moment they believed the Babylonian propaganda that Marduck had conquered YHWH, now they would be reassured. Their God was Sovereign and in control. This same message applies today to the people of God everywhere and is especially relevant those in oppressed and troubled situations. We are to understand that the upheavals of human history and the collapse of Empires is due ultimately to the Kingdom of God which pushes in upon our world with powerful and even devastating effects.

The prophecies of both Daniel and Revelation are first of all to encourage the people of God, in exile or suffering persecution. They are given to assure that no situation is out of God's control and ultimately He will quell the rebellion, and make an end of man's sin, gather His people to Himself in love that they might obey Him and enjoy Him forever.

INTERPRETING THE INTERPRETATION

Prophecy is never presented merely to satisfy the idle curiosity as to what might be, or to promote undue speculation which can detract from getting on with life and what God has for us to be about. Yet if there is a prophetic word being worked out in our day it is given for our edification and ought not to be neglected.

To open the commentaries at this point is to be confronted with a veritable barrage of speculation. Because the dream relates to history, future from Daniel's view point and some at least past from our viewpoint, some elements can be discerned as having been fulfilled.

2:36–38

All agree the first kingdom is Babylon.

2:39–40

Conservative Scholars and the Church traditionally have interpreted the second kingdom as that of the Medes and Persians. The third as Greece and the fourth as Rome.

Liberal Scholars see Greece as the fourth kingdom – the

third then as the Persian and the second as the Median kingdom. The assumption is that the book is of the second Century B.C. and is history and not prophecy. Rome could not have been intended as it did not exist. Greece must then be intended seeing that the writer at that time having suffered under Antiochus was expecting the Kingdom of God to then be ushered in (he was mistaken). This means that the writer must have seen the Medo–Persian Empire not as one but as two. His historical facts were incorrect, (another evidence of a late date.) Such an interpretation hardly needs comment if we accept prophecy as genuine. A cursory reading of the book shows that the author was by no means confused with regard to the Medo–Persian Empire 5:28. The mention of Darius the Mede 6:1–9:1, tended to support the idea but if Darius is seen to be Cyrus, as Wiseman suggests then the argument is invalid.

The Jews hold a conservative position with regards to the first three, but then see the fourth as the Turkish Empire. By this they avoid the Christian claim that the kingdom was established by Jesus in the days of Rome.

2:41–42

Opinions differ widely. Many see the two legs as representing the division of Rome into East and West in A.D. 364, the Liberals, the Greek kingdom between the Ptolemies and Seleucids.

Note the earlier exegesis. The iron and the clay represent the division. Daniel does not draw attention to the fact that there are two legs. Many who hold such an opinion then go on to see the kingdom further divided into 10 toes representing 10 kings. Again we note that this is to go far beyond the interpretation given by Daniel in Chapter two. In fact it is to import elements of a later vision into this one (Chapter 7). Nothing is made of the toes and in fact ten is not mentioned. If we place emphasis on 10 toes then why not on fingers etc., (some undoubtedly do so). We are not at liberty to go beyond the interpretation given by the writer in interpreting symbols.

Many Pre-Millennialists go yet further—Wood for example mistranslates the “And” of V.42 as “Indeed,” and then proceeds to introduce a long time gap between *Vs. 41 and 42*, claiming that the Roman Empire will fall but then rise again at the end time and be reconstituted with ten kings represented by the toes. He errs at three points. 1. Mistranslates. 2. Reads Chapter 7 into Chapter 2. 3. Interprets the passage to conform to his own preconceived ideas. It may well be the case that the Roman Empire will be reconstituted but Daniel certainly does not say that in Chapter 2. If the Bible teaches this we will have to find it elsewhere. Similar fanciful interpretations are multitudinous.

2:43

“By the seed of men—”

1. Intermixing in marriage.
2. Democracy/Monarchy.
3. Democracy/Dictatorship.
4. All the national elements contained in the first three.
5. Have a guess?

2:44–45

The Stone points to a new feature in history. It represents a new power and is not under men’s control. It is agreed that this represents the Messianic Kingdom. The differences here revolve around the words “in the days of those *kings the God of heaven will set up a Kingdom*”

A-Millennialist generally see this as referring to the kings of the kingdoms mentioned above. (Note no kings apart from Nebuchadnezzar have in fact been mentioned only kingdoms). Hence see it as a reference to the Coming of Jesus and the institution of the Spiritual Kingdom of Christ.

Pre-Millennialist generally see V.44 as a reference to the Millennial reign and connect the stone shattering the image with Revelation 19:11–20 Christ smiting the nations with the rod of iron. “*These kings*” then refer to ten kings who appear at the end of time. Points for and against are many and the argument endless.

2:46–49

V. 46 “Homage” The word implies an act of worship. Josephus tells of Alexander the Great bowing before the Jewish High Priest. A General questioned his actions saying, ‘*Men bow to you, why do you bow to a priest.*’ Alexander replied, “*It was not before him that I prostrated myself, but the God of whom he has the honour to be High Priest.*”³ Nebuchadnezzar’s actions and intent may have been similar.

V. 47 The king uttered some impressive words. He was undoubtedly deeply moved by the whole experience. The implication of the dream is that there is only one true God. Nebuchadnezzar acknowledges that He is the God of gods but not the only God. He demands to be acknowledged as God alone. It is not sufficient to reach out to Him while still holding on to idols. Nebuchadnezzar was not ready yet to face the implications of the revelation.

2:48–49

Daniel and his friends were duly exalted in the kingdom. Here again we see God providing and caring for His people. The exiles were given good farming areas to live in, built their own homes, had freedom of movement about the city. Had their own Elders and form of Government and worshipped freely. During the exile the synagogue type of worship came into existence.

AMAZING FACTS

2. Countdown to Eternity

How long can the world go on like this? Is something big about to happen?

Matthew 24:3

The disciples ask Jesus Christ about the signs for the last days.

Matthew 24:15

Jesus directs our attention to the book of Daniel in order to understand where we are in the stream of time.

Daniel 1:1-8

The book of Daniel begins with Daniel and his three faithful friends demonstrating their faithfulness to the true God. Thus God honored them highly. The theme of the book of Daniel is about true worship vs. false worship, loyalty to God vs. loyalty to man.

Isaiah 46:9, 10

Only God can declare the “end from the beginning” and therefore accurately tell the future.

Amos 3:7

God reveals His secrets to His servants the prophets.

READ ALL OF DANIEL 2

Verse 1

King Nebuchadnezzar had a dream he couldn't remember.

Verse 19

God revealed to His prophet Daniel the dream.

Verses 28, 29

The dream would show what would happen in the latter days of earth's history.

In approximately 150 words, God outlines over 2,500 years of earth's history.

Verses 31-36

Four metals: gold, silver, brass, and iron representing four kingdoms.

Verse 38

Head of gold represents **Babylon**.

Daniel 5:28, 30, 31

Chest and arms of silver represent **Medo-Persia**.

Daniel 8:1-8, 20, 21

Belly and thighs of brass represent **Greece**.

Daniel 2:40, Luke 2:1

Legs of iron represent **Rome**.

Verses 41, 42

The fourth kingdom (Rome) would divide into many parts like the feet and the toes on the image and some parts would be strong, others weak.

“The images of gold, or silver, or bronze that might serve to represent the nations and their kings were successively broken by the iron monarchy of Rome.” —Sir Edward Gibbon, The Rise and Fall of the Roman Empire



This dividing of Rome took place between 351-476 A.D. The most recognized and basic divisions of the Roman empire were: Alemanni (German); Visigoths (Spain); Franks (France); Suevi (Portugal); Burgundians (Swiss); Anglo Saxon (English) Lombards (Italy); Heruli (destroyed in 493 A.D.); Vandals (destroyed in 534); Ostrogoths (destroyed in 538).

Verse 43

“They shall not cleave one to another.” Here God predicts that throughout history the ten kingdoms of Europe will never again be brought back together as one nation. Many kings and rulers have tried and failed, proving God right!

Verses 44, 45

In the days of these kings, God will set up His kingdom. The great rock that smashed the image and turned it to powder represents the coming of Christ which will bring the end of all earthly kingdoms and governments, and the setting up of God's eternal kingdom. See also Matthew 21:42-44.

Revelation 21:1-5

A picture of the new heavenly kingdom.

Revelation 22:7, 12, 20

God is sending a message that His coming will be very soon. We must prepare to meet Him today.

THREE THINGS WE LEARN FROM DANIEL 2

1. The Bible can be trusted.
2. Jesus' coming is near.
3. God is in control of everything and can take care of us.

PEACE Bible studies –

STUDY: Daniel 2 – Kingdoms of the world (DAN)

Purpose of study: To show that prophecy in the Bible is true and that God has shown in prophecy the rise and fall of kingdoms.

Central theme of study: Prophecy is to make us believe in Him who knows the end from the beginning. God won't do anything unless He has already shown us.

1 – Can we understand Prophecy?

2 Peter 1:19-20

- We are called to take heed of the prophecies.
- It's a light shining in a dark place.
- No prophecy is of private interpretation...

2 – What is the purpose of prophecy?

John 14:29

- To cause us to believe
- Prophecy is the foretelling of what is to take place before it does with certainty.

3 – Is there a prophecy which has foretold what would take place before it has happened?

Daniel 2:1

- Nebuchadnezzar has dreams and this troubled him.

4 – What was the dream to reveal?

Daniel 2:29

- What is going to happen AFTER.

5 – Did Nebuchadnezzar understand his dream?

Daniel 2:2-11

- Nebuchadnezzar didn't understand the dream and wanted to know the interpretation.
- He called for 4 groups of people, Magicians, Astrologers, Sorcerers, Chaldeans.
- If they couldn't give the interpretation Nebuchadnezzar would kill them via a death decree.
- Even the 'Wise-men' admitted only the 'gods whose dwelling is not with flesh could interpret the dream.

6 – Obviously it was impossible for them to interpret the dream, did he start the death decree?

Daniel 2:13

- The death decree began.

7 – Even Daniel was going to be killed, how did Daniel deal with the situation?

Daniel 2:14-19

- Daniel spoke to Arioch the king's captain with counsel and wisdom.
- Desired to have some time.
- Spoke to his companions about the situation.
- They all prayed and sought God.

8 – What was the outcome of praying for the interpretation?

Daniel 2:19-23

- The secret was revealed to Daniel.
- He blessed the name of God.
- God can change time, kings and is the revealer of wisdom and deep and secret things.
- Light dwells with God. (2 Peter 1:19-20)
- God answered Daniel's prayer. We are to A.S.K. – Ask – Seek – Knock

9 – What was the dream about?

Daniel 2:28

- It was revealing what was to happen in the latter days.

10 – The big question... What was the dream?

Daniel 2:31-35

- Great Image.
- Head of gold.
- Chest and arms of silver.
- Belly and thighs of brass.
- Legs of iron.
- Feet part of iron and part of clay.
- Stone smashed the image and became a great mountain and filled the Earth

11 – What did these represent?

Daniel 2:36-45

- These represented kingdoms.
- **Gold – Babylon – 605-539 B.C.**
- **Silver – Medes & Persians – 539-331 B.C. (Daniel 5:31)**
- **Brass – Greece – 331-168 B.C. Alexander the great**
- **Iron – Rome – 168-476 A.D. (Luke 2:1-4)**
 - o The historian Gibbon says: “The arms of the republic, sometimes vanquished in battle, always victorious in war, advanced with rapid steps to the Euphrates, the Danube, the Rhine, and Ocean; and the images of gold, or silver, or brass, that might serve to represent the nations and their kings, were successively broken by the IRON monarchy of rome” – Edward Gibbon, Decline and fall, Vol 3, p. 161.
- **Feet of clay and iron – 476 A.D. – Present.** Rome was divided from within and Europe today still remains divided.

12 – What did the stone represent?

Daniel 2:44-45

- In the days of these kings... In the present time that we are living in God Himself is going to set up His kingdom which shall never pass away.

13 – What must take place before Christ' Kingdom is set up?

Matthew 24:14

- Gospel must be preached to the whole world.

- APPEAL -

14 – Do you want to be prepared for Christ' kingdom if so how?

Titus 2:11-14

- Accept the grace of God.
- Live a right life.
- Look for His soon appearing.
- Be zealously spreading the Gospel.

NOTES ON DANIEL

potentate-dearer than life itself. He determined to stand firm in his integrity, let the result be what it might.”

- Prophets and Kings, Page 483: 1.

4. Write brief extracts in your note-book from the references in “Prophets and Kings.”

5. Make notes on the topics for Further Study, and bring to class.

6. Read the comments of Uriah Smith on the lesson scripture from “Daniel and the Revelation.”

15. GOD’S CHALLENGE AND BABYLON’S FAILURE

(Daniel 2:1-30)

The King’s Trouble. Verse 1.

Time of the Vision-The 2nd year of Nebuchadnezzar.

Nebuchadnezzar reigned 2 years conjointly with his father, Nabopolassar. The Jews reckoned from the time of his accession with his father; the Chaldeans from his sole reign. See SDA Source Book, Page 54 (Birks); Daniel And Revelation, Page 32. Thus we have as follows:

Nebuchadnezzar reigning con- 606 BC. Daniel’s 3 years of

jointly with Nabopolassar 605 BC. preparation.

1st year as sole monarch 604 BC.

2nd year of Nebuchadnezzar 603 BC. The vision of Chapter 2.

The Religion of Babylon Tested. Verses 2-9.

1. The record of Daniel gives us the history of the struggle between truth and error in Babylon. The religion of Babylon was Satan’s masterpiece of deception. It was God’s design through His witnesses to reveal the falsity of its claims that the honest in heart might be brought into the light of truth and serve Him. We shall miss the vital feature in our study of the book, if we fail to recognize the controversy between good and evil, or between Christ and Satan.

2. The wise men of Babylon were the representatives of her religion. The magicians practiced magic, fortune-telling, etc.; the astrologers foretold the future by studying the stars; the sorcerers professed to hold communications with the dead, and the Chaldeans were a sect of philosophers.

3. The test. The ability to tell what the king had dreamed. V. 9 (last. part).

The Failure of the Wise Men. Verses 10-13.

1. The wise men confess their failure.

2. Verse 11 gives the reason for the failure: Babylon’s gods did not dwell in human flesh. Babylon’s religion knew nothing of a union of divinity and humanity.

3. The failure of the wise men was Satan’s failure. Why?

4. Daniel and his companions in peril.

God’s Interposition. Verses 14-23.

Verses 14-16. Daniel accepts the challenge.

Verse 17, 19 The source of Daniel’s strength.

Verse 20-22. Daniel’s praise to God.

Daniel Before the King. Verses 24-30.

Verse 24. Chaldeans saved through Daniel.

Verse 25. Arioch seeks for praise.

Verse 26. The king’s question.

Verse 27-30. Daniel reveals God as the great revealer of secrets.

For Further Study

1. What is Jehovah’s challenge to false gods? Isaiah 41: 21-23, 26; 44: 7, 8.

2. Was Nebuchadnezzar’s demand unreasonable? Daniel And Revelation, Page 34, 35.

3. The separation of the human and the divine in modern Babylon. SDA Hand Book, Page 256-258.

NOTES ON DANIEL

Questions on the Lesson

1. When was the vision of Daniel 2 given?
2. How could it be given in the second year of Nebuchadnezzar, when, according to chapter 1, Daniel was still in training?
3. To whom did Nebuchadnezzar appeal for help to reveal the dream?
4. Who were the real forces contending in Babylon?
5. What deficiency did the representatives of Babylon's religion admit in their religion?
6. When Satan was defeated on the first test, what did he seek to do?
7. Where did Daniel go for this dream?
8. How did he bless the God of heaven?
9. When brought before the king, what did Nebuchadnezzar say?

The Lesson Assigned

1. In studying the outline as given in the notes, be sure to read carefully all the Scripture and other references.
2. Read from Daniel And Revelation, Page on Daniel 2:1-30.
3. Memorize Daniel 2: 20-22.

16. THE DREAM AND ITS INTERPRETATION

(Daniel 2:24-49)

The Purpose of the Dream. Verses 28, 29.

1. "Makes known ... what shall be in the latter days." The primary object of the prophecy is to point out the events of the last days when Christ will set up His kingdom.
2. "What should come to pass hereafter." The events from Daniel's time to the latter days are embraced.

The Dream. Verses 31-35.

"A great image." Being an idolater, this would appeal to Nebuchadnezzar.

The Interpretation. Verses 37, 38.

"Thou art this head of gold." Nebuchadnezzar was to recognize that he owed all his kingdom and glory to the God of heaven.

BABYLON	Verse 37, 38.	A universal kingdom. A golden kingdom.
MEDO-PERSIA	Verse 39.	A silver kingdom. Inferior to Babylon.
GRECIA	Verse 39.	A brass kingdom.
ROME	Verse 40.	An iron kingdom. Denoted for its strength.
ROME DIVIDED	Verse 41-43.	An iron-clay kingdom. Partly strong and partly broken.
CHRIST'S KINGDOM	Verse 44, 45.	The climax of the prophecy. 1. Set up "in the days of these kings." 2. An everlasting kingdom. 3. All earthly kingdoms pass away from before it.

Daniel's Promotion. Verses 46-49.

Verse 46. King offers Daniel worship.
Verse 47. The king acknowledges God as the great revealer of secrets.
Verse 48, 49. Daniel promoted to Prime Minister.
Made a great man in riches and power.

NOTES ON DANIEL

Verse 49. Daniel remembers his friends.

THE FULFILMENT OF THE VISION

Babylon. 606 B.C-538 BC.

1. Description:

The golden kingdom.

Isaiah 14: 4.

“The glory of kingdoms.”

Isaiah 13: 19.

“The beauty of the Chaldees’ excellency.”

Isaiah 13: 19.

“The lady of kingdoms.”

Isaiah 47: 5.

“A city of merchants,” “A land of traffic.”

Ezekiel 17: 4.

2. History: Daniel And Revelation, Page 45, 46; SDA Source Book, Page 47; “Great Empires of Prophecy,” chapter 1, paragraph 1-3, 60, 61; chapter 11, par. 1-11.

3. Nebuchadnezzar: SDA Source Book, Page 55.

4. The City: Daniel And Revelation, Page 47, 48; SDA Source Book, Page 48-51.

5. Destruction: Isaiah 13: 19-22; 14: 23; SDA Source Book, Page 64, 65. Babylon fell 538 BC.

Medo-Persia. 538 B.C-331 BC.

1. Description: Inferior to Babylon. Daniel 2: 39; Daniel And Revelation, Page 56.

2. History: Daniel And Revelation, Page 56-61; SDA Source Book, Page 324, 325. Overthrown at Battle of Arbela, 331 BC.

Greece. 331 BC-308 BC.

“With Alexander the new Greece begins.”-Harrison, SDA Source Book, Page 203.

1. History: Brief sketch of history. SDA Source Book, Page 202, 203 (Goodspeed). Character of Alexander. Daniel And Revelation, Page 59. Sovereignty passes to Romans at Battle of Pydna, 168 BC.

Rome. 168 BC AD 476.

1. Description: The iron kingdom. Daniel 2: 40. SDA Source Book, Page 460 (Wright); 460, 462 (Gibbon).

2. Rome Divided: (a) “The kingdom shall be divided.” Verse 41. (b) “The kingdom shall be partly strong and partly broken.” Verse 42. (c) “They shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another.” Verse 43. Rome united: 168 B.C-AD 476. 3 5 1. Period of disintegration: AD 351-476.

3. Key Divisions: Alemanni, Ostrogoths, Visigoths, Franks, Vandals, Suevi, Burgundians, Herpli, Anglo-Saxons, Lombards. SDA Source Book, Page 592, 593; 594-595 (Gibbon).

4. Efforts to Unite: Charlemagne, Charles V, Louis XIV, Napoleon, Wilhelm II, Hitler. Leagues, alliances, etc., of today. Intermarriage. Verse 43.

Kingdom of God-The Climax of the Prophecy.

Characteristics:

1. Successive-not contemporaneous with the ten.

2. Everlasting-not to be succeeded. Verse 44.

3. Established by force. Verse 44; Psalm 2:7-9.

4. Established by divine power. Verse 45.

For Further Study

1. The kings of Babylon from 606 B.C-538 BC.

2. The wonders of Babylon. SDA Source Book, Page 50, 51.

3. Babylon’s civilization. SDA Source Book, Page 53, 55.

4. The ten kingdoms. SDA Source Book, Page 594-596; Daniel And Revelation, Page 785, 78, 79.

5. Present-day efforts to unite Europe. Consult library references.

6. Do the ten toes represent the ten kingdoms?

Questions on the Lesson

1. What was the primary object of the dream given to Nebuchadnezzar?

2. From what point does the revelation commence?

3. When interpreting the head of gold as representing Babylon, what truth did Daniel endeavor to impress

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on Nebuchadnezzar?

4. What is said of the kingdom of silver?
5. What particularly would the fourth kingdom be noted for?
6. What change was to occur in the fourth kingdom?
7. What would the divided kingdom fail to do?
8. Explain the vision of the Stone. What did it represent? How does it differ from the other kingdoms?
9. Who founded Babylon, and when?
10. How does Scripture describe Babylon?
11. What period of Babylon's history was her golden era?
12. Give an estimation of Nebuchadnezzar as a king.
13. What prophecy did Isaiah make concerning the city of Babylon? How was it fulfilled?
14. In what respect was Medo-Persia inferior to Babylon?
15. Why are the following battles important: Arbela, Pydna? When were they fought?
16. How does Gibbon describe the Roman Empire?
17. Which is the period of disintegration of the Roman Empire?
18. When did Western Rome fall? Name the ten kingdoms at that time. Why not include the Huns?
19. How would the ten kingdoms try to unite?
20. Name some men who tried to unite Western Europe into one kingdom.
21. What are the four leading characteristics of the kingdom of God?
22. What shows that the dream as outlined by Daniel was the dream of the king?
23. Show from Scripture that Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome are the four great world powers alluded to. Daniel 2: 38; 5: 30, 31; 8:20,21; Luke 2: 1,2.
24. What shows that the head of gold refers to the kingdom of Babylon, and not merely to Nebuchadnezzar?
25. What important event took place under the Persians? Ezra 1:1-3.
26. Whose do the kingdoms of this world finally become? Revelation 11:15.
27. When will Christ's kingdom be set up? Who will be its subjects? Matthew 25:31-41.
28. How does the vision of Daniel 2 disprove the doctrine of (a) a secret rapture? (b) a temporal millennium?
29. Give your reasons against the theory that the fifth universal kingdom was set up at the first advent. Daniel And Revelation, Page 75, 76.
30. Do the two legs of the image represent Eastern and Western Rome? Give reasons. Daniel And Revelation, Page 68-70.
31. What are the terms of admittance to the kingdom of God? Galatians 3: 29.
32. How many nations occupy the territory of Rome today? Name them.

The Lesson Assigned

A

1. The lesson is arranged in two divisions: the first part deals with the dream and its interpretation as set forth in the Scripture; the second part deals with the fulfillment of the vision as we are privileged to view it in the light of history.
2. Get the scripture clearly in mind before dealing with its fulfillment. Study this lesson, as also all your lessons, with the open Bible before you.
3. Memorize the dates which mark the periods of supremacy of the four great empires, and be able to give the event for each date. Add these dates to your list in your note-book.
4. Note-book work: Read all the references given in the lesson on the fulfillment of the vision, making brief notes on each as you do so, and arranging your notes under the proper headings (e.g., Description, History, etc.). Always give the reference as to the source of your information in your note-book work.
5. Study in this assignment down to, and including, the kingdom of MedoPersia.

B

1. Continue, as above, from Greece to the close of the lesson.
2. Draw maps to show the four world empires of Daniel 2.
3. Read from "Daniel and Revelation" (Smith), on the lesson.

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C

1. Make brief notes on the items for Further Study, and be prepared to present your findings to the class.
2. Your preparedness and presentation will count as a part of your class work.
3. Draw a map to show the original ten kingdoms. Continue reading from Daniel And Revelation.

D

1. Go through all the Questions on the Lesson.
2. Draw a map to show the nations which today occupy the territory of Western Rome.

17. GOD REVEALED AS THE MIGHTY DELIVERER

(Daniel 3)

Nebuchadnezzar's Image. Verses 1-3.

An image all of gold. In the vision of Daniel 2, the golden kingdom was succeeded by another kingdom. It now appears that Nebuchadnezzar would show that there would be no such succession. The golden kingdom, he purposed, would remain for ever. Prophets and Kings, Page 503, 504: "For a time . . . Nebuchadnezzar was influenced by the fear of God; but his heart was not yet cleansed from worldly ambition and a desire for self-exaltation. The prosperity attending his reign filled him with pride. In time he ceased to honor God, and resumed his idol worship with increased zeal and bigotry." Dimensions of the image: go feet high, 9 feet wide. The chief men of the kingdom were gathered for the occasion.

The Command to Worship. Verses 4-12.

The worshipping of the image was Satan's plan to keep Babylon from the worship of the true God. Not only does Satan blind men with a false worship, but he seeks to blot out the witness of all who would oppose it. God was depending upon His three representatives to uphold the honor of His name on this occasion.

Before the King. Verses 13-18.

Verse 14. Nebuchadnezzar's pride: "My gods."

Verse 15. Nebuchadnezzar's challenge: "Who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands?"

Verse 17, 19. The courageous answer of God's witnesses: There was a God who could deliver even from the hand of Nebuchadnezzar.

Cast into the Fiery Furnace. Verses 19-27.

Verse 19. The madness of the persecutor.

Verse 20-23. The king's officers slain.

Verse 24, 25. Christ delivers.

Verse 26. The king's acknowledgment: "You servants of the most high God."

Verse 27. A wonderful deliverance.

The King's Acknowledgment and Decree. Verses 28-30.

1. The God of the Hebrews is able to deliver.
2. He can change the king's word.
3. "There is no other god that can deliver after this sort."

For Further Study

1. Was it right for the Hebrew children to disobey the king? Why?
2. How did Nebuchadnezzar know the Son of God? Prophets and Kings, Page 509.
3. Is it ever right to persecute? "The Rights of Man" (Colcord), 97; Galatians 4: 29.
4. Where was Daniel at the time of this event?
5. What lesson may we learn from this experience? Prophets and Kings, Page 510-513.
6. Note the similarities between the experience of God's people in Babylon, as brought to view in Daniel 3, and the experience of God's people in the last days, as recorded in Revelation 13.

3. OF THE VISION OF THE IMAGE COMPOSED OF FOUR METALS.

THE Prophecies of Daniel are all of them related to one another, as if they were but several parts of one general Prophecy, given at several times. The first is the easiest to be understood, and every following Prophecy adds something new to the former. The first was given in a dream to Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, in the second year of his reign; but the King forgetting his dream, it was given again to Daniel in a dream, and by him revealed to the King. And thereby, Daniel presently became famous for wisdom, and revealing of secrets: insomuch that Ezekiel his contemporary, in the nineteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar, spake thus of him to the King of Tyre: Behold, saith he, thou art wiser than Daniel, there is no secret that they can hide from thee, Ezekiel 28:3. And the same Ezekiel, in another place, joins Daniel with Noah and Job, as most high in the favor of God, Ezekiel 14:14, 16, 18, 20. And in the last year of Belshazzar, the Queen-mother said of him to the King:

Behold there is a man in thy kingdom, in whom is the spirit of the holy gods; and in the days of thy father, light and understanding and wisdom, like the wisdom of the gods, was found in him; whom the king Nebuchadnezzar thy father, the king, I say, thy father made master of the magicians, astrologers, Chaldeans and soothsayers: forasmuch as an excellent spirit, and knowledge, and understanding, interpreting of dreams, and shewing of hard sentences, and dissolving of doubts, were found in the same Daniel, whom the king named Belteshazzar, Daniel 5:11, 12.

Daniel was in the greatest credit amongst the Jews, till the reign of the Roman Emperor Hadrian: and to reject his Prophecies, is to reject the Christian religion. For this religion is founded upon his Prophecy concerning the Messiah.

Now in this vision of the Image composed of four Metals, the foundation of all Daniel's Prophecies is laid. It represents a body of four great nations, which should reign over the earth successively, viz. the people of Babylonia, the Persians, the Greeks, and the Romans. And by a stone cut out without hands, which fell upon the feet of the Image, and brake all the four Metals to pieces, and became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth; it further represents that a new kingdom should arise, after the four, and conquer all those nations, and grow very great, and last to the end of all ages.

The head of the Image was of gold, and signifies the nations of Babylonia, who reigned first, as Daniel himself interprets. Thou art this head of gold, saith he to Nebuchadnezzar. These nations reigned till Cyrus conquered Babylon, and within a few months after that conquest revolted to the Persians, and set them up above the Medes. The breast and arms of the Image were of silver, and represent the Persians who reigned next. The belly and thighs of the Image were of brass, and represent the Greeks, who, under the dominion of Alexander the great, conquered the Persians, and reigned next after them. The legs were of iron, and represent the Romans who reigned next after the Greeks, and began to conquer them in the eighth year of Antiochus Epiphanes. For in that year they conquered Perseus King of Macedon, the fundamental kingdom of the Greeks; and from thence forward grew into a mighty empire, and reigned with great power till the days of Theodosius the great. Then by the incursion of many northern nations, they brake into many smaller kingdoms, which are represented by the feet and toes of the Image, composed part of iron, and part of clay. For then, saith Daniel the kingdom shall be divided and there shall be in it of the strength of iron, but they shall not cleave one to another.

And in the days of these Kings, saith Daniel, shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; but it shall break in pieces, and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever. Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountains without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver and the gold.

the prophecies is not rooted in history, no one can be sure when they will take place. The method of interpretation espoused by this Prophecy Seminar, however, is consistent with the Biblical evidence. It sees the prophecies as beginning in Daniel's day but culminating in the end time. Thus the prophecies span the ages, rooted in history but focused on the future. This has been the most consistent interpretation of the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation by Jewish and Christian scholars from earliest times.

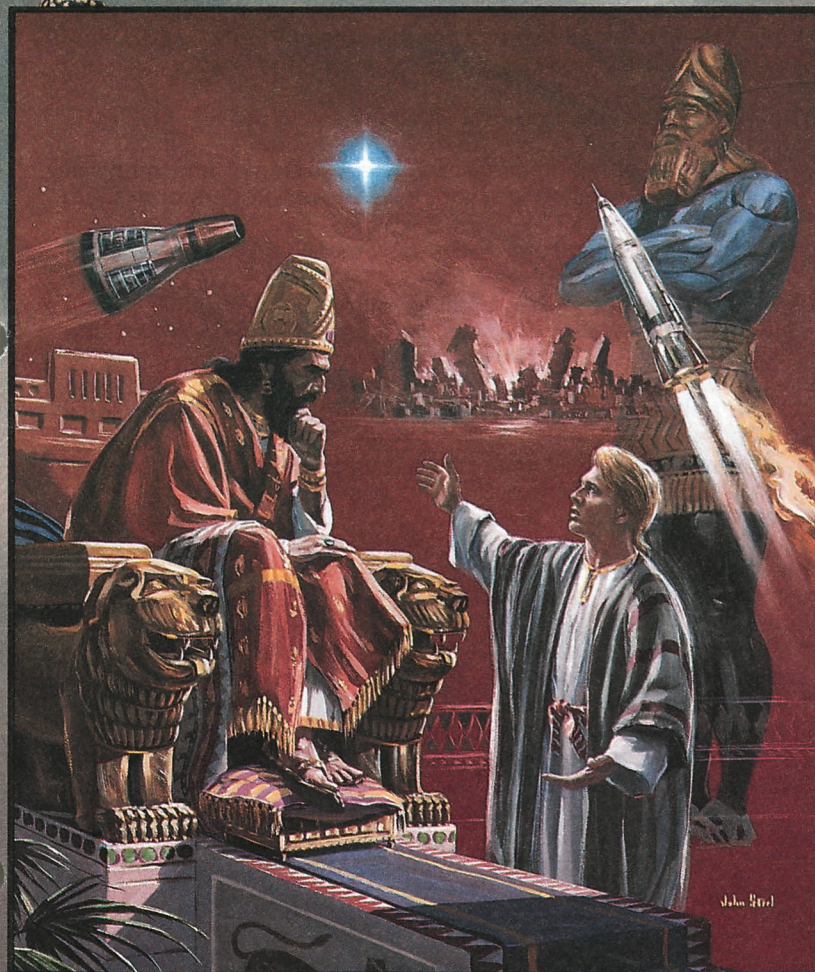
Lesson 2 will explore the exciting theme of the book of Daniel. Once the theme of the book is clear, we will begin our chapter study. Thrilling times are ahead of us as we unravel these fantastic prophecies and see how the various stories relate to the time of the end.

It is imperative to remember that the focal point of the book of Daniel is the time of the end — the end of the conflict between good and evil. It will be exciting for you to discover through your study that we today are indeed living in the time of the end foretold in the book of Daniel. What reassuring news for people everywhere who face the future with apprehension! And even more important, both **Daniel** and **Revelation** focus on Jesus Christ and reveal fantastic new amazing facts regarding Him and His plans for the future. It is our hope and prayer that you will get to know Him better in this Prophecy Seminar.

9. Is it your desire to know Jesus better through the study of the prophecies of the book of Daniel?

PS-01

PROPHECY SEMINAR



INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF DANIEL

INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF DANIEL

Does the possibility of nuclear annihilation frighten you? Are you fearful that the world is on a countdown to the Battle of Armageddon? Are we headed toward some cosmic conflict straight out of Star Wars? What does the future hold for our world? Have you attempted to understand the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation, but have been confused by all the symbolism of those prophecies? These and many other amazing questions will be answered through this Prophecy Seminar.

You are about to begin one of the most fascinating adventures of your life. What can you expect from this Daniel Prophecy Seminar? What will it do for you?

What the Prophecy Seminar Will Do For You:

1. You will understand the prophecies of Daniel and many of those in Revelation as you have never understood them before.
2. Your friends will be amazed at how much you will know about the books of Daniel and Revelation.
3. You will discover the amazing story of the cosmic drama unfolding between the forces of good and evil, and the ultimate triumph of Christ.
4. You will enhance your relationship with Jesus Christ as you get better acquainted with the One who delivers God's people.
5. You will find inner peace and security as you learn the truth that God is in control of world events.

Since the book of Revelation in the New Testament is the companion book to Daniel, we will be examining many similar prophecies in Revelation in order that we might better understand Daniel.

These two Bible books are most intriguing. They are full of prophetic symbols. For some, this symbolism has been a barrier to understanding the message of the books, but this need not be. The exciting news is that **YOU** can understand the books of Daniel and Revelation! As you proceed through this special Prophecy Seminar, you will discover the meaning of the various symbols. You will understand the prophecies of the book of Daniel as you have never before understood them. The book of Revelation will also come alive for you.

c. Water Rev. 17:15 (1819) [1231] _____

NOTE: This does not mean that every time these words appear in Scripture they have symbolic meaning, but rather only in the symbolic prophecies such as those found in Daniel and Revelation.

HOW TO INTERPRET DANIEL

There are four major prophecies in the book of Daniel: (1) Daniel 2; (2) Daniel 7; (3) Daniel 8 and 9; and (4) Daniel 10 through 12. Each of these prophecies covers the broad sweep of history from Daniel's day to the end time. The focal point of each prophecy is the end of time.

1. We will discover that Daniel 2 gives us the broad outline of human history from Daniel's day to our day.
2. Daniel 7 covers the same time period with different symbols, and elaborates on a certain period in the time of the end.
3. Daniel 8 and 9 also cover the same ground, but add further details on the time of the end.
4. Daniel 10 through 12 likewise go over the same ground and further expand our understanding of the end time.

The principle that Daniel uses is what is called "outline" prophecy, in which world history is outlined from Daniel's day to the end of time, and each subsequent prophecy elaborates on the end time. In employing this method Daniel made certain that he rooted the prophecies in history, so that as we see them unfold we can constantly see where we are living in the stream of history. This Prophecy Seminar attempts to utilize this principle of interpretation which is so clearly enunciated in the book of Daniel itself. In other words, we will discover that each of these major prophecies begins in Daniel's day, continues through history, and then focuses on the end time. Amazingly, we will discover that we today are living in Daniel's predicted time of the end.

The student should be aware that other interpretations are suggested for the book of Daniel. Some have erroneously dated the book of Daniel in the 2nd century B.C. and have interpreted the events in the book as occurring mainly in the Grecian Empire. They feel that all the prophecies of Daniel were fulfilled then and that the book of Daniel has little meaning for today. Others have gone to the opposite extreme and suggest that everything in the book of Daniel will yet take place in the future. Since this view of

prophecies predict. The stories reveal that what happened to Daniel and his friends in ancient Babylon are symbolic of the experiences of the people of God in the end time.

Always remember that the focal point of the book of Daniel is the time of the end — the end of the conflict between good and evil. In this seminar we will study the entire book chapter by chapter, including both the historical and prophetic sections. We shall study the historical section to discover the message there for the end time, and then we will discover how the prophetic sections have predicted those very conditions in the last days. What an exciting study awaits us in the book of Daniel!! In addition we will be studying the great key prophecies of the book of Revelation.

7. Is the study of prophecy important? 2 Peter 1:19 (1787) [1209]

_____, because “We have also a more _____ word of _____ whereunto ye do well that ye take _____ as unto a light that _____ in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day _____ arise in your hearts.”

NOTE: The Bible says prophecy is sure; we should heed it. Instead of studying Bible prophecy to provide hope today, many people are turning to the occult, to spirit mediums and witches in an endeavor to understand today’s chaotic world. The Bible asserts that real answers can be found only in prophecy. Prophecy is a light that illuminates our pathway, and the study of prophecy causes Christ (the Day Star) to find a place in our hearts. We pray that this study of Daniel and Revelation will provide Christ-centered illumination in your life.

SYMBOLS OF PROPHECY

Much of the books of both Daniel and Revelation is written in symbolic language. In order to correctly interpret the prophecies, one must understand the Biblical meaning of the symbols. Once the symbols are understood, the prophecies make sense.

8. Give the Biblical meaning of the following symbols:

- a. Beast Daniel 7:23 (1310) [888] _____
- b. Day Ezekiel 4:6 (1213) [822] _____

Three Basic Premises Control Our Study in This Prophecy Seminar:

1. The prophetic symbols in both Daniel and Revelation must be interpreted by the Bible itself. Private man-made interpretations have no validity whatsoever (2 Peter 1:20) (1787) [1209]. In order to understand the prophecies correctly, we must let the Bible explain them.
2. A correct comprehension of the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation will give us a clearer understanding of Jesus Christ. Prophecy can be understood correctly only as it centers in and uplifts Jesus Christ.
3. Both Daniel and Revelation have much to say about the time of the end. Thus the focus of our study will be on the preparation needed for the end time.

NOTE: Though this prophecy seminar embraces both Daniel and Revelation, special emphasis is given to the Book of Daniel — a much misunderstood book.

AUTHOR AND DATE

1. Who is the author of the book of Daniel? Daniel 12:4,5,9. (1320) [895]

NOTE: The testimony of the book is that it was written by the prophet Daniel. This is evident not only from the testimony of Scripture, as these verses indicate, but also by the fact that only a person who was intimately acquainted with Nebuchadnezzar’s Babylon could have written the details of history revealed in the book of Daniel.

2. Did Jesus recognize Daniel as the author of this book? Matthew 24:15 (1439) [976]

NOTE: Jesus told His followers to study Daniel’s prophecies and seek to understand them. According to Jesus, they can be understood. In this same statement Jesus recognized that Daniel spoke the words of the book of Daniel.

3. When was the book of Daniel written? Daniel 1:1 (1295) [878]

In the _____ year of the reign of Jehoiakim.

NOTE: Since the book was written by the prophet Daniel, it would have had to be written while the prophet lived, in the 6th century B.C. Daniel was taken captive to Babylon in 606 B.C. and lived on into the Medo-Persian reign, which began in 538 B.C. Hence, the book of Daniel must have been written sometime during those years.

PS-01

THE SETTING OF THE BOOK OF DANIEL

4. Who had conquered Jerusalem and taken Daniel captive to Babylon? Daniel 1:1 (1295) [878]

NOTE: Because of their disobedience to God the nations of Israel and Judah had been taken captive. Eventually the city of Jerusalem was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar, and most of the Jews were carried away to Babylon. The book of Daniel begins with Jerusalem being desolated by the heathen king Nebuchadnezzar and God's people being removed to a strange land. Our study will reveal that God can bring good out of every bad situation in which His people find themselves.

5. To what event does the book of Daniel point? Daniel 12:4,9,13. (1320) [895]

The _____ of the _____

NOTE: Even though the book of Daniel was written while God's people were captive in Babylon because of their sins, the focal point of the book is not the Jewish captivity but the time of the end. As we study Daniel we must ever keep in mind that everything is pointing to the end of the world. You will discover that this gives the book of Daniel tremendous meaning for us today.

6. What are the two parts to the book of Daniel?

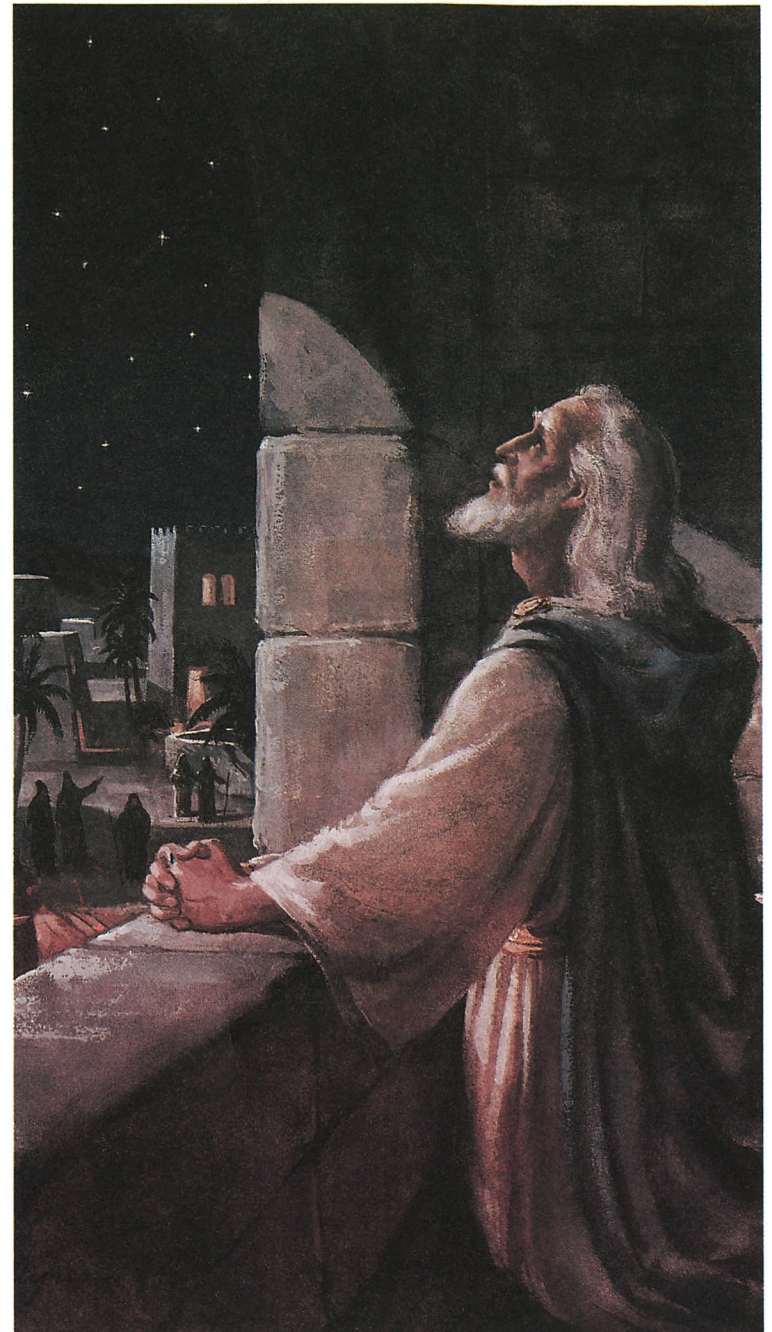
1. _____ 2. _____

NOTE: There are two basic sections to the book of Daniel:

1. The historical, found in the first half of the book, contains stories about Daniel's day.
2. The prophetic, found in the latter part of the book, contains prophecies pointing to the end time.

What the book of Daniel says about history provides a key that unlocks the meaning of history, while its prophetic section opens a window through which we see how the God of heaven is guiding the affairs of this world towards that great climactic event, the second coming of Christ.

Many people in their haste to quickly unravel the prophecies of Daniel have skipped the historical section and missed a lot of the meaning in the book. The stories of Daniel are not given simply as stories; rather they illustrate what the



HOPE IN A WORLD SPINNING OUT OF CONTROL

I. WORLD CONDITIONS

- A. Disasters
- B. Technological Advances
- C. Political Changes
- D. People's Desire for God

II. A MESSAGE OF HOPE FOR TROUBLED TIMES

- A. Bible Prophecy with its Symbols and Beasts
 - 1. Revelation means an "unveiling"
 - 2. Beasts - God's cartoon characters
 - 3. Revelation contains 2000 allusions to the Old Testament
 - 4. Biblical symbols
 - a. Beast - Daniel 7:23 - kingdom
 - b. Waters - Rev. 17:15 - people
 - c. Day - Ezekiel 4:6 - year
- B. The Prophecy of Revelation 13:10-18
 - 1. Unlocking the symbols in the passage
 - 2. Symbol of the United States of America as the world's only superpower at the end of time
 - 3. "The United States will possess even more global influence in the next century, becoming a nation without peer, enabling it to influence as never before economic and political events around the globe." Bob Whitesel, "Another American Century?" *Strategies for Today's Leaders*, Nov-Dec 1997.
- C. God's Special Message for the End Times. Rev. 14:6-12 - Message of the Three Angels
 - 1. The everlasting gospel in the setting of the judgment hour
 - 2. Gospel is consistent with judgment
 - 3. Why humanity needs this special message

- a. Genesis 1:27 - humanity created in God's image: physically, mentally, and spiritually
 - b. Genesis 3:1-6 - loss of the image of God
 - c. Matthew 4:1-10 - Jesus gained the victory physically, mentally, and spiritually in the wilderness temptation
4. First angel's message
 - a. Fear God - Prov. 1:7 - restores humanity mentally
 - b. Give glory to Him - 1 Cor. 6:19, 20 - restores humanity physically
 - c. Worship Him - restores humanity spiritually
 5. Second angel's message - Rev. 14:8
 - a. Fall of Babylon
 - b. Rejection of the everlasting gospel
 6. Third angel's message - Rev. 14:9, 10
 - a. Warning against mark of the beast
 - b. Issue of the last days will be over who will be worshiped
- D. The Result of the Proclamation of These Three Messages is the Production of the 144,000 - Rev. 14:1-5
1. Literal or symbolic
 2. People ready for Jesus to come
 3. Fully transparent before God
 4. They follow the Lamb wherever He goes



SEARCH FOR

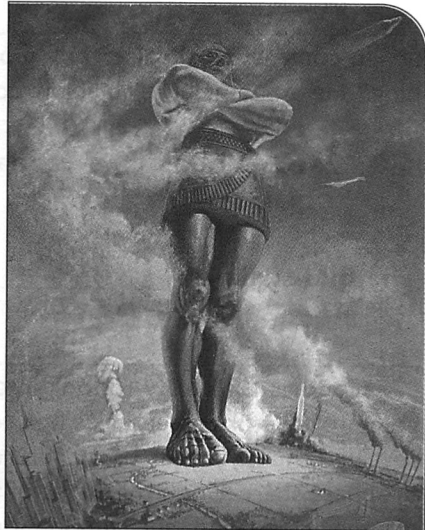
Certainty I

QR

Our Day in the Light of Bible Prophecy Certainty for the 21st Century

What does the future hold? Is anyone in charge? Can we look forward to the future with confidence? Is there anything we can count on? Our lesson today is on an ancient prophecy from the book of Daniel. The prophet Daniel's predictions have been amazingly accurate for the past 2,500 years. They speak with relevance to us today. They promise certainty for the twenty-first century. They reveal that God is really in control of history.

Throughout history the Bible has proven its accuracy in predicting the future. This study is an outline of world history from Daniel's time to our time today. Before we turn to the book of Daniel, let's discover a few things about Bible prophecy.



Throughout history the Bible has proven its accuracy in predicting the future.



? 1. How far-reaching is God's ability to reveal the future? Isaiah 46:9, 10

The Bible answer: _____

In contrast to all false gods, God knows "the end from the beginning." He alone has the ability to consistently reveal the future.

? 2. How does God reveal the future to His people? Amos 3:7

The Bible answer: _____

God has the ability to look into the future and foretell what is going to take place centuries before the events come to pass. He revealed the mysteries of the future to the Bible prophets. These Bible prophets share God's messages of the future with us. As we see these prophecies fulfilled, our faith in God increases. One of the Bible's most significant prophecies regarding the future is found in Daniel 2.

? 3. What unusual thing happened to Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon? Daniel 2:1, 3

The Bible answer: _____

Nebuchadnezzar had a dream of great significance, but when he woke up the next morning he couldn't remember it. He was greatly troubled.

? 4. Whom did the king ask to tell him his dream and the interpretation? Daniel 2:2, 3

The Bible answer: _____



Miraculously, God hid the dream from Nebuchadnezzar's mind. If the king could have remembered the dream, the psychics would have been able to make up a plausible interpretation. The wise men of Babylon utterly failed.

- ?** 5. When these men could not reveal the king's dream, what did Nebuchadnezzar do?
Daniel 2:12, 13

The Bible answer: _____

The angry king condemned all the wise men of Babylon to death when they could not tell him what he had dreamed. Daniel was a Hebrew captive in the king's court and educated in the University of Babylon. He too was considered one of Babylon's wise men.

- ?** 6. When they sought to kill him, what did Daniel do? Daniel 2:16-18

The Bible answer: _____

Daniel asked the king for time so he could pray to the God of heaven who reveals all secrets. He had confidence that God would solve the problem.

- ?** 7. After Daniel and his fellows sought God earnestly, how was the dream and its interpretation revealed to Daniel? Daniel 2:19

The Bible answer: _____



**8. Who did Daniel say was the only one who could make known the dream and its meaning?
Daniel 2:28**

The Bible answer: _____

Remember, the prophet Isaiah said that God is the only one who knows all things. The God of the universe is the only one who can reveal the future (Isaiah 46:9, 10).



**9. To what time period does the dream apply?
Daniel 2:28**

The Bible answer: _____

The book of Daniel especially reveals events in the last days of earth's history. The king's dream focuses on the end-times. It foretells events that occur at the close of this earth's history.



10. What did Daniel say King Nebuchadnezzar had seen in his dream? Daniel 2:31-35

The Bible answer: _____



**A. What do the different metals represent?
Daniel 2:38-40**

The Bible answer: _____

According to Daniel's interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream, each corresponding metal represents a kingdom that would rule the world. Beginning with Babylon, the prophet traces the destiny of the nations through the centuries.



? B. List the corresponding metals that make up the image. Daniel 2:32, 33

<i>Image</i>	<i>Metals</i>
Head	_____
Breast and Arms	_____
Belly and Thighs	_____
Legs	_____
Feet	_____

? IDENTIFYING THE KINGDOMS

A. Whom does the Bible identify as the head of gold? What kingdom does this head of gold represent? Daniel 2:38 (last part)

The Bible answer: _____

Gold is a fitting symbol for Babylon. Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom ruled the world from 605 B.C. to 539 B.C. A metal represents a king or kingdom. Babylon would not last forever. It would be overthrown by a second dominant world power.

? B. What metal follows gold? What kingdom would arise next? What nation conquered Babylon? Daniel 2:39; Daniel 5:28

The Bible answer: _____

The Medes and Persians overthrew the Babylonians in 539 B.C. Under the leadership of the Persian king, Cyrus, they ruled from 539 B.C. to 331 B.C. Each of these empires were dominant world powers which aggressively oppressed God's ancient people.

- ?** C. What metal follows silver? What kingdom would overthrow the Medes and Persians? Daniel 2:39; Daniel 8:20, 21

The Bible answer: _____

The nation of Greece overthrew the Medes and the Persians in 331 B.C. The prophet Daniel describes the Greeks in two ways. First, as bronze in the image of Daniel 2. The Greeks were known for their bronze-plated armor. Second, the prophet describes a fierce battle between a ram and a he-goat in chapter 8. He clearly identifies Greece as the goat that tramples down Media-Persia, the ram.

- ?** D. How is the fourth world dominant power described? Daniel 2:40

The Bible answer: _____

The Roman Empire conquered the Greeks in 168 B.C. The Romans ruled the world during the time of Christ. The ancient historian Edward Gibbon, in his *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, referred to “the iron monarchy of Rome” using the exact expression from the Bible.

- ?** 11. What significant events would occur next? Would a fifth world-ruling empire arise to overthrow Rome? Daniel 2:41

The Bible answer: _____

The prophet Daniel predicted that the Roman Empire would be divided. The breakup of the empire occurred from A.D. 351 to A.D. 476. Daniel continued, “But they will not adhere to one another” (verse 43, NKJV).* History has followed this prophecy like a blueprint. Dictators and rulers have attempted to unite Europe through the centuries, but have absolutely failed. The Roman Empire was divided. The divisions of



the empire into the eastern and western sections formed the foundation of the nations located in Europe today.

? **12. Would the nations of Europe ever be united into one cohesive, lasting, political nation again?**
Daniel 2:42, 43

The Bible answer: _____

Oppression of God's people does not last forever. Although the Roman Empire lasted longer than any prior empire—no small feat in and of itself—God saw that ultimately oppressive regimes would collapse. God's Word is clear. These seven prophetic words, "They shall not cleave one to another," have stopped every would-be conqueror of Europe through the centuries. Throughout history, political leaders such as Charlemagne, Charles V, Louis XIV, Napoleon, Hitler, and Stalin have attempted to dominate by uniting Europe. Each has desperately failed. Communism stretched its tentacles across Europe. One nation after another fell into its grasp. But Communism failed. The Berlin Wall came down. Freedom triumphed! Bible prophecy is accurate. The future is in God's hands. He can be safely trusted. He will safely guide us into the twenty-first century.

? **13. What will be the next event in history? Is there hope for the twenty-first century?**
Daniel 2:44, 45

The Bible answer: _____

The rock represents the coming kingdom of God. Soon all wickedness, evil, and rebellion will be gone forever. The forces of evil will be crushed, destroyed, and broken in pieces. God will establish His everlasting kingdom forever. You can face the future with confidence. The twenty-first century is bright with the promises of God. The future is in the hands of God. Hope is on the way.

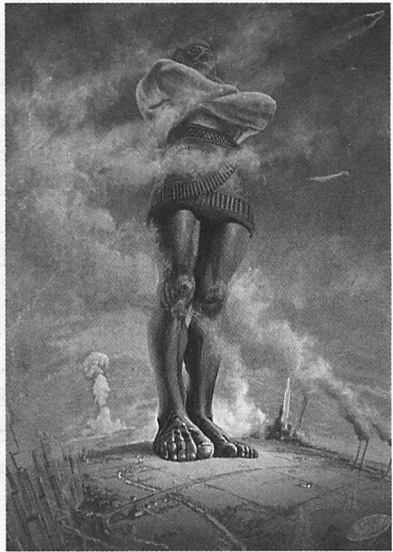


MY DECISION:

Lord Jesus, I choose to follow You in all things and be one of Your children. I want to be remembered when You come into Your kingdom.

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NOTES



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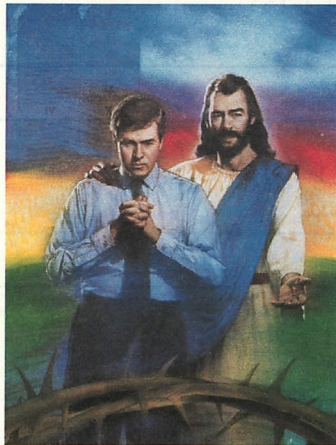
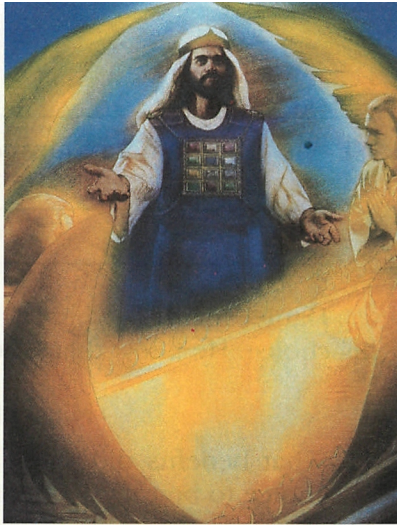
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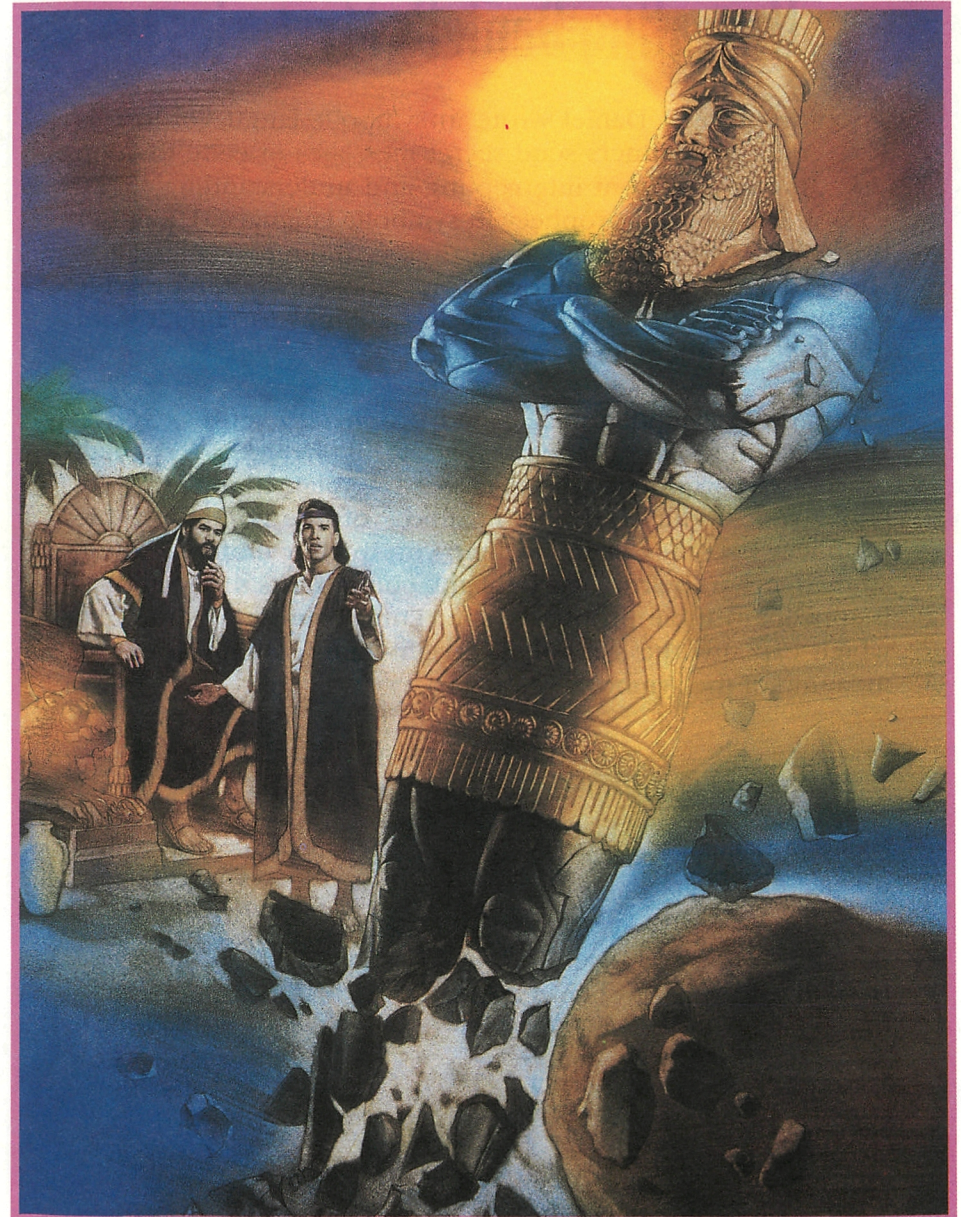
Unsealing

DANIEL'S MYSTERIES

WITH MARK FINLEY

◆ Prophetic Symbols Revealed ◆

1



ADVENTURES IN BIBLE PROPHECY



Introduction

Unsealing Daniel's Mysteries

The prophet Daniel wrote in symbolic language. Just as military planners send secret messages in code to keep the enemy from intercepting and understanding them, so God has cloaked prophecy in symbolic language. He didn't use symbols to prevent us from understanding His messages. He used them so the evil powers He exposed wouldn't readily see themselves in the messages and attempt to tamper with them, change them, or destroy them.

By using symbolic images and prophetic pictures, God is able to condense thousands of years of history into a very small space. Each prophetic symbol is clearly explained in Scripture. Once you understand the meaning of the symbol, Bible prophecy becomes plain. To help you in your understanding, study the chart below. The left-hand column lists the symbol as it appears in Bible prophecy. The center column lists the text which explains the symbol. The right-hand column gives the meaning of the symbol.

SYMBOL	CLARIFYING TEXT	WHAT THE SYMBOL MEANS
Metals in Daniel 2— gold, silver, brass, iron	Daniel 2:38-40	Four successive world empires beginning in Daniel's day
Head of gold in Daniel 2:38	Daniel 2:32	Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom—Babylon
Toes of image in Daniel 2:41	Daniel 2:41	A divided kingdom

10. What did Daniel request of the king's servant? Daniel 1:12.

Daniel's faith led him to conclude that God would honor his choice. He knew that God would never disappoint him.

Miraculous Results

11. What benefits did Daniel and his friends gain from their choice to be totally obedient to God?

The physical results (Daniel 1:15)

The mental results (Daniel 1:17)

The political results (Daniel 1:19, 20)

Daniel's faithfulness to God brought him God's blessing. When we make decisions that are morally right—when we do right because it is right—we too can expect the abundant blessings of a loving, heavenly Father. We may experience trials. Daniel did! We may experience disappointments. Daniel did! But we can be certain of ultimate triumph at last. God turns our defeats into victories. He turns our scars into stars to shine for His glory forever. In the trials of life we can truly trust Him.

- Today I determine to surrender my will to God.
- Right now, I acknowledge my loving Creator as the Lord of my life.

In 605 B.C., Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, led a vicious attack on Jerusalem. These two cities represented two ways of life—two ideologies—two philosophies. Babylon was the center of rebellion against the true God. It stood for apostasy or a counterfeit system of religion based on idol worship in opposition to the law of God. Jerusalem, the city of Daniel, stood for loyalty, fidelity, and faithfulness. It represented worship of the true God and obedience to His law. In the first verse of Daniel's book, this struggle between the forces of good and the forces of evil is introduced. The great controversy between good and evil which began in heaven (Revelation 12:7-9) continues on earth.

Hostages Seized

7. Describe the qualities of the Hebrew young men whom Nebuchadnezzar took captive. Daniel 1:4.

8. What did Nebuchadnezzar do to change the hostages' Hebrew identity? Daniel 1:6, 7.

Nebuchadnezzar began a "brainwashing" process—changing the names of the Hebrew young men to represent pagan Babylonian gods. In this way, he hoped to destroy their identity.

9. What decision did Daniel make which changed the course of his life? Daniel 1:8.

The word "purpose" means "to determine" or "decide." The governing power within our mind is our will. When we choose to do right, God supplies the moral power to carry out our choices. His Holy Spirit guides us to make the choice—and as we make it, He gives us the power to carry it out.

SYMBOL	CLARIFYING TEXT	WHAT THE SYMBOL MEANS
The rock cut out without hands in Daniel 2:34	Daniel 2:44, 45	God's eternal kingdom
The tree in Daniel 4:10	Daniel 4:22	King Nebuchadnezzar
The cutting down of the tree in Daniel 4:14	Daniel 4:24, 25	King Nebuchadnezzar's loss of his throne to temporary insanity
The band of iron and brass around the tree's stump in Daniel 4:15	Daniel 4:26	Nebuchadnezzar's empire preserved
The mysterious writing on the wall of Belshazzar's banquet hall in Daniel 5:5	Daniel 5:26-28	God's judgment pronounced upon Babylon
Four winds in Daniel 7:2	Jeremiah 49:36, 37 (See also Revelation 7:1, 2)	Winds equal devastation and destruction. The number four symbolizes the directions of the compass—North, South, East, and West.
Sea in Daniel 7:2	Revelation 17:15	Multitudes, peoples, nations
Beasts in Daniel 7:3	Daniel 7:17, 23	Empires or kingdoms
The lion, bear, leopard, and dragon-like beast in Daniel 7:3-8	Daniel 7:4-7	Four successive world empires of Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome
Ten horns in Daniel 7:8	Daniel 7:24 (first part)	Ten kings or kingdoms—divisions of power



• King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon conquered Jerusalem and led away many captives. Among these was Daniel.



The Holy Spirit reveals truth through the Bible prophets. The future is clearly revealed. God is never caught by surprise.

3. Why should we study Bible prophecy? John 14:29.

Fulfilled prophecy increases our confidence in the truthfulness of the Bible. It also prepares us for the overwhelming events ahead.

4. What counsel did Jesus personally give in His sermon on end-time events, regarding the prophecies of Daniel? Matthew 24:15.

The book of Daniel must be extremely important. It is the only book which Jesus specifically urges His last-day people to study. It contains truth for our time. Daniel's prophecies reveal the plans of God and unmask the plans of the enemy. The book of Daniel can be divided into two parts—stories and prophecies. The stories reveal how to be ready for earth's final days. The prophecies reveal when these last-day events will occur.

In this lesson, we discover the source of Daniel's courage in the midst of a sin-polluted society.

Conflict in the Middle East

5. The book of Daniel opens with a major conflict in the Middle East. What two nations were involved? Daniel 1:1.

a. _____

b. _____

6. Who was the king of Babylon? Daniel 1:1.

Each lesson will lead you on a journey of discovery into the Scriptures. As you look up the answers in your own Bible, you will find Bible study a rewarding experience. You will discover the path to lasting happiness and life's deepest joy.

Daniel, chapter 1, introduces the theme of the entire book—a titanic struggle between good and evil. It reveals God's divine power in an unusual way. God is never taken by surprise. He is never caught off guard. His plans triumph in the midst of apparently insurmountable odds.

Truth for the End Time

1. For what special time in this world's history were the prophecies of Daniel written? Daniel 12:6, 8, 9, 13.

2. What promise does God give His people regarding the future? Amos 3:7.



ILLUSTRATIONS: NATHAN GREENE

SYMBOL	CLARIFYING TEXT	WHAT THE SYMBOL MEANS
Little horn in Daniel 7:8	Daniel 7:24, 25 (last part)	A diverse or different power; one that is not political, but religious in nature
Eyes like a man in Daniel 7:8	Ephesians 1:18	Eyes equal understanding or wisdom. Eyes like a man indicate a system based on human, rather than divine, wisdom
Clouds of heaven in Daniel 7:13	Revelation 1:7; Matthew 16:27	Angels



ILLUSTRATION: NATHAN GREENE

A prophetic day	Numbers 14:34; Ezekiel 4:6; Genesis 29:27	One year
Time, times, and half a time in Daniel 7:25	Revelation 12:6, 14	1,260 prophetic days or 1,260 literal years
Son of man in Daniel 7:13	Luke 19:10; Luke 21:27	Jesus Christ
Ram in Daniel 8:3	Daniel 8:20	Media-Persia
He goat in Daniel 8:5	Daniel 8:21	Greece

ILLUSTRATIONS: (LEFT) JOHN STEELE, PFFPA; (TOP) NATHAN GREENE; (RIGHT) RICK THOMSON, NATHAN GREENE

6 • UNSEALING DANIEL'S MYSTERIES

SYMBOL	CLARIFYING TEXT	WHAT THE SYMBOL MEANS
Prince of the Host in Daniel 8:11	Daniel 9:25, 10:13, Daniel 12:1 Isaiah 9:6	Jesus Christ
Transgression in Daniel 8:12	1 John 3:4	Sin is the transgression, or breaking, of God's law
Transgression or abomination of desolation	Daniel 11:31, 32	Open rebellion against God, His word, and His law—the Ten Commandments
2300 prophetic days in Daniel 8:14	Ezekiel 4:6; Numbers 14:34	2,300 literal years
Seventy weeks in Daniel 7:24	Ezekiel 4:6; Numbers 14:34	490 literal years
Messiah the Prince in Daniel 9:25	Matthew 1:21	Jesus Christ
The covenant in Daniel 9:27	Matthew 26:28	God's plan of salvation through the blood of Christ
The prince of the kingdom of Persia in Daniel 10:13	John 12:31	The prince of this world, or Satan
King of the South in Daniel 11:5	Exodus 5:2	Spiritual Egypt, anti-God powers, atheistic powers
King of the North in Daniel 11:7	Revelation 14:8, 9; 18:1	Spiritual Babylon, or false religious powers which, under the guise of religion, deceive with false teachings
Tidings from the east in Daniel 11:44	Matthew 24:27	The message of Christ's soon return



I

More Than a Hostage

The prophetic book of Daniel was written for our time. Its prophecies speak with increased meaning to this generation. The angel Gabriel specifically told Daniel to “seal up” these prophecies until the “time of the end.” Daniel 12:4. The Bible prophet, Daniel, outlines in vivid detail world events now unfolding before our eyes. His predictions, covering twenty-five hundred years of history, clearly outline world events from the prophet's time (six hundred years before Christ) to ours. As we near the close of earth's history, these amazing predictions become more detailed. They provide “inside information” on the enemy's plans. They reveal the last-day delusions Satan uses to deceive the world's population. They also carefully outline God's strategy for the end time.

Best of all, the prophet reveals how to thrive in the tough times ahead. The days ahead will be difficult. A crisis of unimagined fury will break upon our world. Friend, you can do much more than survive—you can thrive. Daniel describes how to tap into resources of spiritual power. As a hostage in a foreign land, subjected to the pressures of mind manipulation, Daniel triumphed. He overcame unsurmountable odds. You can too!

As you study these lessons, you will—

- Discover the secrets of a deeper prayer life.
- Experience a new sense of God's power in your own life.
- Develop the spiritual strength to resist temptation.
- Learn of earth-shaking events soon to burst upon the world as an overwhelming surprise.
- Find the keys to understanding truth for our times.

CHAPTER II

A CONTROVERSY BETWEEN TRUTH AND ERROR

1. And in the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar Nebuchadnezzar dreamed dreams, wherewith his spirit was troubled, and his sleep brake from him.

Dan. 1:1.
Dan. 2:37, 38.
Jer. 27:6-11.

And Cush begat Nimrod; he began to be a mighty one in the earth. He was a mighty hunter before the Lord: wherefore it is said, Even as Nimrod the mighty hunter before the Lord. And the beginning of his kingdom was Babylon, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar.

Gen. 10:8-10 [margin].

Gen. 11:9.
Isa. 14:12-14.

And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth. Therefore is the name of it called Babel.

Gen. 11:1-9.

Behold the land of the Chaldeans; this people was not, till the Assyrian founded it for them that dwell in the wilderness: they set up the towers thereof, they raised up the palaces thereof; and he brought it to ruin.

Isa. 23:13.
Jer. 50:58.

Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them. And the Lord said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the Lord, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.

Job 1:6, 7.
Job 2:1, 2.
2 Chron. 18:18.

“IN the second year of Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuchadnezzar dreamed dreams.” It is thus that we are introduced to the monarch of the greatest of earthly kingdoms in his own home. In chapter one, Nebuchadnezzar is referred to as the one who besieged Jerusalem; in chapter two, he is spoken of as the ruler of every nation on earth. The kingdom which Nebuchadnezzar brought to the height of its glory can be traced in Bible history to its foundation. The history of Babylon is the story of the great controversy between Christ and Satan, begun in heaven, continued on earth, and which will end only when the stone cut out without hands from the mountain shall fill the whole earth.

Satan's accusation against God is that the Father is unjust. “But give me a fair chance,” argued Lucifer, “and I can establish a kingdom on earth which will excel in glory the kingdom of God in heaven.” He was granted the privilege of making a trial. The plains of Shinar were chosen; the people whom God told to fill the whole earth were gathered into a city. Babylon grew, and its mighty walls three hundred and fifty feet in height and eighty-seven feet thick, with the massive gates of brass, were designed to imitate the strength of the city of God. At the time of the founding of Babylon, Satan was still meeting with the council of the repre-

sentatives of worlds, which was held at the gates of heaven. It was his design to counterfeit the plans of God. The earthly city was patterned after the heavenly. The Euphrates flowed through it as did the river of God through Paradise. The government was an absolute monarchy; a man occupied the throne, and as it grew, every knee of earth was caused to bow to its king. Tyranny took the place of love. This is always true when man is exalted above God. There was a close union of church and state, for no power was tolerated above that of the monarch. It was to such a kingdom that Nebuchadnezzar fell heir, and the beauty and power of the kingdom were increased by him in every possible way, until it was spoken of everywhere as “Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency.”

Not only the power, but the wisdom also, of Nebuchadnezzar was exceedingly great. The king favored education, and during his reign Babylon was the educational center of the world. Every art and science was taught in the schools of Babylon. The wisdom of the ancients was made known to the students who sat at the feet of her magicians and wise men. They revealed in the study of astronomy and the higher mathematics. There were linguists who could teach the language of every nation.

The king himself was highly educated, for it was he who examined the students on the completion of their course, and granted their degrees. Babylon was proud of her educational system; she trusted to it for salvation, but it was the cause of her ruin. “Thy *wisdom* and thy *knowledge*, it hath caused thee to turn away.”

And the Lord said unto him, Wherewith? And he said, I will go forth, and I will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.

1 Kings 22:18-23.

Rev. 22:1, 2.

He who smote the people in wrath with a continual stroke, he that ruled the nations in anger, he persecuted, and none hindereth.

Isa. 14:3-7.

Behold, I am against thee, O destroying mountain, saith the Lord, which destroyest all the earth: and I will stretch out mine hand upon thee, and roll thee down from the rocks, and will make thee a burnt mountain.

Jer. 51:25.

Isa. 13:19.

And in all matters of wisdom and understanding, that the king inquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers that were in all his realm.

Dan. 1:17-20.

Thy wisdom and thy knowledge, it hath perverted thee: and thou hast said in thine heart, I am, and none else beside me.

Isa. 47:10.

Thou art wearied in the multitude of thy counsels. Let now the astrologers, the stargazers, the monthly prognosticators, stand up, and save thee from these things that shall come upon thee. They shall not deliver themselves from the power of the flame.

Isa. 47:13, 14.

Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

1 Cor. 1:19-25.

Yea: have ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise?

Matt. 21:16.

2. Then the king commanded to call the magicians, and the astrologers, and the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans, for to show the king his dreams. So they came and stood before the king.

3. And the king said unto them, I have dreamed a dream, and my spirit was troubled to know the dream.

4. Then spake the Chaldeans to the king in Syriack, O king, live forever: tell thy servants the dream, and we will show the interpretation.

Dan. 2:2-4.

For what is your life? It is even a vapor, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.

James 4:14.

Why dost thou strive against him? for he giveth not account of any of his matters. For God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not. In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed; then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction, that he may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide pride from man.

Job 33:13-17.

O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!

Rom. 11:33.

5. The king answered and said to the Chaldeans, The thing is gone from me: if ye will not make known unto me the dream, with

God himself speaks, saying: "Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?" In the Babylonish court this was exemplified. Nebuchadnezzar and his counselors,—the wise men, astrologers, and soothsayers,—on one side, represented the education of the world. Daniel, a youth not over twenty-one years of age, a Hebrew and a slave, was chosen by God to confound the wisdom of the mighty.

THE DREAM

The Scripture gives the story in language that can be readily understood. But why did God give Nebuchadnezzar a dream? How could the God of heaven reveal truth to this heathen king? Doubtless he could not during his waking moments; but Nebuchadnezzar had contemplated the glory of his kingdom, and fell asleep with a longing desire to know its future. He knew that life was short. Soon he must die; what would the future be? It was God's opportunity, and while those eyes were closed to earthly things; while self was lost,—dead, as it were,—the future history of the world was spread before Nebuchadnezzar. On awaking, he found no language to express his thoughts. He who was acquainted with the world's wisdom knew not the language of heaven. This he had never been taught. He tried to think what he had seen, but as his eyes again rested on the glory about him, the vision faded away. Earthly things drew a veil over the things of God, and while he knew he had seen something, he knew not what it was.

The king demanded an interpretation, but the wisest men of the king answered: "There is not a man upon the earth that can show the

king's matter. . . . There is none other that can show it before the king, except the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh." That the pretended knowledge of the wise men of Babylon might be exposed, the Lord had in his providence given Nebuchadnezzar this dream, and then allowed him to forget the details, while causing him to retain a vivid impression of the vision. The king was angered by the request of the wise men for him to tell them the dream, saying, "I know of certainty that ye would gain the time, because ye see the thing is gone from me." That is, they would be able to agree on some interpretation if the king could tell the dream. The king then threatened that if they failed to tell the dream, they should all be destroyed. The wise men urged that the requirement was most unreasonable; but the more they argued, the more furious the king became, and in his anger he finally "commanded to destroy all the wise men of Babylon."

This decree was made in the second year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign. He had ruled two years conjointly with his father, Nabopolassar, and two years alone; so Daniel and his fellows were serving their first year as wise men in the court of Babylon, having finished their three-years' course in the schools. They were therefore sought out by Arioch, the king's captain, to be slain. Daniel asked: "Why is the decree so hasty from the king?" Then Arioch made the thing known to Daniel. Daniel alone had the courage to venture into the presence of the king, at the peril of his life, to beg that he might be granted time to show the dream and the interpretation. The request was granted.

the interpretation thereof, ye shall be cut in pieces, and your houses shall be made a dunghill.

6. But if ye show the dream, and the interpretation thereof, ye shall receive of me gifts and rewards and great honor: therefore show me the dream, and the interpretation thereof.

7. They answered again and said, Let the king tell his servants the dream, and we will show the interpretation of it.

8. The king answered and said, I know of certainty that ye would gain the time, because ye see the thing is gone from me.

9. But if ye will not make known unto me the dream, there is but one decree for you: for ye have prepared lying and corrupt words to speak before me, till the time be changed: therefore tell me the dream, and I shall know that ye can show me the interpretation thereof.

Dan. 2:5-9.

But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man.

1 Cor. 2:14, 15.

10. The Chaldeans answered before the king, and said, There is not a man upon the earth that can show the king's matter: therefore there is no king, lord, nor ruler, that asked such things at any magician, or astrologer, or Chaldean.

11. And it is a rare thing that the king requireth, and there is none other that can show it before the king, except the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh.

12. For this cause the king was angry and very furious, and commanded to destroy all the wise men of Babylon.

13. And the decree went forth that the wise men should be slain; and they sought Daniel and his fellows to be slain.

14. Then Daniel answered with counsel and wisdom to Arioch the captain of the king's guard, which

was gone forth to slay the wise men of Babylon:

16. He answered and said to Arioch the king's captain, Why is the decree so hasty from the king? Then Arioch made the thing known to Daniel.

16. Then Daniel went in and desired of the king that he would give him time, and that he would show the king the interpretation. Dan. 2:10-16.

Be not afraid of sudden fear, neither of the desolation of the wicked when it cometh. For the Lord shall be thy confidence.

Prov. 3:25, 26.

17. Then Daniel went to his house, and made the thing known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions:

18. That they would desire mercies of the God of heaven concerning this secret; that Daniel and his fellows should not perish with the rest of the wise men of Babylon. Dan. 2:17, 18.

Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity. 1 Tim. 4:12.

19. Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a night vision. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven.

20. Daniel answered and said, Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever: for wisdom and might are his:

21. And he changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings: he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding:

22. He revealeth the deep and secret things: he knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him.

23. I thank thee, and praise thee, O thou God of my fathers, who hast given me wisdom and might, and hast made known unto me now what we desired of thee: for thou hast now made known unto us the king's matter.

Dan. 2:19-23.

The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; and he will show them his covenant.

Ps. 25:12-14.

Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous: for praise is comely for the upright. Ps. 23:1.

"There are in the providence of God particular periods when we must arise in response to the call of God." The supreme moment had come to Daniel. For this very moment had God been giving him a preparation. From his birth every detail of his life had been pointing forward to this time, although he knew it not. His early education was such that at this moment when death stared him in the face, he could look up to God and claim his promise.

Although Daniel had been granted a diploma from the schools of Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar himself, and had been accounted ten times wiser than his fellow students, he had not as yet been classed with the astrologers and wise men of Chaldea. Probably his youth and inexperience delayed such recognition. But God chooses the weak things of earth to confound the mighty, because the foolishness of God is wiser than men.

Four Hebrew youth bowed in prayer, and that night "was the secret revealed unto Daniel." How could God talk with Daniel? — Because the Spirit of the Lord is with them that fear him. Daniel's education had acquainted him with the voice of God. He was in the habit of seeing eternal things with the eye of faith. God showed Daniel the same things which he had revealed to Nebuchadnezzar, but which were hidden from him by the glamour of worldliness.

The song of praise which rose from the lips of Daniel when the vision came, shows how self-forgetful he was, and how close his heart was knit to the heart of God.

The schools of Babylon developed pride, love of pleasure, haughtiness, and self-esteem. They fostered an aristocracy, and cultivated the spirit

of oppression and slavery. Contrast with this the native simplicity, the courtesy, gentleness, and self-forgetfulness of the child of God as he enters the court and is introduced by Arioch.

Years before this, when Egypt was the educational center of the world, God taught Egyptian senators by the mouth of Joseph, a boy no older than Daniel. When Babylon had outgrown the counsels of Heaven, another Hebrew meets the men of the schools. "Can not the wise men show the secret unto the king?"

Before Daniel was the king in his glory; around him stood the very teachers with whom he had studied three years. At this time were exemplified the words of the psalmist: "I have more understanding than all my teachers; for thy testimonies are my meditation. I understand more than the ancients, because I keep thy precepts."

Nebuchadnezzar was careworn from loss of sleep, and in great anxiety because the dream troubled him; but Daniel was calm, conscious of his connection with God, the King of kings. Daniel now had opportunity to exalt his own wisdom, but he chose rather to give all the glory to God. He plainly told the king that it was beyond the power of man to reveal the dream or give the interpretation; "but there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days." The king's mind was directed to God alone.

In one night God revealed the history of over twenty-five hundred years, and what the human historian requires volumes to explain is given in fifteen verses. The Scriptures explain them-

24. Therefore Daniel went in unto Arioch, whom the king had ordained to destroy the wise men of Babylon: he went and said thus unto him: Destroy not the wise men of Babylon: bring me in before the king, and I will show unto the king the interpretation.

25. Then Arioch brought in Daniel before the king in haste, and said thus unto him, I have found a man of the captives of Judah, that will make known unto the king the interpretation. Dan. 2:24, 25.

He sent a man before them, even Joseph, who was sold for a servant: he made him Lord of his house, and ruler of all his substance: to bind his princes at his pleasure; and teach his senators wisdom. Ps. 105:17-22.

Ps. 119:98-100.

26. The king answered and said to Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, Art thou able to make known unto me the dream which I have seen, and the interpretation thereof?

27. Daniel answered in the presence of the king, and said, The secret which the king hath demanded can not the wise men, the astrologers, the magicians, the soothsayers, show unto the king;

28. But there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days. Thy dream, and the visions of thy head upon thy bed, are these;

29. As for thee, O king, thy thoughts came into thy mind upon thy bed, what should come to pass hereafter: and he that revealeth secrets maketh known to thee what shall come to pass.

30. But as for me, this secret is not revealed to me for any wisdom that I have more than any living, but for their sakes that shall make known the interpretation to the king, and that thou mightest know the thoughts of thy heart.

31. Thou, O king, sawest, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible.

32. *This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass,*

33. *His legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay.*

34. *Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces.*

35. *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: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.*

36. *This is the dream; and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king.*

37. *Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory.*

38. *And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold.*

39. *And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferlor to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth. Dan. 2: 26-39.*

Isa. 47: 1, 2, 13.

Isa. 47: 13.

Put yourselves in array against Babylon round about: all ye that bend the bow, shoot at her, spare no arrows: for she hath sinned against the Lord. Jer. 50: 14.

Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the Lord.

Jer. 9: 23, 24.

selves, and in divine records every word is well chosen and put in the proper setting.

In the image revealed to Nebuchadnezzar, the glory of the Babylonian kingdom is recognized by the Lord, and represented by the head of gold. But while giving due credit to the present state of things, the spirit of prophecy with equal candor points out to the self-exalted king the weakness of the institutions in which he has placed his trust, and the inability of the Babylonian learning to save from impending destruction.

"Come down, and sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon, sit on the ground; there is no throne, O daughter of the Chaldeans; for thou shalt no more be called tender and delicate. Take the millstones and grind meal." From being master of all, Babylon must become the most humble servant. Because these people had disregarded the God of heaven, and had said, "None seeth me," evil would come from unknown sources, and Babylon should be cut off. She would make a desperate effort to save herself by turning to her educators and wise men. "Let now the astrologers, the star-gazers, the monthly prognosticators, stand up and save thee from these things. . . Behold, they shall be as stubble." When the trial came, there was nothing in all the realms of Babylon that could save her.

"The strength of nations and of individuals is not found in the opportunities and facilities that appear to make them invincible; it is not found in their boasted greatness. That which alone can make them great or strong is the power and purpose of God. They, themselves, by their at-



THE IMAGE

titude toward his purpose, decide their own destiny.”

Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom lasted only until the reign of his grandson, when the second or inferior nation represented by the breast and arms of silver came upon the stage of action.

Medo-Persia took the place of Babylon; Grecia followed the Medo-Persian kingdom, while Rome, the fourth kingdom, was to be broken into ten parts, which were to remain until the end of time. In the days of these kings the God of heaven would set up a kingdom which would never be destroyed nor conquered by any other people; it would break in pieces and consume all former kingdoms, and stand forever.

The image was a comprehensive outline of the world's history. The "glory of kingdoms" formed the head of gold, all following kingdoms deteriorated from Babylon as shown by the grade of metals forming the image. First gold, then silver, brass, and iron. In the latter part of the world's history, a marked change was revealed by the iron being mixed with miry clay. There were to be no more universal kingdoms ruled by men when the power of the fourth kingdom was broken, it was to remain divided until the end. In place of one kingdom there would be several.

The clay mixed with iron also denoted the union of church and state. This combination is peculiar to the latter part of the world's history, to the feet and toes of the image.

Religion was the basis of government in the heathen nations; there could be no separation of the church and the state. When apostate Christianity united with the state, each remained in a

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.
Jer. 27: 7.

The ram which thou sawest having two horns are the kings of Media and Persia. And the rough goat is the king of Grecia: and the great horn that is between his eyes is the first king.
Dan. 8: 21, 22.

And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city.
Luke 1: 2, 3.

Dan. 2: 44.

That thou shalt take up this proverb against the king of Babylon, and say, How hath the oppressor ceased! the golden city ceased!
Isa. 14: 4.

For brass I will bring gold, and for iron I will bring silver, and for wood brass, and for stones iron.
Isa. 60: 17.

I will overturn, overturn, overturn, it: and it shall be no more, until he come whose right it is: and I will give it him.
Eze. 21: 27.

40. 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.
Dan. 2: 40.

So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet colored beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.
Rev. 17: 3.

With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication.
Rev. 17: 2.

For their mother hath played the harlot: she that conceived them hath done shamefully: for she said,

I will go after my lovers, that give me my bread and my water, my wool and my flax, mine oil and my drink. Hosea 2:5.

Ps. 2:8, 9.

41. And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potters' clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay.

42. 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.

43. And whereas thou sawest 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.

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

45. Forasmuch as thou sawest 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: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure.

46. Then the king Nebuchadnezzar fell upon his face, and worshiped Daniel, and commanded that they should offer an oblation and sweet odors unto him.

47. The king answered unto Daniel, and said, of a truth it is, that your God is a God of gods, and a Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, seeing thou couldst reveal this secret.

Dan. 2:41-47.

And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising. Isa. 60:3-5.

Deut. 28:12, 13.

Deut. 15:6.

sense distinct as the miry clay is separate from iron. This union continues until the stone smites the image upon the feet. The very fact that the "stone was cut out of the mountain without hands," shows that the last kingdoms on earth will not be overthrown by any earthly power, but that the God of heaven will bring upon them final destruction by giving them to the burning flames.

A CHANGED HEART

The king listened to every sentence Daniel uttered when telling the dream, and recognized it as the vision which had troubled him. When Daniel gave the interpretation, he was certain that he could accept it as a true prophecy from the God of heaven. The vision had deeply affected the king, and when the meaning was given, he fell upon his face before Daniel in wonder and humility, and said, "Of a truth, it is that your God is a God of gods, and a Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, seeing thou couldst reveal this secret."

The youth of twenty-one was made ruler over all the provinces of Babylon, and chief governor over all the wise men of the kingdom. Daniel's companions were also given high positions in the government. It should be remembered that this dream as recorded in the second chapter of Daniel was given to Nebuchadnezzar in the second year of his sole reign. It was still during the lifetime of Jehoiakim, king of Judah.

It was in the providence of God that his people should carry the light of truth to all the heathen nations. What they failed to do in the time of peace, they must do in time of trouble. Babylon

was the ruling power of the world; it was the educational center. The Jews were comparatively a small people; they lost the power of God by neglecting the education of their children; they failed to let their light shine. From their midst God took a few who were trained in the fear of the Lord, placed them in the heathen court, brought them into favor with the ruler of the world, so making himself known to the heathen king. He did even more; he revealed himself to the king, and used these children of his to prove that the wisdom of God excelled the wisdom of the Chaldeans. Having exalted true education, he put Daniel and his companions at the head of that vast empire that the knowledge of the God of heaven might go to the ends of the earth.

Having acknowledged the God of Daniel, Nebuchadnezzar was in a position to save Jerusalem instead of destroying it. It was because of these experiences that God could send word by his prophet a few years later that, should Zedekiah, king of Judah, deliver himself to the king of Babylon, Jerusalem would not be burned, and the world would receive the light of the gospel.

The history of the city of Babylon is put on record because it is God's object lesson to the world of to-day. The book of Revelation, which is the complement of the book of Daniel, frequently uses the name, applying it to the modern churches. The relation of the Jews to the Babylon of Nebuchadnezzar is the same as that sustained by the remnant church, the true Israel, to the churches which, having known the truth, have rejected it.

My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Hosea 4:6.

Isai. 5:13.

48. Then the king made Daniel a great man, and gave him many great gifts, and made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon, and chief of the governors over all the wise men of Babylon.

Prov. 2:10, 11.

49. Then Daniel requested of the king, and he set Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, over the affairs of the province of Babylon: but Daniel sat in the gate of the king. Dan. 2:48, 49.

But as truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord. Num. 14:21.

Hab. 2:14.

Then said Jeremiah unto Zedekiah, Thus saith the Lord, the God of hosts, the God of Israel: If thou wilt assuredly go forth unto the king of Babylon's princes, then thy soul shall live, and this city shall not be burned with fire; and thou shalt live, and thine house: but if thou wilt not go forth to the king of Babylon's princes, then shall this city be given into the hand of the Chaldeans, and they shall burn it with fire, and thou shalt not escape out of their hand. Jer. 38:17, 18.

Babylon is fallen, is fallen: and all the graven images of her gods he hath broken unto the ground. Isa. 21:9.

Flee out of the midst of Babylon, and deliver every man his soul: he not cut off in her iniquity: for this is the time of the Lord's vengeance; he will render unto her a recompence. Jer. 51:6.

And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication. Rev. 14:8.

Babylon hath been a golden cup in the Lord's hand, that made all the earth drunken: the nations have drunken of her wine; therefore the nations are mad. Jer. 51:7.

Rev. 17:4.

That thou shalt take up this proverb against the king of Babylon, and say, How hath the oppressor ceased! the exactress of gold hath ceased!

Isa. 14:4, margin.

And saying, Alas, alas that great city, that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls! For in one hour so great riches is come to nought.

Rev. 18:16, 17.

Gen. 12:1.

Joshua 24:2, 3.

Deut. 6:6, 7.

Ps. 105:22.

Rev. 18:1-4.

For thou art a holy people unto the Lord thy God, and the Lord hath chosen thee to be a peculiar people unto himself, above all the nations that are upon the earth. Thou shalt not eat any abominable thing. Deut. 14:1-3.

Lev. 11:44.

1 Peter 2:9.

Keep therefore and do them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations, which shall hear all these statutes, and say, Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people. For what nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as the Lord our God is in all things that we call upon him for? Deut. 4:5-8.

Gal. 3:28.

For many are called, but few are chosen. Matt. 22:14.

The sins of ancient Babylon will be repeated to-day. Her educational system is the one now generally accepted; her government, with its excessive taxes, its exaltation of the rich and the oppression of the poor, its pride, arrogance, love of display, its choice of the artificial in place of the natural, and the exaltation of the god of science instead of the God of heaven, is the one toward which the world of to-day is hastening.

As God called Abraham out from the idolatry of Chaldea, and made him the father of the Hebrew nation; as he delivered to that people a form of government that would exalt God; as he gave them commandment so to teach their children that the Jews would become a teacher of nations and might be an everlasting kingdom, so to-day he calls forth a people from modern Babylon. He has intrusted to them principles of healthful living which will make them mentally and physically a wonder to the world. He has given them educational principles which, if followed, will make them the teachers of the world, and finally bring them into the kingdom of God. And to them he has delivered the principles of true government which recognize the equal rights of all men, and which in the church organization bind all together — one body in Christ Jesus.

Only a few — four out of thousands — were true to these principles in the days of Daniel. How will it be to-day?

CHAPTER III

TRUE FREEDOM IN WORSHIP

"NEBUCHADNEZZAR the king made an image of gold." According to Usher's chronology it had been twenty-three years since the dream of this same Nebuchadnezzar as recorded in the second chapter of Daniel. As a result of the experience at that time, Daniel was made counselor, sitting in the gate of the king, and Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego were appointed rulers in the province of Babylon. Many opportunities had presented themselves to these men of God, and they had kept the knowledge of their God before the people of Babylon. Jerusalem had in the meantime been destroyed. The Jews as a nation, were scattered throughout the kingdom of Nebuchadnezzar; their king, Jehoiachin, languished in one of the prisons of Babylon. It was a time of sorrow and mourning for the chosen people of God. Could it be that they were forgotten by Him who smote Egypt, and led the hosts across the Red Sea? As far as human eye could see, it was right to think so.

Nebuchadnezzar had been humiliated when Daniel interpreted his dream, and he had then worshiped God. But as the years passed, he lost the spirit which characterized true worship, and while in the mind acknowledging the God of the Jews, in heart he was pagan still. So he made an image of gold, patterning it as closely as possible after the image revealed to him in

1. Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold, whose height was threescore cubits, and the breadth thereof six cubits; he set it up in the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon.

2. Then Nebuchadnezzar the king sent to gather together the princes, the governors, and the captains, the judges, the treasurers, the counselors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces, to come to the dedication of the image which Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up.

3. Then the princes, the governors, and captains, the judges, the treasurers, the counselors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces, were gathered together unto the dedication of the image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up; and they stood before the image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up.

4. Then an herald cried aloud, To you it is commanded, O people, nations, and languages,

5. That at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of music, ye fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king hath set up:

6. And whoso falleth not down and worshipeth shall the same hour be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace.

Dan. 3:1-6.

Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself.

Luke 10:27.

Chapter 2

The Faith of Daniel

Daniel Chapter 2 is another test it is the study the main character. Look for the list of characteristics.

2:1 And in the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar Nebuchadnezzar dreamed dreams, wherewith his spirit was troubled, and his sleep brake from him.

- Second year of his reign, but it should be the third year because Daniel had to wait three years before he came to the king.
- The first year was the 0 year or the campaign year as he invaded Jerusalem.
- The dream was really bad as it has troubled him.

2:2 Then the king commanded to call the magicians, and the astrologers, and the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans, for to show the king his dreams. So they came and stood before the king.

- He called magicians, astrologers, and sorcerers first.
- It was common to interpret dreams.
- We know that God gives dreams.
- They were use to interpreting dreams.
- *"Professed theologians seem to take pleasure in making that which is plain, mysterious. They clothe the simple teachings of God's word with their own dark reasonings, and thus confuse the minds of those who listen to their doctrines." {ST July 2, 1896}*

2:3 And the king said unto them, I have dreamed a dream, and my spirit was troubled to know the dream.

2:4 Then spake the Chaldeans to the king in Syriack, O king, live for ever: tell thy servants the dream, and we will show the interpretation.

- How hard is it to interpret a dream?

2:5 The king answered and said to the Chaldeans, The thing is gone from me: if ye will not make known unto me the dream, with the interpretation thereof, ye shall be cut in pieces, and your houses shall be made a dunghill.

- Is the king reasonable?
- How can you expect other to know what you have dreamed?
- He has an extreme personality, he is very emotional, he thinks they should know everything.
- This is a good opportunity to see if they are true or not.
- Reference to verse 9 to see what is in his heart towards (lying and corrupt)
- Wise man was tested first.
- God has made the dream such a way that only God will be glorified.
- Remember in Egypt that they were able to copy Moses miracles.
- God gave the dream then took it away to protect His truth from Satan.
- This dream was only to be understood by Daniel.
- This is why much of the prophecies are symbolic.
- God set the situation so that the King would come into contact with Daniel.

2:6 But if ye show the dream, and the interpretation thereof, ye shall receive of me gifts and rewards and great honour: therefore show me the dream, and the interpretation thereof.

- The king really wants to understand this dream.
- He is willing to give great riches.
- He wants to know both the dream and the meaning.

2:7 They answered again and said, Let the king tell his servants the dream, and we will show the interpretation of it.

- These wise man are pushing for the king to tell them the dream.

2:8 The king answered and said, I know of certainty that ye would gain the time, because ye see the thing is gone from me.

- The king as seen that they are waiting for him to remember the dream.

2:9 But if ye will not make known unto me the dream, [there is but] one decree for you: for ye have prepared lying and corrupt words to speak before me, till the time be changed: therefore tell me the dream, and I shall know that ye can show me the interpretation thereof.

- He was testing the wise man.
- I know that you're true when you tell me what it was.

2:10 The Chaldeans answered before the king, and said, There is not a man upon the earth that can show the king's matter: therefore [there is] no king, lord, nor ruler, [that] asked such things at any magician, or astrologer, or Chaldean.

- Now we see their true understanding.
- They are telling the king that what his is asking is very unreasonable.
- What you're asking have never been asked before of the wise man.
- This is really setting the scene for God to be glorified.

2:11 And [it is] a rare thing that the king requireth, and there is none other that can show it before the king, except the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh.

- They are now showing that they have a limit to wisdom.
- They understand god not to be someone who's dwelling is not with flesh.
- They don't see god as someone close.
- Except the gods, referring to more than one gods.
- Dwelling not with them in the flesh.
- This is not Daniel's God.
- **{John 1:14}** – Daniel's God came in the flesh.
- These gods are the Babylonian gods.
- This reveals the Nature Christ:
- What kind of flesh **{Rom 1:3}** *"Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh;"*
- **{1 John 4:3}** *"every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that [spirit] of antichrist,"*

2:12 For this cause the king was angry and very furious, and commanded to destroy all the wise [men] of Babylon.

- Now the king has gone too far.
- Showing his hot temper.
- How many where wise man?
- This includes Daniel.

- If you were Daniel, what would be your natural thoughts? "Why did you put me in this kind of situation?"
- When you are lead into a corner; it is then when you have to depend wholly on Him.

2:13 And the decree went forth that the wise [men] should be slain; and they sought Daniel and his fellows to be slain.

- How is this fair? Daniel was not even asked.
- Satan is willing to sacrifice his own servants, if it will take out Gods servants.

2:14 Then Daniel answered with counsel and wisdom to Arioch the captain of the king's guard, which was gone forth to slay the wise [men] of Babylon:

- Daniel asked with counsel and wisdom; Even facing death Daniel maintained composure, didn't answer in hast.
- What would Arioch have thought?

2:15 He answered and said to Arioch the king's captain, Why [is] the decree [so] hasty from the king? Then Arioch made the thing known to Daniel.

- Instead of killing Daniel he had a conversation with him. Why?
- Daniel says "Why is this so hasty?" He is so calm. Here we can see that Daniel has a very stable personality.

2:16 Then Daniel went in, and desired of the king that he would give him time, and that he would show the king the interpretation.

- Why was Daniel given time?
- He asked for time to give the interpretation, not for what the dream was.
- Interpretation is what the king wanted.
- God gave the dream in such a way that the king really wants to know.
- Daniel is the kind of person who does not move easy either in crisis or in excitement.
- How can Daniel claim such a promise? Faith.
- Faith is based on promised.
- Daniel grew up with the book of Genesis and story of Joseph.
- But Joseph had the dream, Daniel had faith that God would give the interpretation as with Joseph, but more then that he had faith that God would give him the actual dream as well.
- Daniel has great faith, this is the faith of Jesus.

2:17 Then Daniel went to his house, and made the thing known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions:

- Daniel sort counsel, he was not self-confident, true faith lead you not to trust yourself.
- "There is wisdom in a multitude of counsel" {Prov 11:14}

2:18 That they would desire mercies of the God of heaven concerning this secret; that Daniel and his fellows should not perish with the rest of the wise [men] of Babylon.

- They prayed to the God of heaven.
- Was Daniel ready to die in Chapter 1? Yes.
- Was he ready to die in Chapter 2? No.
- Its not worth dying in Chapter 2 because of some dumb decree.

- Daniel is not a martyr fanatic, he knew when to die and when not to die.

2:19 Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a night vision. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven.

- It was revealed to Daniel? Why not to the other three?
- {Dan 1:17} – With all understanding.
- Daniel was the one who stepped out.
- Seems like Daniel was the leader.

2:20 Daniel answered and said, Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever: for wisdom and might are his:

- Daniel is humble, giving all credit to God.

2:21 And he changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings: he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding:

- Tells us about the dream.
- God changes times.
- God removes kings and set-ups kings.

2:22 He revealeth the deep and secret things: he knoweth what [is] in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him.

2:23 I thank thee, and praise thee, O thou God of my fathers, who hast given me wisdom and might, and hast made known unto me now what we desired of thee: for thou hast [now] made known unto us the king's matter.

- What's the meaning of might?
- He has given to me; humble.

2:24 Therefore Daniel went in unto Arioch, whom the king had ordained to destroy the wise [men] of Babylon: he went and said thus unto him; Destroy not the wise [men] of Babylon: bring me in before the king, and I will show unto the king the interpretation.

- Daniel is not a man of violence, not man of revenge.
- God gave grand opportunity for the wise man to see that the God of Daniel is their saviour.

2:25 Then Arioch brought in Daniel before the king in haste, and said thus unto him, I have found a man of the captives of Judah, that will make known unto the king the interpretation.

- Arioch takes to credit for Daniel.
- Puts down Daniel, captive of Judah.
- The Babylon takes about Israel as captives.

2:26 The king answered and said to Daniel, whose name [was] Belteshazzar, Art thou able to make known unto me the dream which I have seen, and the interpretation thereof?

- Daniels name.

2:27 Daniel answered in the presence of the king, and said, The secret which the king hath demanded cannot the wise [men], the astrologers, the magicians, the soothsayers, show unto the king;

- Daniel is reminding the king that the education is of no profit.
- Daniel didn't even answer his question.

2:28 But there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the

latter days. Thy dream, and the visions of thy head upon thy bed, are these;

- Daniel is putting himself in the category as the other wise man.
- It is only God who can interpret.
- The prophecy is about kingdoms and latter days (future).

2:29 As for thee, O king, thy thoughts came [into thy mind] upon thy bed, what should come to pass hereafter: and he that revealeth secrets maketh known to thee what shall come to pass.

- As the king is falling asleep he thought about the future.
- Un requested prayer was answered.
- Why did these king have such a privilege?
- God cares about the leaders of this world.
- God by meeting his needs he is trying to save him.

2:30 But as for me, this secret is not revealed to me for [any] wisdom that I have more than any living, but for [their] sakes that shall make known the interpretation to the king, and that thou mightest know the thoughts of thy heart.

- Daniel makes it clear that it's not him.
- He is humble.

The Dream

2:31 Thou, O king, sawest, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness [was] excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof [was] terrible.



- Great, terrible = {Dan 7:7} Anti-Christ

2:32 This image's head [was] of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass,

2:33 His legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay.

2:34 Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet [that were] of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces.

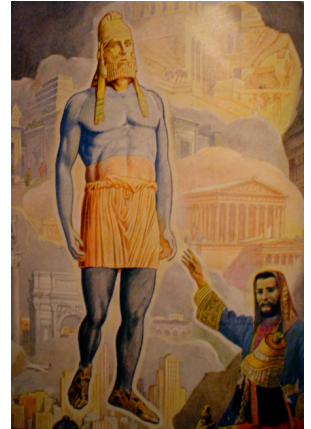
- And brake them to pieces = Second coming of Jesus

2:35 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: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.

- The dream was an image.
- Why did God describe the future with and image?
- Idols? Familiar languages that He might understand.
- The image in his dream was broken to pieces
- Maybe this is why he woke up?
- When Daniel was given dreams of the future, he was given dreams of animals, this was the language he was familiar with.
- God will use what we understand in order for us to understand it.
- Longest prophecy from Babylon to (filled the whole earth) New Jerusalem.
- That no place was found for them = Third coming of Jesus.
- From Babylon to the third coming.

The Image

Most important prophecy as it lays the foundation for all other prophecies in the book of Daniel.



Observation (look for)

- Repeated terms
- Definitions
- Descriptions
- Comparison
- Contrast
- Emphasise

The Dream

- Elements, Precious
- Why is it gold, silver what's the difference?
- Value is decreasing Gold > Silver > Brass > Iron > Iron Clay
- Strength increases Gold > Silver > Brass > Iron > Iron Clay

2:36 This [is] the dream; and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king.

2:37 Thou, O king, [art] a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory.

- You are the best kingdom of all kingdoms.
- {Det 10:17} The title king of kings belongs to God only
- Who is the king of the beast? Lion; Therefore Gold = Lion
- "A lion [which is] strongest among beasts, and turneth not away for any" {Prov 30:30}

2:38 And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou [art] this head of gold.

- Head of Gold is Babylon {Dan 2:38}
- {Dan 2:37-38} = Description of Babylon.
- God gave the kingdom.
- Head represents {Eph 5:26} Leader of all other kingdoms.
- The whole image is Babylon as the head controls the whole body.
- There may be other kingdoms coming after Babylon with different names but it is still Babylon.
- God is showing one image with different aspects.
- One philosophy.
- Is the image positive or negative, good or bad? The stone is coming to destroy it therefore it is evil; the whole image had the character of Babylon.

2:39 And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth.

- This all it says about the second kingdom is one sentence.
- Book of Daniel has more political aspect to prophecy (kings).
- Book of Revelation is more ecclesiastic aspect to prophecy (churches).
- Gods people in OT where nation.
- Gods people in NT are a church.

- Second kingdom of silver (less value, but stronger) .
- Second kingdom is Medes and Persians {Dan 5:28} {Isa 45:1}.
- Second kingdom is also the arms (Medes and Persians).
- God only told the king that he would be attacked but not who or when as it was future.
- Third kingdom is Grecia {Dan 8:21}
- Daniel chapter 2 is the best place to show that Gods word is truth.
- There is more detail then the second kingdom.
- Alexander the Great conquered the world at 32.
- Greece was known for its use of Silver. [\(LOOKUP\)](#)

2:40 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.

- Out of the four kingdoms the fourth has the more details.
- We need to study the forth kingdom; Rome.
- Rome was known for the use of Iron.
- Breaketh in pieces keeps repeating {Ps 2:9} Jesus is the one who breaks; but here it is Rome. Characteristics of Christ; Against Christ; Anti-Christ {Isa 53:5}
- Against Christ > They killed him.
- Bruise {Gen 3:15} foretelling the death of Christ; that the Romans would kill Christ.
- Bruise connotation of cross.
- The stone breaks in pieces paying back.
- {Dan 7:23} - Forth kingdom upon earth; devour the whole earth.
- {Luk 2:1} - Decree unto the whole world.

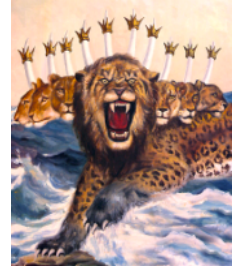
2:41 And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potters' clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay.

- The kingdom shall be divided.
- One kingdom.
- kingdom shall be divided (by iron and clay).
- Iron = kingdom (Broken Rome - Characteristics (political entity with persecution)).
- Clay = kingdom.
 - Trying to unite but they cannot, only Christ can have church and state and not have persecution.
 - {Acts 5:31} Prince belongs to Jesus in the context of State, saviour in context of Church.
 - {Rev 1:5-6} Prince (State), sins (Church); kings and priests.
 - {Rev 15:3} God, King.
 - {Rev 19:16} KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.
- Only church and state can exist with Christ but Anti Christ tries to bring it about but it can only bring persecution.
- From Babylon to Rome it was church and state but pagan gods;
- In Iron Clay its state and pagan religion which is called Christian.
- Last day issues is union of church and state.
- This kingdom is trying to be like Christ (Anti).
- Potters clay = Good connotation. {Isa 643:8}
- Miry clay = (Heb #2916) To be sticking, dirt swept away, dirt.

- "He brought me up also out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, [and] established my goings." {Ps 40:2}
- This is a NEGATIVE, like a pit (margin; Pit of Noise) = Confusion = Babylon
- {2 Thess 2:3} falling way (opposite) departing from the true faith.
- Potters clay to Miry clay = falling away.

The Ten toes

2:42 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.



- Toes are part of the feet - not separate but part.
- The toes are still iron and clay.
- All the toes are ONE kingdom.
- {Rev 17:12} Ten horns are ten king's with no Kingdom, one mind one kingdom.
- Kingdom of Iron and clay.
- 5 Kingdoms and after this is kingdom of God.
- strong, and partly broken (opposite of strong is weak) so, strong and weak.
- Iron = political (strong).
- Clay = religious (weak) because of {v41} depending on political power for its power therefore it is weak, has not merit.

2:43 And whereas thou sawest 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.

- Out of five kingdoms the kingdom with the most detail is the fifth.
- All these kingdoms are world wide kingdoms.
- What is the climatic point of the prophecy? The stone.
- Its getting weaker and weaker, in moral value (degeneration).
- Its increasing in its strength in sin and political power (area).
- These kingdoms where connected with Gods people.
- Now spiritual Israel with iron and clay.
- Their relationship to Gods people was that they were conquered by them.
- This image is destroying Gods people. That's why God is going to destroy it.
- The images in Babylon have religious connotation (idol).
- This image has political connotation (kingdoms)
- Put these together (church + state) = persecution (Christ was killed by union of church (blasphemy) and state (king of Jews))?
- Gods people through gold, silver, iron, iron and clay are persecuted.
- This images from top to bottom has religion and political entities.
- Shall not cleave {Gen 2:24} uniting. This a union that will not happen.
- Mingle themselves with the seed of men = (intercourse man and women).
- Intercourse: refers to fornication, or the mixture of (church and state).

Iron and Clay

- Iron is political (Broken Roman Empire).
- Clay is {Isa 64:8} Gods people or Church.
- Feet is a combination of Church and State, which equals persecution.
- Why is Gods kingdom represented as a stone?
- Stoning is associated with the punishment of breaking the law. {Jon 8:1-7}
- God will judge the whole world after the iron and clay.
- Where are Babylon, Medes and Persians, Greece, and Rome today?
- The stone is meant to destroy all three kingdoms, but they don't exist, all the characteristics still exist in the kingdom of iron and clay.
- If we setup this image according to time were missing the toes. (One Kingdom) {Dan 2:42}
- The time will come when the toes will form and bring persecution to Gods people.
- Why is the (Iron Clay) stronger?
- The 4 kingdoms persecuted Gods people with paganism.
- The (Iron Clay) persecuted Gods people with "Christian" religion.
- It's stronger because of its deception.
- Because they can use the name of God to destroy the Christian people.

2:44 And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, [but] it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.

- These kingdoms were already destroyed political speaking.
- The bible makes it sound as if they all exist.
- Philosophy, religion, politics of Babylon all exist in the feet.
- All these continued into the feet {Rev 13:2}.
- {Matt 12:34} out of the heart the mouth speaks
- What is the main emphasis of Babylon?
 - Idol worship {Dan 3}
- What is the main emphasis of Medes and Persians?
 - Decree that cannot be changed (infallibility) {Dan 6}
- What is the main emphasis of Greece?
 - Philosophy {Acts 17:21}
- What is the main emphasis of Rome?
 - Persecution military power {Matt 2:16}
- The feet contain, (Idol worship; Infallibility; Philosophy; Military power)

2:45 Forasmuch as thou sawest 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: and the dream [is] certain, and the interpretation thereof sure.

- Iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold.
- (5 thing mentioned).
- What is the centre ingredient? Clay
- Total Destruction {Matt 21:44}

2:46 Then the king Nebuchadnezzar fell upon his face, and worshipped Daniel, and commanded that they should offer an oblation and sweet odours unto him.

2:47 The king answered unto Daniel, and said, Of a truth [it is], that your God [is] a God of gods, and a Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, seeing thou couldst reveal this secret.

2:48 Then the king made Daniel a great man, and gave him many great gifts, and made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon, and chief of the governors over all the wise [men] of Babylon.

2:49 Then Daniel requested of the king, and he set Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, over the affairs of the province of Babylon: but Daniel [sat] in the gate of the king.

3–6 MH 148 ; PP 592

4 FE 77 ; PK 484

4, 5 Te 271

5 CD 29 ; PK 481 ; 4T 570

6 PK 480

7 PK 481

8 CD 28 , 30 , 154 ; CE 43 ; CG 166 ; CH 50 , 65 ; CT 478 , 496 ; Ed 54 ; FE 78 , 86 ,
227 ; ML 75 , 120 , 147 , 254 ; MM 276 ; SL 19 ; Te 35 , 101 , 151 , 189 , 237 , 271 ;
4T 515 , 570 ; 5T 448 ; 9T 157 , 165

8–12 CH 64 ; PK 483

9 PK 546

10 SL 21

12 CD 31 ; FE 79

12–20 SL 22

15–17 PK 484

15–20 CH 65 ; FE 80

17 CD 31 , 154 ; CH 50 , 65 ; COL 357 ; CT 456 ; FE 87 , 225 , 247 , 339 , 358 ; MM 89

17–20 FE 193

18–20 CH 65

19 CD 32 ; Te 271

19, 20 Ed 55 ; ML 147 ; MYP 241 ; PK 485

20 CH 50 ; FE 247 , 358 , 374 ; MM 276 ; Te 191 ; 6T 220

CHAPTER 2

1 Nebuchadnezzar, forgetting his dream, requireth it of the Chaldeans, by promises and threatenings . 10 They acknowledging their inability are judged to die . 14 Daniel

obtaining some respite findeth the dream . 19 He blesseth God . 24 He staying the decree is brought to the king . 31 The dream . 36 The interpretation . 46 Daniel's advancement .

1. Second year. On the identification of the second year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign and for an explanation of how the three years of Daniel's training (ch. 1:5, 18) were completed before the end of the king's 2d year see on ch. 1:18 .

Dreamed dreams. Possibly the plural is intended to describe the series of incidents in the dream. The singular occurs in vs. 3, 4, 5, 6 , etc. The records of ancient Mesopotamia tell of many royal dreams. In one of these Gudea saw a man with a kingly crown upon his head whose stature reached from earth to heaven. The ancients regarded dreams with awe, treated them as revelations from their deities, and sought to discover their true interpretation.

The Lord in His providence gave Nebuchadnezzar this dream. God had a message for the king of the Babylonian realm. There were representatives in the palaces of Nebuchadnezzar through whom God could communicate a knowledge of Himself. God is no respecter of men or of nations. His object is to save as many as are willing, of whatever tribe or nation. He was as anxious to save the ancient Babylonians as He was to save Israel.

The dream was intended to reveal to Nebuchadnezzar that the course of history was ordained by the Most High and subject to His will. Nebuchadnezzar was shown his place of responsibility in the great plan of Heaven, in order that he might have the opportunity of cooperating effectively with the divine program.

The lessons of history given to Nebuchadnezzar were designed for the instruction of nations and men till the close of time. Other scepters than those of Babylon have held sway over the nations of men. To every ancient nation God assigned a special place in His great plan. When rulers and people failed in their opportunity, their glory was laid in the dust. Nations today should heed the lessons of past history. Above the fluctuating scene of international diplomacy the great God of heaven sits enthroned "silently, patiently working out the counsels of His own will" (PK 500). Eventually stability and permanence will come when God Himself, at the end of time, sets up His kingdom, which shall never be destroyed. (v. 44). See on ch. 4:17 .

God approached King Nebuchadnezzar through a dream because, evidently, that was the most effective means by which to impress his mind with the importance of the message thus imparted, win his confidence, and secure his cooperation. Like all ancient peoples, Nebuchadnezzar believed in dreams as one of the means by which the gods revealed their will to men. Divine wisdom always meets men where they are. In communicating a knowledge of His will to men today God may use means that are less spectacular, yet as certainly ordained for the accomplishment of His beneficent purposes. He ever adapts His modes of working with men to the capacity of each individual and to the environment of the age in which each lives. See further on ch. 4:10 .

Was troubled. Or, “was disturbed.” The Hebrew verb thus translated occurs also in Gen. 41:8 and Ps. 77:4 . The dream experience had greatly impressed King Nebuchadnezzar.

2. Magicians. Heb. *charṭummim* , an Egyptian loan word (see on ch. 1:20).

Astrologers. Heb. *'ashshaphim* , an Akkadian loan word (see on ch. 1:20).

Sorcerers. Heb. *mekashshephim* , from a root meaning “to use enchantments.” The Babylonians called them by the cognate word *kashshapu* . The *mekashshephim* professed to be able to produce magic spells (see on Ex. 7:11). The Mosaic law pronounced the death penalty upon those who practiced this black magic (Lev. 20:27 ; cf. 1 Sam. 28:9).

Chaldeans. Heb. *Kaśdim* (see on ch. 1:4).

3. To know the dream. Though the king had been deeply impressed by the dream, when he awoke he found it impossible to recall the particulars (see PK 491). Some have suggested that Nebuchadnezzar had not forgotten his dream and that he was putting to the test the reputed skill of the supposedly wise men. But the king appears too concerned about gaining a knowledge of the dream and its interpretation to use the occasion to test his would-be interpreters.

4. Syriack. Heb. *'aramith* , “Aramaic.” The royal family and the ruling class of the empire were Aramaic-speaking Chaldeans originating from southern Mesopotamia. It is therefore not surprising to find that the king’s courtiers spoke to him in Aramaic and not in Babylonian, the tongue of the native population of Babylon. The Aramaeans were an important branch of the Semitic peoples, and their language included many dialects.

From this verse on to the end of ch. 7 the record is in Aramaic and not in Hebrew, as is the remainder of the book. On the possible reasons for this see p. 749.

O king, live for ever. The Babylonian formula found in contemporary inscriptions reads somewhat like this: “May Nabu and Marduk give long days and everlasting years to the king my lord.” Compare 1 Sam. 10:24 ; 1 Kings 1:31 ; Neh. 2:3 ; Dan. 3:9 ; 5:10 ; 6:21 .

5. The thing is gone from me. Some scholars translate this expression so as to give it the meaning “the thing is certain with me,” or “the word is promulgated by me.” The RSV reads, “the word from me is sure.” These alternative translations are based on the assumption that the Aramaic word *'azda* ' is an adjective rather than a verb, as the translators of the KJV considered it. The translation of the KJV is supported by the LXX and by Rashi, who translates *'azda* ' “has gone.” Whatever meaning is adopted there is no question about Nebuchadnezzar’s being unable to recall the particulars of the dream (see on v. 3). The dream was purposely taken from the king, that the wise men should not place upon it a false interpretation (see FE 412).

Cut in pieces. Literally, “dismembered.” They were to be cut limb from limb (see 2 Macc.1:16 ; Josephus *Antiquities* xv. 8. 4). Such cruelty as is here depicted was common in the ancient world. The Assyrians and Babylonians were notorious for the severity and barbarity of their treatment of offenders. Ashurbanipal reports that he cut in pieces rebel rulers.

Dunghill. Aramaic *newali* , which, from a similarity with an Akkadian root, some interpret as meaning “ruins.” Others retain the definition “dunghill,” or “refuse heap,” and interpret the clause as meaning that the houses would be turned into “public privies” (see 2 Kings 10:27). The LXX supports neither interpretation, but reads, “your houses shall be spoiled.”

8. *Gain the time.* Literally, “buy the time.” The wise men were temporizing, and their repeated request aroused the suspicion of the king that they were seeking to gain and advantage by delay. It is doubtful whether at this point he was already seriously questioning their ability to give him the requested information. The whole fabric of his faith was built around a belief that the gods communicated with men through the various channels represented by these men. Their hesitancy to comply immediately with his request may at first have aroused his suspicion that they had conspired together to take advantage of him. If the dream contained a communication concerning action to be taken at an auspicious moment, delay would result in tragic loss. Certain communications through divinations demanded that action be undertaken at a precise moment, such as a particular conjunction of the planets. The expressions, “gain the time,” and “till the time be changed” (v. 9), may have reference to such a supposed opportune moment.

9. *One decree for you.* Literally, “your law is one.” The word for “decree” may also be rendered “sentence,” or “penalty.”

Time be changed. Either until the king should forget the whole affair or till they could invent some form of reply. “Time” here may also refer to the auspicious moment for carrying out the alleged communication of a god (see on v. 8).

10. *Not a man.* The Chaldeans were compelled to acknowledge their inability to reveal the dream. They told the king that he was asking for something that was beyond human power to reveal, and that no king had ever made such an unreasonable request of any of his subjects.

King, lord, nor ruler. Literally, “king, great and powerful.” “Great king” (see 2 Kings 18:28) is an old Babylonian title. Such an expression as “Great King, Mighty King, King of Assyria [or, of Babylon]” is common in the inscriptions.

11. *Rare.* Better, “difficult.”

Gods. Some see a hint here of two classes of gods. They suggest that these wise men claimed to be in communication with certain gods, such subordinate deities as were

supposed to maintain contact with men, but that the higher gods were unapproachable. In any case the Chaldeans were revealing the limitations of their art.

Others suggest that the plural *'elahin*, “gods,” even as the Hebrew plural *'elohim* (see Vol. I, pp. 170, 171), could be used of a single deity, and that, in common with other polytheists, the Chaldeans recognized some supreme deity. In any case the wise men were frank to admit that they recognized a higher intelligence, some master mind or minds, that had knowledge beyond that possessed by human beings. This confession of failure provided a remarkable opportunity for Daniel to reveal something of the power of the God whom he served and worshiped.

12. Commanded to destroy. The severity of the sentence was not out of keeping with the customs of the times. It was, however, a bold step on the part of the king, because the men whose death he had ordered were the learned classes of society.

Babylon. Possibly only the city and not the whole realm of Babylonia.

13. They sought Daniel. Daniel and his friends would not have been “sought” had they not already become members of the profession of “wise men.” Thus the view that they were still in training seems unfounded (see on ch. 1:18). The fact that they had but recently graduated is sufficient to explain why they had not been called to interpret the dream. The monarch would have summoned only the highest ranking leaders, representative of all the knowledge of their craft. Neither the king nor the leading wise men would have thought of calling on Daniel and his three friends any more than the top specialists of the land, baffled by a royal ailment, would consult fledgling doctors just out of medical school. Nor is it necessary to suppose that Daniel’s training included courses in exorcism and soothsaying, as modern critics suggest (see on ch. 1:20).

14. Wisdom. Aramaic *te'em*, which may also be translated “taste,” or “discretion.” Daniel showed great tact in approaching his superior.

15. Hasty. The LXX has *pikros*, which means “bitter,” or “harsh.” Some scholars also assign this meaning to the Aramaic, whereas others insist that the original has the basic idea of urgency.

16. Give him time. One of the things that infuriated the king was that the wise men were seeking to postpone their answer (see on v. 8). Obviously the king was still troubled over the dream, and may have been happy over the new prospect of finding a solution to the mystery that was harassing his spirit. Since Daniel had not been consulted previously, the king may have thought it only fair to give him an opportunity. In his previous contact with this young Judean captive, Nebuchadnezzar had evidently been favorably impressed with Daniel’s sincerity and ability. Daniel’s previous faithfulness in lesser things now opened the door to greater things.

Interpretation. Daniel's request differed from that of the Chaldeans. The wise men demanded that the king relate to them the dream. Daniel simply requested time, and assured the king that the interpretation would be provided.

18. Desire mercies. Daniel and his companions could approach God with strong faith and implicit confidence because, to the best of their knowledge and ability, they were living up to His revealed will (see 1 John 3:22). They had the consciousness that they were in the place where God wanted them to be, and were doing the work that Heaven designed. If in their earlier experience they had compromised principle and had yielded to the temptations that constantly surrounded them in the royal court, they could not have expected such marked divine intervention in this crisis. Contrast their experience with that of the prophet of Judah who forfeited divine protection by his rash disobedience (1 Kings 13:11–32 ; see on 1 Kings 13:24).

19. Night vision. Aramaic *chazu* , akin to the Heb. *chazon* (see on 1 Sam. 3:1).

Daniel blessed. Upon receiving the divine revelation, Daniel's first thought was to return due praise to the Revealer of secrets, a worthy example of what all should do who receive signal blessings from the Lord.

On the meaning of the expression "blessed the God" see on Ps. 63:4 .

20. Name of God. The expression is frequently used to denote the being, power, and essential activity of God. "Name" is often used in the Bible synonymously with "character."

Wisdom. Those who lack wisdom may receive it from its true source in response to the prayer of faith (James 1:5). The boasted claim of the Babylonians that their deities possessed wisdom and insight had been demonstrated to be false. Heathen deities continually disappoint their devotees.

21. And he. The pronoun is emphatic in the Aramaic. The effect may be shown in the English by the translation, "It is he that changeth," etc.

Times and the seasons. The two words are almost synonymous. The latter may refer to a more specific point of time; the former seems to stress more the idea of a period of time.

Removeth kings. Here is portrayed the true philosophy of human history. Kings and rulers are ultimately under the direction and control of an almighty Potentate (see Ed 173 ; see on v. 1 and on ch. 4:17).

Unto the wise. The Lord delights to bestow wisdom upon those who will use it wisely. He did this for Daniel, and He will do it today for every one who trusts fully in Him.

22. He revealeth. God reveals Himself in nature (Ps. 19), in personal experience, through the prophetic gift and other gifts of the Spirit (1 Cor. 12), and His written Word.

Deep. Things beyond human comprehension until revealed.

Darkness. That which man is unable to see is not hidden from the eye of God (see Ps. 139:12 ; 1 John 1:5).

23. Thank thee. The pronoun is emphatic in the Aramaic. The word order in the original is as follows: “To thee, O God of my fathers, I give thanks.”

What we desired. Although the dream has been revealed to Daniel, he does not take all the credit to himself, but includes his companions who prayed with him.

24. Destroy not the wise men. Daniel’s first concern was to plead for the wise men of Babylon, that the sentence of death upon them might be canceled. They had done nothing to earn their reprieve, but they were saved because of the presence of a righteous man in their midst. It has often been thus. The righteous are “the salt of the earth.” They have a preserving quality. Because of Paul’s presence in the ship the sailors and all aboard were saved (Acts 27:24). The wicked know not how much they owe to the righteous. Yet how often the wicked ridicule and persecute the very ones whom they should thank for the preservation of their lives.

25. In haste. Possibly because of his great joy that the secret had been discovered. He might now be spared the gory task of executing all the wise men, an assignment for which obviously he had no heart.

I have found. Arioch appears to take undeserved credit to himself, for his statement seems to imply that through strenuous efforts on his part he had discovered someone who could interpret the dream. However, Arioch may not have known of Daniel’s interview with the king (v. 16). In this case his statement would be the natural way of announcing the discovery.

26. Belteshazzar. For the meaning of this name and the reason why it was given to Daniel see on ch. 1:7 . In Nebuchadnezzar’s presence Daniel naturally assumed his Babylonian name.

27. Cannot the wise men. Daniel had no desire to exalt himself above the wise men. He aimed, rather, to impress upon the king the futility of trusting his wise men for counsel and help. He hoped to turn the king’s eyes to the great God in heaven, the God whom Daniel worshiped, the God of the Hebrews, whose people had been conquered by the king.

The astrologers, the magicians. See on ch. 1:20 .

Soothsayers. Aramaic *gazerin* , from a root meaning “to cut,” “to determine.” Hence the generally accepted meaning is “the deciders,” or “the determiners [of destiny].” From the position of the stars, by various arts of computation and divining, these soothsayers thought they could determine the future (see on ch. 1:20).

28. Latter days. See on Isa. 2:2 . The message of the dream was for the instruction of Nebuchadnezzar as well as of the rulers and people to the end of time (see on v. 1). The outline of prophecy carries us from Nebuchadnezzar’s day (see on v. 29) down to the end of the world and the second coming of Christ (see on vs. 44 , 45). Nebuchadnezzar had been looking forward with anxious forebodings to the future (see SL 34). God revealed to him the future, not to satisfy his curiosity, but to awaken in his mind a sense of personal responsibility toward the program of heaven.

29. Hereafter. In this dream are depicted future developments beginning with the time of Daniel and Nebuchadnezzar and extending to the end of the world.

30. Their sakes. “Their” is a supplied word. The clause reads literally, “but on account of the thing that they may make known to the king the interpretation.” “They” appears to be used impersonally. The LXX probably gives the simplest meaning of the passage, “Moreover, this mystery has not been revealed to me by reason of wisdom which is in me beyond all living, but for the sake of making known the interpretation to the king, that thou mightest know the thoughts of thine heart.”

31. Image. Aramaic *ṣelem* , “a statue,” corresponding to the Heb. *ṣelem* , which also may be translated “statue.” In every instance except one (Ps. 39:6 , where it is translated “vain shew”) the KJV translates *ṣelem* , “image,” though statue would be an appropriate translation in a number of instances, such as 2 Kings 11:18 ; 2 Chron. 23:17 ; Amos 5:26 .

Whose brightness was excellent. Or, as in the LXX , “whose appearance was extraordinary.”

Terrible. Or, “dreadful.” The word occurs again in Dan. 7:7, 19 .

32. Fine gold. That is, “pure gold.”

Brass. Rather, “bronze,” or “copper” (see on 2 Sam. 8:8 ; 1 Kings 7:47).

33. Legs. The word thus translated seems here to refer to the lower part of the legs. The word translated “thighs” (v. 32) refers to the upper part of the hips. Precisely where on the leg the transition from brass to iron occurred is not clear from these words.

Clay. Aramaic *chasaph* . From an examination of the cognate languages *chasaph* seems to designate an earthen vessel or a potsherd rather than the clay itself from which these objects are formed. The word for “clay,” Aramaic *ṭin* , occurs in vs. 41, 43 , in

connection with *chasaph* , and is there translated “miry.” It seems better, therefore, in v. 33 to translate *chasaph* “molded clay,” or “earthenware,” rather than simply “clay.”

34. Cut out. Or, “quarried,” or “broken out.”

Without hands. That is, unaided by human agencies.

35. Chaff. For a description of threshing as carried out in ancient Oriental lands, see on Ruth 3:2 ; Matt. 3:12 . Inasmuch as Inspiration has attached no particular significance to the “chaff” and the “wind” that blows it away (see on Matt. 13:3), it is best to consider them simply details added to complete the picture. For a description of the threshing floor as a common illustration, see on Ps. 1:4 ; (cf. Matt. 13:3 ; see Vol. III, p. 1111).

36. We will tell. The plural may indicate that Daniel classed his companions with himself. They had joined him in earnest prayer that the interpretation might be revealed, and Daniel may have wished to acknowledge their part in the matter (vs. 17, 18).

37. King of kings. This same title is found in the inscription of the Persian king Ariaramnes, a contemporary of Nebuchadnezzar.

God of heaven hath given. In his inscriptions Nebuchadnezzar attributes his regal success to his god Marduk, but Daniel, in a kindly manner, corrects this mistaken idea. He affirms that it is the God of heaven who has bestowed such power upon him.

A kingdom. The territory that Nebuchadnezzar ruled had had a long and checkered history and had been under the varied leadership of different peoples and kingdoms. According to Genesis, the city of Babylon was part of the kingdom founded by Nimrod, the great-grandson of Noah (Gen. 10:8–10). A number of city-states existed in the valleys of the Tigris and Euphrates at a very early period. Later, some states were grouped together into several Sumerian kingdoms. Following the first period of Sumer’s domination came the kingdom of Akkad, with its great Semitic kings Sargon and Naram-Sin. However, these Semites were again replaced by various nations, such as the Gutti, Elamites, and Sumerians. They in turn had to give way to the Semites who founded the Old Babylonian Empire, which flourished in the time of the later patriarchs. This Amorite Empire, of which Hammurabi was the most important king, came to include all of Mesopotamia and expanded into Syria, like the Akkadian Empire of Sargon. Later, Mesopotamia was taken over by Hurrians and Kassites, and Babylonia became less important than the powerful Hittite and Egyptian empires. Then in northern Mesopotamia arose another world power, the Assyrian Empire, which again united Mesopotamia and Western Asia to the Mediterranean. After a period of Assyrian domination Babylon became independent again under Chaldean rule, and took over once more the leadership of the world. Nabopolassar (626–605 B.C.) was the founder of what is termed the Chaldean, or Neo-Babylonian, Empire, which had its golden age in the days of King Nebuchadnezzar (605–562 B.C.), and lasted until Babylon fell to the Medes and Persians in 539 (see Vol. II, pp. 92–94; Vol. III, pp. 45–50).

38. *Beasts of the field.* See Jer. 27:6 ; Jer. 28:14 cf. Gen. 1:26 . A fitting representation of Babylon’s dominion in the time of Nebuchadnezzar. The manner in which ancient kings included the animal world in their sphere of domination is illustrated by a statement by Shalmaneser III: “Ninurta and Palil, who love my priesthood, have given me all the beasts of the field.”

The following passage from the so-called East India House inscription is typical of archeological evidence which substantiates Daniel’s description of Nebuchadnezzar’s conquests:

“In his [Marduk’s] exalted service I have traversed distant countries, remote mountains from the Upper Sea [Mediterranean] to the Lower Sea [Persian Gulf], steep paths, blockaded roads, where the step is impeded, [where] no foothold is possible, [also] uncharted routes, [and] desert paths. The disobedient I subjugated; I captured the enemies, established justice in the land; exalted the people; the bad and evil I removed far from the people.”

Thou art this head. Nebuchadnezzar was the Neo-Babylonian Empire personified. The military conquests and the architectural splendor of Babylon were, in large measure, due to his prowess.

Gold. An abundance of gold was used in embellishing Babylon. Herodotus describes in lavish terms how gold sparkled in the sacred temples of the city. The image of the god, the throne on which he sat, and the table and the altar were made of gold (Herodotus i. 181, 183; iii. 1–7). The prophet Jeremiah compares Babylon to a golden cup (Jer. 51:7). Pliny describes the robes of priests as interlaced with gold.

Nebuchadnezzar was outstanding among the kings of antiquity. He left to his successors a great and prosperous kingdom, as may be gleaned from the following inscription:

“[From] the Upper Sea [to] the Lower Sea (one line destroyed) ... which Marduk, my lord, has entrusted to me, I have made ... the city of Babylon to the foremost among all the countries and every human habitation; its name I have [made, or elevated] to the [most worthy of] praise among the sacred cities. ... The sanctuaries of my lords Nebo and Marduk (as a) wise (ruler) ... always. ...

“At the time, the Lebanon (*La-ab-na-a-nu*), the [Cedar] Mountain, the luxurious forest of Marduk, the smell of which is sweet, the hi[gh] cedars of which, [its] pro[duct], another god [*has not desired*, which] no other king has *fe[lled]* ... my *nâbû* Marduk [had desired] as a fitting adornment for the palace of the *ruler* of heaven and earth, (this Lebanon) over which a foreign enemy was ruling and robbing (it of) its riches—its people were scattered, had fled to a far (away region). (Trusting) in the power of my lords Nebo and Marduk, I organized [my army] for a[n expedition] to the Lebanon. I made that country happy by eradicating its enemy everywhere (*lit.* : below and above). All its scattered inhabitants I led back to their settlements (*lit.*: collected and reinstalled). What no former king had done (I achieved): I cut through steep mountains, I split rocks, opened passages and (thus) I constructed a straight road for the (transport of the) cedars. I made the Arahtu flo[at] (down) and carry to Marduk, my king, mighty cedars, high and strong, of precious beauty and of excellent dark quality,

the abundant yield of the Lebanon, as (if they be) reed stalks (carried by) the river. Within Babylon [I stored] mulberry wood. I made the inhabitants of the Lebanon live in safety together and let nobody disturb them. In order that nobody might do any harm [to them] I ere[cted there] a stela (showing) me (as) everlasting king”

(*Ancient Near Eastern Texts* , p. 307).

39. Another kingdom inferior. As silver is inferior to gold, the Medo-Persian Empire was inferior to the Neo-Babylonian Empire.

Some commentators have explained the term “inferior” as meaning “lower down in the image,” or “below.” The expression correctly means “downward,” “earthward,” but in this verse Daniel is speaking, not of the relative position of metals, but of nations. As we contrast the two kingdoms, we find that though the latter covered more territory, it certainly was inferior in luxury and magnificence. The Median and Persian conquerors adopted the culture of the complex Babylonian civilization, for their own was far less developed.

This second kingdom of Daniel’s prophecy is sometimes called the Medo-Persian Empire, because it began as a combination of Media and Persia. It included the older Median Empire and the newer acquisitions of the Persian conqueror Cyrus. The second kingdom cannot be the Median Empire alone, as some contend, with Persia as the third. The Median Empire was contemporary with the Neo-Babylonian, not its successor. Media fell to Cyrus the Persian before Babylon did. The fact that after Belshazzar’s death Darius the Mede “was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans” (ch. 9:1) does not mean that there was a separate Median Empire after the Babylonian and before the Persians took over (see Vol. III, pp. 48–56, 94–96). Darius the Mede ruled in Babylon by permission of the real conqueror, Cyrus (see Additional Note Chapter 6), as Daniel obviously knew. The book of Daniel repeatedly refers to the nation that conquered Babylon, and that Darius represented, as that of “the Medes and Persians” (see on chs. 5:28 ; 6:8, 28), and it pictures that dual empire elsewhere as a single beast (see on ch. 8:3, 4).

The origin of the Medes and Persians is not clear, but it is believed that around 2000 B.C. a number of Aryan tribes, led by the Madai (Medes) began to migrate from what is now southern Russia into what later became northern Persia, where they first appear in history in the 9th century (see on >Gen. 10:2 ; see Vol. III, pp. 50, 51). Among these Aryans were also the Persians, who settled in the Zagros Mountains bordering on Elam late in the 9th century B.C. Probably by 675 their ruler established himself as king of the city of Anshan. There he and his descendants ruled in comparative obscurity. At the beginning of the 6th century they were vassals of the Median king, ruling a relatively insignificant border state in the large Median Empire, which stretched from eastern Asia Minor around the north and east of the Babylonian Empire (see *The Rival Empires in Jeremiah’s Time* ; see Vol. III, pp. 50, 51).

In 553 or 550 B.C. Cyrus, who had become king of Persia as a vassal of the Median Empire, defeated Astyages of Media. Thus the formerly subordinate Persians became the

dominant power in what had been the Median Empire. Since the Persians were the ruling power from the time of Cyrus on, it is now generally referred to as the Persian Empire. But the older prestige of Media was reflected in the phrase “Medes and Persians” applied to the conquerors of Babylon in Daniel’s day and even later (Esther 1:19 ; etc.). The honorary position of Darius the Mede after the conquest of Babylon demonstrates Cyrus’ deference to the Medes even after he himself wielded the actual power (see Vol. III, pp. 51–53, 95, 96).

Years before, under prophetic guidance, the prophet Isaiah had described the work of Cyrus (Isa. 45:1). This conqueror of Media soon defeated the neighboring tribes and ruled from Ararat in the north to southeastern Babylonia and the Persian Gulf in the south. To round out his empire, he defeated the rich Croesus of Lydia in 547 B.C. and took Babylon by strategy in 539 B.C. (see Vol. III, pp. 51–55). Cyrus recognized that the Lord had given him all these kingdoms (2 Chron. 36:23 ; Ezra 1:2). For parallel prophecies concerning this empire, see on chs. 7:5 ; 8:3–7 ; 11:2 .

Third kingdom. The successor of the Medo-Persian Empire was the “Greek” (more properly Macedonian or Hellenistic) Empire of Alexander and his successors (see ch. 8:20, 21).

The Hebrew word for Greece is *Yawan* (Javan), which is the name of one of the sons of Japheth. Javan is mentioned in the genealogy immediately after Madai, the progenitor of the Medes (see on Gen. 10:2). About the time the Israelites were settling in Canaan, those Indo-European tribes later called Greeks were migrating in successive waves into the Aegean region (mainland Greece, the islands, and the western coasts of Asia Minor), conquering or driving out the earlier Mediterranean inhabitants. These displacements were connected with the movement of the Peoples of the Sea (including the Philistines) into the eastern Mediterranean coastlands (see Vol. II, pp. 27, 33, 34). Ionian Greeks were found in Egypt in the time of Psamtik I (663–610 B.C.) and in Babylonia during the reign of Nebuchadnezzar (605–562 B.C.), as attested by written records.

Greece was divided into small city-states with a common language but little concerted action. When we think of ancient Greece we think chiefly of the golden age of Greek civilization, under the leadership of Athens, in the 5th century B.C. This flowering of Greek culture followed the period of the greatest united effort of the divided city-states—the successful defense of Greece against Persia about the time of Queen Esther. On the Persian wars, see on ch. 11:2 ; see also Vol. III, pp. 59–62.

The “Grecia” of ch. 8:21 does not refer to the divided city-states of classical Greece, but rather to the later Macedonian kingdom that conquered Persia. The Macedonians, a kindred nation north of Greece proper, conquered the Greek cities and incorporated them for the first time into a strong, united state. Alexander the Great, inheriting his father’s newly expanded Greco-Macedonian kingdom, set out to extend Macedonian dominion and Greek culture eastward, and conquered the Persian Empire. The prophecy represents the kingdom of Greece as following Persia, because Greece never became united into a kingdom until the formation of the Macedonian Empire, which replaced Persia as the

leading world power of that time (for parallel prophecies see on chs. 7:6 ; 8:5–8, 21, 22 ; 11:2–4).

The last reigning king of the Persian Empire was Darius III (Codomannus), who was defeated by Alexander at the battles of Granicus (334 B.C.), Issus (333 B.C.), and Arbela, or Gaugamela (331 B.C.). For comments on the period of Alexander and the Hellenistic monarchies see on ch. 7:6 ; see also historical article on the intertestament period in Vol. V.

Brass. That is, bronze (see on 2 Sam. 8:8). The Greek soldiers were noted for their brazen armor. Their helmets, shields, and battle-axes were made of brass. Herodotus tells us that Psamtik I of Egypt saw in invading Greek pirates the fulfillment of an oracle that foretold “men of bronze coming from the sea” (Herodotus i. 152, 154).

Rule over all the earth. History records that the rule of Alexander extended over Macedonia, Greece, and the Persian Empire, including Egypt and extending eastward to India. It was the most extensive empire of the ancient world up to that time. Its dominion was “over all the earth” in the sense that no power on earth was equal to it, not that it covered the whole world, or even the known world of that time. A “world power” may be defined as the one that stands above all the rest, invincible, not necessarily actually governing the whole known world. Superlative statements were commonly used by ancient rulers. Cyrus called himself “king of the world, . . . king of the four rims [quarters of the world].” Xerxes styled himself “the great king, the king of kings, . . . the king of this big and far [reaching] earth.”

40. Fourth kingdom. This is not the later, divided stage of Alexander’s empire, but the next empire, which conquered the Macedonian world. Daniel elsewhere represents the Hellenistic monarchies, the divisions of Alexander’s empire, by the Grecian goat’s four horns (ch. 8:22), not by a separate beast (compare the four heads of the leopard; see on ch. 7:6).

It is obvious that the kingdom that succeeded the divided remnants of the Macedonian Empire of Alexander was what Gibbon has aptly called the “iron monarchy” of Rome, though it was not a monarchy at the time it first became the leading world power. Early Rome was settled, long before the traditional date of 753 B.C. , by Latin tribes who had come into Italy in successive waves about the time other related Indo-European tribes had settled in Greece. From about the 8th to the 5th century the Latin city-state was ruled by neighboring Etruscan kings. Roman civilization was strongly influenced by the Etruscans, who came to Italy in the 10th century, and especially by the Greeks, who arrived two centuries later.

About 500 B.C. the Roman state became a republic, and remained a republic for nearly 500 years. By 265 B.C. all Italy was under Roman control. By 200 B.C. Rome had emerged victorious from the life-and-death struggle with her powerful North African rival Carthage (originally a Phoenician colony). Henceforth Rome was mistress of the western Mediterranean, and more powerful than any of the states in the east, although she

had not yet come to grips with them. From then on Rome first dominated and then absorbed, in turn, the three surviving kingdoms of Alexander's successors (see on ch. 7:6), and thus became the next great world power after Alexander's. This fourth empire was the longest lived and most extensive of the four, stretching in the 2d Christian century from Britain to the Euphrates. For a parallel prophecy see on ch. 7:7.

Breaketh in pieces. All that we have been able to reconstruct of Roman history confirms this description. Rome won her territory by the force or the fear of her armed might. At first she intervened in international affairs in a struggle for her life against her rival, Carthage, and was drawn into war after war. Then, crushing one opponent after another, she finally became the aggressive, irresistible conqueror of the Mediterranean world and Western Europe. At the beginning of the Christian Era and a little later, the iron might of the Roman legions stood back of the Pax Romana—the Roman peace. Rome was the largest and strongest empire the world had hitherto known.

41. Toes. Though mentioning the toes, Daniel does not specifically call attention to their number. He does mention that the kingdom was to be divided (see 1T 361). Many commentators have held that the toes, of which there were presumably 10, correspond to the 10 horns of the fourth beast of ch. 7 (see on ch. 7:7).

Miry clay. See on v. 33. Rome had lost its iron tenacity and strength, and its successors were manifestly weak, like the admixture of clay with the iron.

42. Partly strong. These barbarian kingdoms differed greatly in military prowess, as Gibbon states when he refers to “the powerful monarchies of the Franks and the Visigoths, and the dependent kingdoms of the Sueves and Burgundians.”

Broken. Literally, “fragile,” “brittle.”

43. With the seed of men. Many commentators refer this to royal intermarriages, though the intent of the statement may be wider. The word for man is *'enash*, “mankind.” “Seed” means descendants. Hence there may also be a general indication of a shifting back and forth of populations, but with nationalism continuing strong. The original LXX version has several variations from the Masoretic text, vs. 42, 43 reading: “And the toes of the feet a certain part of iron and a certain part of earthenware, a certain part of the kingdom shall be strong and a certain part shall be broken. And as you saw the iron mixed with earthenware, there shall be mixings among nations [or, among generations] of men, but they shall not agree [literally, “be like-minded”], nor be friendly with one another even as it is impossible to mix iron with clay.” Theodotion's translation of Daniel, which practically displaced the original Greek translation, known as the LXX, is more like the Masoretic text, but even it shows variations: “And the toes of the feet a certain part of iron and a certain part of clay, a certain part of the kingdom shall be strong and from it [a part] shall be broken. Because you saw the iron mixed with earthenware, there shall be mixings in the seed of men and they shall not cleave this one with this one according as iron is not mixed with earthenware.”

It is difficult to evaluate the authority of the LXX in any given statement; hence it is impossible for us to know to what extent the above readings may have preserved Daniel's original words. Interestingly, the recently discovered Chester Beatty Papyri, in the Daniel section dating from the beginning of the 3d century A.D. , contain the original LXX version rather than the translation of Theodotion.

Shall not cleave. Daniel's prophecy has stood and will stand the test of time. Some world powers have been weak, others strong. Nationalism has continued strong. Attempts to unite into one great empire the various nations that grew out of the fourth empire have ended in failure. Temporarily certain sections have been united, but the union has not proved peaceful or permanent.

There have also been many political alliances among the nations. Farseeing statesmen have tried in various ways to bring about a federation of nations that would operate successfully, but all such attempts have proved disappointing.

The prophecy does not specifically declare that there could not be a temporary union of various elements, through force of arms or political domination. It does declare, however, that the constituent nations, should such a union be attempted or effected, would not become organically fused, and that they would remain mutually suspicious and unfriendly. A federation created on such a foundation is doomed to crumble. The temporary success of some dictator or nation must, therefore, not be labeled a failure of Daniel's prophecy. In the end Satan will actually be able to achieve a temporary union of all nations (Rev. 17:12–18 ; cf. Rev. 16:14 ; GC 624), but the federation will be brief, and in a short time the elements composing this union will turn on one another (GC 656 ; EW 290).

44. *Set up a kingdom.* Many commentators have attempted to make this detail of the prophecy a prediction of the first advent of Christ and the subsequent conquest of the world by the gospel. But this "kingdom" was not to exist contemporaneously with any of those four kingdoms; it was to succeed the iron-and-clay phase, which had not yet come when Christ was here on earth. The kingdom of God was still future at the time, as He clearly stated to His disciples at the Last Supper (Matt. 26:29). It is to be set up when Christ comes at the last day to judge the living and the dead (2 Tim. 4:1 ; cf. Matt. 25:31–34).

45. *Stone.* Aramaic *'eben* , identical with the Heb. *'eben* , "a single stone," used of slabs, sling stones, hewn stones, stone vessels, precious stones. The word "rock," frequently used of God (Deut. 32:4, 18 ; 1 Sam. 2:2 ; etc.), is from the Heb. *šur* rather than *'eben* . It cannot be established that there is any necessary connection between Daniel's symbol for the kingdom of God and the figure of a rock or stone used elsewhere. The interpretation offered by Daniel is of itself sufficient to identify the symbol.

Without hands. This kingdom has a superhuman origin. It is to be founded, not by the ingenious hands of man, but by the mighty hand of God.

46. Fell upon his face. A mark of respect and reverence. Such expressions of respect are frequently noted in the OT (Gen. 17:3 ; 2 Sam. 9:6 ; 14:4).

Worshipped. Aramaic *segad* , a word that normally seems to imply actual worship. The king was already upon his face; so it may mean more than “bow down”. *Segad* is used throughout ch. 3 to describe the worship of the golden image demanded by the king but refused by the Hebrews. The Hebrew words for “oblation” and “sweet odours,” combined with the word for “offer,” also strongly imply worship. Whether Daniel permitted these acts without remonstrance we are not told. The record says only that Nebuchadnezzar commanded that an oblation and sweet odors should be offered to Daniel, but does not say that the actions were carried out. Daniel may have tactfully called attention to what he had already positively affirmed, that the revelation came from the God of heaven and that he had not received it because of any superiority in wisdom (see on v. 30).

In the light of Peter’s refusal of the worship of Cornelius (Acts 10:25, 26), of Paul and Barnabas’ rejection of the adoration of the men of Lystra (Acts 14:11–18), and of the angel’s reproof of John when he fell at his feet to worship him (Rev. 19:10), many think it unlikely that Daniel would have permitted the king to worship him. Others reason that, inasmuch as God accepts sincerity of motive when men follow the best light they have, Daniel may have been directed not to interfere in the matter at this time. Many commentators follow the suggestion of Jerome that Nebuchadnezzar was not worshipping Daniel, but through Daniel was adoring Daniel’s God. They also call attention to Josephus’ record of how Alexander the Great bowed before the Jewish high priest, and when Parmenio, the king’s general, inquired concerning the meaning of this act, Alexander replied, “I did not adore him but that God who hath honored him with his high priesthood” (*Antiquities* xi. 8. 5). However, a strict reading of the second commandment of the Decalogue brings all such acts under most serious question.

As yet Nebuchadnezzar knew but little of the true God, and even less of how to worship Him. Thus far his acquaintance with God was limited to what he had seen of the divine character reflected in the life of Daniel and to what Daniel had told him of God. It is entirely possible that Nebuchadnezzar, seeing in Daniel the living representative of “the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh” (v. 11), intended the acts of worship he accorded Daniel to be in honor of Daniel’s God. With his limited knowledge of the true God, Nebuchadnezzar was doubtless doing the best he knew at the time to express his thankfulness and to honor the One whose wisdom and power had been so impressively demonstrated.

An oblation. The Hebrew word corresponding to the Aramaic word here used generally denotes a bloodless offering (see on ch. 9:21).

Sweet odours. That is, incense.

47. Your God is a God of gods. Better, “your God is God of gods.” The expression is in the superlative degree. Nebuchadnezzar, who called his patron god Marduk “lord of

gods,” here acknowledges that Daniel’s God is infinitely superior to any of the so-called gods of the Babylonians.

Lord of kings. Nebuchadnezzar evidently knew that this was a title applied to Marduk in the Babylonian creation story; he himself annually received his kingship anew from Marduk in the New Year festival. Further, he was named for Nabu, the son of Marduk, the scribe who wrote the Tablets of Fate.

Nebuchadnezzar was himself a man of superior intelligence and wisdom, as his provision for the professional training of court officials (ch. 1:3, 4) and his ability to evaluate their “wisdom and understanding” (vs. 18–20) make clear. Imperfect as was Nebuchadnezzar’s concept of the true God, he now had irrefutable proof that Daniel’s God was infinitely wiser than either the wise men or the gods of Babylon. Later experiences were to convince King Nebuchadnezzar with respect to additional attributes of the God of heaven (see on chs. 3:28, 29 ; 4:34, 37 ; see also p. 751).

48. Chief of the governors. Better, “chief prefect.” Daniel did not interpret the dream with a view to obtaining any reward from the king. His one aim was to exalt God before the king and all the people of Babylon.

49. Daniel requested. Daniel did not become intoxicated by the great honors that had been conferred upon him. He remembered his comrades. They had shared in the prayer (v. 18); they shared also in the reward.

Gate. The place where Oriental kings sat as judges and where chief councils convened (see on Gen. 19:1).

ELLEN G. WHITE COMMENTS

1–49 FE 410-413 ; PK 491-502 ; 7T 151

1, 2 FE 410

1–4 PK 491

1–5 SL 34

4–12 FE 410

5–11 PK 492

12 SL 34

12–18 PK 493

13–19 FE 374

16–18 FE 411

16–19 SL 35

19–26 PK 494

20–22 FE 374

20–28 FE 374

21 Ed 175

22 MH 433 ; 8T 282

24–30 AA 13 ; 6T 227

27, 28 SL 36

27–36 PK 497

28 FE 411

37 PK 514

31–49 7T 161

37–43 PK 498 , 548

38 Ed 175 ; PK 504

42, 43 1T 361

44 DA 34 ; 1T 360

44, 45 PK 503

44–49 PK 499

46–49 FE 412

47 Ed 56 ; PK 503 , 513 ; SL 36 ; 6T 220

CHAPTER 3

1 Nebuchadnezzar dedicateth a golden image in Dura . 8 Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego are accused for not worshipping the image . 13 They, being threatened, make



THE GOOD NEWS ABOUT THE FUTURE

There seems to be no end of new tabloids blazing with bizarre and intriguing predictions of supermarket psychics and syndicated astrologers. They claim to know what will take place in the future.

If their information is coming from God, it surely seems a bit strange that most of their interest is in the people of the entertainment business. And it's interesting to notice that the batting average of the psychics is less than impressive.

Counterfeit prophets annually fire "buckshot into tomorrow's clouds, hoping to bag a stray duck as it passes overhead," says Ralph Blodgett in *These Times* (March 1979).

Blodgett also states that out of 250 specific published predictions he found less than 3 percent that he could list as reasonably fulfilled and 97 percent that missed the mark completely.

If we really want to know what the future holds we need to go back to the Bible, the book that has proved again and again its accuracy in predicting the future.

- 1. What gift has God given to man to reveal the future? 2 Peter 1:19-21 (KJV 898; NIV 860; NKJV 1166).**

The Bible says: _____

Nebster's defines *prophecy* as "a prediction of the future."

Unless otherwise noted, Bible texts are from the King James Version. Bibles referred to by page number are published by the International Bible Society (KJV, 1985, #330 and NIV, 1984, #109) and Thomas Nelson Publishers (NKJV, 1990, #490).

- 2. To whom does God reveal His secrets of the future? Amos 3:7 (KJV 673; NIV 648; NKJV 889).**

The Bible says: _____

God looks into the future and foretells what is going to take place centuries before the events come to pass. As we see these prophecies fulfilled we can have faith in God and His Word.

Read the entire chapter of Daniel 2. The events of this chapter took place in about the year 605 B.C. Babylon was the first world empire. It is fascinating to notice that God outlines the future of the world for 2,500 years in this one chapter.

- 3. What happened to King Nebuchadnezzar during his second year as king? Daniel 2:1 (KJV 651; NIV 625; NKJV 856).**

The Bible says: _____

- 4. Whom did the king summon to tell him his dream and its interpretation? Daniel 2:2, 3 (KJV 651; NIV 625; NKJV 856).**

The Bible says: _____

- 5. When these "wise" men were unable to reveal the king's dream, what command was given by Nebuchadnezzar? Daniel 2:4-12 (KJV 651; NIV 625, 626; NKJV 856).**

The Bible says: _____

- 6. When Daniel was sought to be slain, what request did he make of the king? Daniel 2:14-16 (KJV 651; NIV 626; NKJV 856).**

The Bible says: _____

Daniel and his three friends were Hebrews from royal families who were captured by Nebuchadnezzar during his siege of Judah. They had been educated and trained by the Babylonians and given high positions in the government because of their great wisdom. They were not magicians or astrologers as were the other wise men.

- 7. What did Daniel immediately do when the king granted him time to come up with the information the king desired? Daniel 2:17-23 (KJV 651; NIV 626; NKJV 856).**

The Bible says: _____

- 8. Whom did Daniel say could reveal the mystery of the king's dream? Daniel 2:24-28 (KJV 651, 652; NIV 626; NKJV 856).**

The Bible says: _____

- 9. With what time period of earth's history is this dream especially concerned? Daniel 2:28 (KJV 651, 652; NIV 626; NKJV 857).**

The Bible says: _____

The King James Version says God was going to make known to King Nebuchadnezzar what would happen "In the latter days."

- 10. What did Daniel tell the king that he had seen in his dream? Daniel 2:29-31 (KJV 652; NIV 626; NKJV 857).**

The Bible says: _____

- 11. List the various metals that made up the parts of the image. Daniel 2:32, 33 (KJV 652; NIV 626; NKJV 857).**

The Bible says:

a. Head _____

b. Chest and arms _____

c. Belly and thighs _____

d. Legs _____

e. Feet _____

12. What happened when the great stone hit the image? Daniel 2:34, 35 (KJV 652; NIV 626; NKJV 857).

The Bible says: _____

13. What did the head of gold represent? Daniel 2:36-38 (KJV 652; NIV 626; NKJV 857).

The Bible says: _____

14. What nation would arise after the Babylonian kingdom? Daniel 2:39 (KJV 652; NIV 626; NKJV 857).

The Bible says: _____

The second world empire, of course, was Medo-Persia, which, indeed, was inferior to the golden kingdom of Babylon.

15. According to the prophecy, what was predicted after the reign of the Medo-Persians? Daniel 2:39 (KJV 652; NIV 626; NKJV 857).

The Bible says: _____

The third world empire was Greece. It is interesting to notice that much of the armor worn by the Grecians was made of brass! Alexander the Great and his army, in the battle of Arbela in 331 B.C., "settled the fate of the Persian Empire, and established the wide dominion of the Greeks" (*The Divine Programme of the World's History*, p. 308).

16. How did Daniel describe the fourth world empire—Rome? Daniel 2:40 (KJV 652; NIV 626; NKJV 857).

The Bible says: _____

"The images of gold, or silver, or brass, that might serve to represent the nations and their kings, were successively broken by the iron monarchy of Rome" (*The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, chap. 38).

17. What was to happen to Rome, the fourth world empire? Daniel 2:41 (KJV 652; NIV 626; NKJV 857).

The Bible says: _____

Barbarian invasions of Rome divided the empire. These divisions, ten in number, represented by the ten toes of iron and clay, formed the foundations of the nations located in Europe today. These barbaric tribes are listed as followers by most historians: Alemanni, Ostrogoths, Visigoths, Franks, Vandals, Suevi, Burgundians, Heruli, Anglo-Saxons, and Lombards. For further reading see *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Vol. III.

18. What prediction by God assures us that there will never be any more world empires as we know them? Daniel 2:43 (KJV 652; NIV 626; NKJV 857).

The Bible says: _____

19. Who will set up the next world empire? Daniel 2:44, 45 (KJV 652; NIV 626, 627; NKJV 857).

The Bible says: _____

20. What glorious event will mark the setting up of this kingdom? Matthew 25:31 (KJV 726; NIV 702; NKJV 962).

The Bible says: _____

21. Are you determined to be a citizen of that kingdom that will last forever?

Your answer: _____

NOTES



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thinks that this expression furnishes us with a hint of the date for the beginning of the writing of the book, even as Daniel 10:1 and 12:13 seem to indicate that it was finished under the third year of Cyrus and only shortly before the death of the prophet.

In any case we have in this chapter revealing incidents in the early life of one of the greatest men of all time. They illustrate the way in which God trains special men whom He plans to use in His work. As a statesman, Daniel had a profound influence on two world empires and exercised this influence during a prolonged career. He was the only prophet during Old Testament times through whom God saw fit to outline in advance the rise and fall of the world's empires down to the end of earth's history and the setting up of the everlasting kingdom of God. This was indeed a high honor which God bestowed upon this Hebrew captive, but the honor and trust were not misused. Daniel is one of the few men of the Bible about whom nothing seriously evil has been recorded; and at the close of his remarkably long life he received the divine assurance that he could confidently expect a bright and happy resurrection-blessed promise for a long life well spent amid trying and perplexing circumstances.

2. THE GREAT IMAGE

The prophecy given in this chapter may be regarded as the ABC of prophetic symbols. It furnishes the key to all the rest, not only to the others given in this book, but to those of the book of Revelation. In point of time also, it is the first which gives an outline of the world's history from that time down to the setting up of the everlasting kingdom of God.

From a literary point of view also it is remarkable. Dr. S. R. Driver expresses it: "The representation of the magnificent but hollow splendor of earthly empire in the form of a huge, gleaming, terrible colossus, of many colors and different metals, brilliant of its summit, but gradually deteriorating, both in material and in appearance, toward its base, and, when struck by the foiling rock, instantly collapsing into atoms, is fine and striking." — "Commentary," page 17.

1. And in the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuchadnezzar dreamed dreams; and his spirit was troubled, and his sleep went from him.

Since Daniel was carried to Babylon in the accession year of Nebuchadnezzar, and then was given three years of training in the royal school, the apparent discrepancy has given no end of trouble to the commentators. Some modern scholars have adopted the view that there is here a double method of reckoning the reign of the king: that in the account given in the first chapter he was then reigning as co-regent with his father Nabopolassar, while on this reckoning he is sole monarch. Driver, however, defends the text as it stands, on the basis of the well-known postdating practice, under which custom the accession year was not counted, but the royal reign was reckoned from the first full year thereafter. This with the universal Hebrew usage of counting fractions of periods, whether of months or of years, as full units, would easily explain every apparent discrepancy in this case.

Dreamed dreams. Among all the ancient Oriental nations dreams were considered matters of profound importance. Numerous classical examples of this are recorded.

His sleep went from him. The more literal rendering would be, "His sleep was come to pass," that is, it was finished or done with. He found he couldn't sleep any more at that time.

2. Then the king commanded to call the magicians, and the enchanters, and the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans, to tell the king his dreams. So they came in and stood before the king.

The picture which is here presented is that of an Oriental despot who found that he couldn't sleep. In the middle of the night, perhaps, he issued a peremptory summons to round up all the men around the court who professed to have any dealings with supernatural events, to come in and "tell the king his dreams." It was no matter to the king that he was depriving a dozen or ten dozen men of their sleep; he must have his whim gratified on the instant, no matter what trouble or inconvenience it might cause any number of others. Why did the king tolerate these men around him, except to help him out of such circumstances?

All the other classes of men enumerated here are well known in the ancient literatures. Fully one

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fourth of Ashurbanipal's library as discovered has to do with omens or magic of one sort or another. But the name Kasdim (Chaldeans) has caused much discussion, and until the past few years it was used as a point of attack by the "critics." These have said that the word was always used in a national or ethnic sense, never as the name of a class, until long after Daniel's time, hence this term helped to prove the "late" date of the book. Boutflower, a stout defender of the book of Daniel, devotes a whole chapter to this subject and proves that the name Chaldeans was that of a highly privileged class of priests of the god Bel, even as far back as the days of Nebuchadnezzar. He turns the battle around and handsomely shows that the presence of this term "Chaldeans" in the book of Daniel is now an asset, instead of a liability. "The defenders of the orthodox view would now be as sorry to lose the presence of those jealous, contentious individuals as to have the once much-debated, much-doubted-of Belshazzar removed from the scene."--In and Around the Book of Daniel, page 35.

3. And the king said unto them, I have dreamed a dream, and my spirit is troubled to know the dream.

According to the words here used and hereafter, it is not entirely clear whether the king had really forgotten the dream entirely, or whether he was merely withholding the dream itself in order to test the reputed skill of these supposedly wise men.

In this connection it should be remembered that King Nebuchadnezzar was at this time a young man, in his early twenties, and thus not much older than Daniel. He was, moreover, a man of keen intellect and was well able to judge the claims of the men around him as to their genuineness or their fraudulent nature. He seems to have been one of the ablest and cleverest monarchs who ever occupied a throne.

4. Then spoke the Chaldeans to the king in the Syrian language, O king, live forever: tell thy servants the dream, and we will show the interpretation.

These high-caste priests of Bel, the Chaldeans were acting as spokesmen for the entire company, which doubtless comprised several dozen persons. Many of these priests were probably elderly, dignified men, almost as accustomed to deference as was the king himself.

Beginning with the words O king, the Aramaic language is used in the book down to the last verse of chapter 7. As for the guesses assigned by scholars for this peculiar division into two languages, see the Introduction, pages 23-3.

It seems evident that the Aramaic was the ordinary court language around Babylon at this time. Many scholars think that the words in the Syrian language (literally, "in Aramaic") are a gloss, and they try to trace to Jerome's mistake the idea that the wise men spoke to the king in this language. From this attempt arose another mistake, that the Biblical Aramaic was called Chaldee. From the numerous Aramaic documents which have been discovered during the last few decades, it has become abundantly clear that Aramaic was on its way to become a world language in Daniel's time.

5. The king answered and said to the Chaldeans, The thing is gone from me: if you make not known unto me the dream and the interpretation thereof, you shall be cut in pieces, and your houses shall be made a dunghill.

Instead of the clause The thing is gone from me, which is not in the original Septuagint, according to Charles, most modern commentators substitute, "The word from me is sure," that is, What I say will surely be carried out. The modern Jewish translation prepared in 1917 by the Jewish Publication Society of America, has: "The thing is certain with me: if etc." This of course carries the idea that the king had not really forgotten the dream, but was withholding it and making the occasion a means of testing the supernatural claims of his wise men. His opinion of these men was probably not high. All these men claimed to have magical or supernatural means of knowing things, the different classes among them, magicians, astrologers, and so forth, merely adopting different means of attaining this magical knowledge. Now the young king had caught them in a situation where he could actually test out their loud claims. He may have been getting a good deal of malicious fun secretly from their predicament.

You shall be cut in pieces. That is, dismembered limb from limb; similar to the custom of the Middle Ages of drawing and quartering. All the Oriental despots, particularly the Assyrians and the Persians, were notorious for their savage cruelty in carrying out their executions. Witness the records in the

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Behistun inscription.

6. *But if you show the dream and the interpretation thereof, you shall receive of me gifts and rewards and great honor: therefore show me the dream and the interpretation thereof.*

The king was no less able to reward than to punish.

7. *They answered the second time and said, Let the king tell his servants the dream, and we will show the interpretation.*

This answer may sound more respectful than the former one, but it is essentially a repetition of their former reply.

8. *The king answered and said, I know of a certainty that you would gain time, because you see the thing is gone from me.*

The matter was hastening to a climax. The king was not slow to understand their implied acknowledgment that they could not do anything in the way of revealing a genuine secret, but he was not at all disposed to let them off easy in this case. Probably he never had much respect for them or their business.

The expression The thing is gone from me, is like the previous one, Inasmuch as you see the thing is certain with me, that, if etc.” The temper of absolute monarchs has never been known to improve under opposition or resistance.

9. *But if you make not known unto me the dream, there is but one law for you; for you have prepared lying and corrupt words to speak before me, till the time be changed: therefore tell me the dream, and I shall know that you can show me the interpretation thereof.*

Have prepared lying and corrupt words. He probably means by this that they had agreed together as to what they should tell the king about the meaning of his dream, if he would only tell them what the dream was about.

Till the time be changed, that is, until something should arise to give them a chance to get out of their predicament.

10. *The Chaldeans answered before the king, and said, There is not a man upon the earth that can show the king's matter, forasmuch as no king, lord, or ruler, bath asked such a thing of any magician, or enchanter, or Chaldean.*

11. *And it is a rare thing that the king requires, and there is no other that can show it before the king, except the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh.*

This language can hardly be regarded as anything but a flat statement that the king was unreasonable in making such a request. Undoubtedly the leading ones among these priests of Bel-Marduk were learned, rich, and enormously influential; they had not been accustomed to being put in a corner and made to look like impostors. But in the last part of their answer they tacitly acknowledged that they did not have any supernatural power to reveal secrets; there was no one who could do such a thing except the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh. In other words, these gods did not really have anything to do in the way of revealing such secrets to the Chaldeans and their companions. Their claims to such superhuman knowledge were only a pretense.

Probably the real idea behind what they said would be that only the “high gods,” or the great or supreme gods, could reveal such a thing, whereas they themselves (the Chaldeans) did not have any dealings with these “high gods,” but only with the subordinate or lower gods. This distinction in rank among the heathen deities is found all through the heathen religions, and became the foundation of what is commonly called “devil worship.” These “devils” or “demons” were recognized as subordinate in rank to other beings whom the priests regarded as beyond their reach.

12. *For this cause the king was angry and very furious, and commanded to destroy all the wise men of Babylon.*

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13. So the decree went forth, and the wise men were to be slain; and they sought Daniel and his companions to be slain.

Herodotus tells us that about a century later Darius I of Persia actually carried out such a wholesale massacre of the Magi, which resulted in their almost complete extermination. This decree by Nebuchadnezzar was not to be any quiet or secret assassination, but a public execution; so the proper officials were sent out to get the condemned men together for their doom. As Daniel and his companions were by this time regarded as included among the professional wise men, they also were hunted up by the officials, though they evidently had not been among those who had been summoned before the king. Probably only a few of the leaders had actually been present at the interview with the king, whereas now the decree was to include all who belonged to these professional classes of wise men, perhaps hundreds in number. The executions were planned to embrace many more than those representative ones who had met the king.

14. Then Daniel returned answer with counsel and prudence to Arioch the captain of the king's guard, who was gone forth to slay the wise men of Babylon;

15. He answered and said to Arioch the king's captain, Wherefore is the decree so urgent from the king? Then Arioch made the thing known to Daniel.

The word here given as prudence is literally "taste," and means discretion or tact. Arioch is an ancient Akkadian name.

Captain of the king's guard. This expression occurs several times in connection with the history of Israel in the Old Testament, once also as the title of an officer of the pharaoh of Egypt. The word here translated "guard" originally meant butchers, or slaughterers of animals, not executioners; yet in some way not clearly traced these men became the official bodyguard of the king.

So urgent. Driver says that this word "urgent" is not strong enough to express the original. The Jewish translation reads: "So peremptory."

16. And Daniel went in, and desired of the king that he would appoint him a time, and he would show the king the interpretation.

We are not informed how Daniel managed to conform to the royal etiquette in making this request for more time and a stay of the execution. Montgomery suggests that he may have had Arioch intercede for him, or that the latter may have granted a respite informally on his own authority.

This agreement to solve the king's request shows Daniel's faith in his God in a marked degree. He believed God would intervene in this matter.

17. Then Daniel went to his house, and made the thing known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions.

18. That they would desire mercies of the God of heaven concerning this secret; that Daniel and his companions should not perish with the rest of the wise men of Babylon.

Several providential circumstances are clearly combined toward the happy outcome of this whole affair. In the first place, the king's dream must have made a profound impression on his mind; and he either forgot it entirely, or was induced to withhold it from the priests and other wise men in such a way as to lead to a complete exposure of the false claims of these men. Again, it was all for the best that Daniel was not at first consulted by the king regarding the dream, for if he had been requested by the king to tell the dream and had made it known with its interpretation there would have been no opportunity to expose the false heathen systems. In this case, as in so many others down through history, the heathen priests and their associates had the first chance.

They had a free hand, with no one to hinder them. With their lives at stake we may be assured that they did their best. Then when they utterly failed and openly confessed that they could do nothing, it was time for God to honor His trusting servants with the means of explaining the dream to the king. Through this entire set of circumstances He gave to the world for more than two thousand years the first, and in some respects the clearest, outline of the world's history ever shown in advance through anybody.

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19. Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a vision of the night. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven.

Some think that the term vision of the night covers dreams as well as visions; others contend that visions are always distinct from dreams, the latter being a lower form of divine communication. If, as appears probable, the king in his impatience had summoned the wise men to him during the night in which he had had his dream, when his sleep went from him, then the search for Daniel and the others would take place the next day, and the prayer of Daniel and its answer would take place during the next night.

As soon as the matter was revealed to Daniel, he doubtless summoned his companions (unless they were already with him engaging in prayer) and blessed the God of heaven. That is, he gave formal thanks to God for answering his prayer, even though he had not tried out the matter with the king to see if he had the real dream which the king called for. He was certain that what had been revealed to him was from God, and he was also assured that God would not be giving him false information. In this act of asking for a direct communication from God and then having his prayer directly answered, Daniel was acquiring a valuable experience which was to prepare him for becoming the "greatest of all the prophets," as Josephus terms him. The other visions given to him later could not have been communicated to him (in all human probability) if he had not acquired an experience in such matters here so early in his life, for he was at this time a young man.

Daniel's praise for the answer to his prayer is in strict metrical form in the Hebrew, consisting of four stanzas of tristichs and tetrastichs which alternate with each other. The Jewish translation prints this portion in metrical form. Several other examples of lyrics or hymns occur in the book further on, quite extensively in chapter 4, in the last part of chapter 6, and twice in chapter 7, with brief spontaneous lyrical outbursts here and there besides that hardly admit of distinct classification.

As the A.R.V., which we have been following, does not preserve the poetical form in this passage, we give it below from the Jewish translation, which is verbally almost identical with the A.R.V.

**20. Daniel spoke and said: Blessed be the name of God From everlasting even unto everlasting;
For wisdom and might are His;**

**21. And He changes the times and the seasons; He removes kings, and sets up kings; He gives
wisdom unto the wise, And knowledge to them that know understanding;**

**22. He reveals the deep and secret things; He knows what is in the darkness, And the light
dwells with Him.**

**23. I thank Thee, and praise Thee, O Thou God of my fathers, Who has given me wisdom and
might, And has now made known unto me what we desired of Thee; For Thou has made known unto us
the king's matter.**

This hymn of praise is a natural and unaffected outburst, and is rightly regarded as a fine example of liturgical form. In the second stanza there is a direct challenge to the fatalism of the Babylonian astral religion. As Montgomery points out, this fatalism continued its baneful influence in the Greek and Roman worlds for a long time.

In the last stanza Daniel unites his companions with himself in his thanks-what we desired of Thee.

**24. Then Daniel went in unto Arioch, whom the king had appointed to destroy the wise men of
Babylon; he went and said thus unto him: Destroy not the wise men of Babylon; bring me in before the
king, and I will show unto the king the interpretation.**

We may well imagine that Daniel's visit to Arioch was a hurried but joyful act on his part; and although his own life had been at stake, his first plea is not for himself, but for the wise men of Babylon as an entire class. The secret had been revealed to Daniel, and because of this the lives of all the group should be spared. The priests and their fellows could not in the slightest degree claim any part in this revelation of the secret of the dream; they and all their vain pretensions were as much to be reprobated as before; but Daniel asks for their lives on the strength of what he was now able to do for the king.

How often do sinners receive a prolonging of their tranquillity because of the presence among them of a few who are faithful to God. In one of Paul's numerous shipwrecks of which we have record, he was assured that the lives of all who were sailing with him would be saved because of his faithfulness. Acts

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27:22-24. If only ten righteous had been found in Sodom, that city of iniquity would not have been destroyed. So in the case here under consideration. Because of the intercession of Daniel and his three companions, the lives of all the wise men of the kingdom *were saved from the just anger of Nebuchadnezzar.

25. Then Arioch brought in Daniel before the king in haste, and said thus unto him, I have found a man of the children of the captivity of Judah, that will make known unto the king the interpretation.

The circumstances here narrated would seem to prove that Daniel himself did not have any earlier audience with the king, as might be inferred from the words of verse 16.

In haste. Montgomery says that the words might more exactly be “in excitement.” The king had already had some acquaintance with the Hebrew captives, yet he could not be expected to remember this young fellow Daniel. Hence the courtly etiquette must be observed by a formal introduction, for as Montgomery slyly remarks, “royal minds are easily forgetful of ‘college professors.’” Arioch also doubtless was glad to have it appear that he had been anxiously hunting for someone to solve the king’s perplexity, and had at last found the right man.

26. The king answered and said to Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, Art thou able to make known unto me the dream which I have seen, and the interpretation thereof?

The king was still skeptical about the claim of this young man to be able to reveal the secret. If he couldn’t tell the details of the dream itself, how could the king have any confidence in a professed interpretation?

27. Daniel answered before the king, and said, The secret which the king hath demanded can neither wise men, enchanters, magicians, nor soothsayers, show unto the king;

28. But there is a God in heaven that reveals secrets, and He hath made known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days. Thy dream, and the visions of thy head upon thy bed, are these:

29. As for thee, O king, thy thoughts came into thy mind upon thy bed, what should come to pass hereafter; and He that reveals secrets hath made known to thee what shall come to pass.

Before the king. This seems to have been the more common form of expression, though the less formal “to the king” also occurs in this book.

Daniel had here a splendid opportunity to make known the true God to this heathen king, and he did not fail to improve it.

Under somewhat similar circumstances, Joseph had directed the mind of Pharaoh to the Hebrew Jehovah as the revealer of secrets. Genesis 41:16. Daniel now disclaims any credit for himself and gives all the credit to the God in heaven that reveals secrets. Daniel could be confident and fearless before this greatest monarch of the ancient world, because he had already bowed in love and adoration before the King of kings, who had in turn entrusted to His servant an astonishing message for this Nebuchadnezzar.

In the latter days. Literally, “in the end closing part of the days.” On this Driver has the note: “An expression which occurs fourteen times in the Old Testament, and which always denotes the closing period of the future so far as it falls within the range of view of the writer using it. The sense expressed by it is thus relative, not absolute, varying with the context.... Here, as the sequel shows, it is similarly the period of the establishment of the divine kingdom which is principally denoted by it.”

Thy thoughts came into thy mind. Here Daniel tells the king what he had been thinking about previous to having the dream. Nebuchadnezzar had been pondering the future of his kingdom and what might occur after him. We should remember that this occurred near the beginning of his reign and that afterward he had a reign of some forty years full of glory and prosperity for his kingdom. Because of his commendable desire to know the future of his kingdom and of the world, the great Jehovah took notice of it and gave him this extraordinary picture of the course of the world’s successive empires down to the establishment of the kingdom that shall have no end. Instead of giving the king the full meaning of it all, He ordained that the interpretation should come through one of His chosen people in order that the additional light of His true religion might also be made known to this young ruler, and through him to all the world.

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30. But as for me, this secret is not revealed to me for any wisdom that I have more than any living, but to the intent that the interpretation may be made known to the king, and that thou may know the thoughts of thy heart.

As Joseph had done before him, Daniel here disclaims any personal wisdom in making known the dream and its meaning. The dream, which follows in the succeeding five verses, is in many respects the most remarkable dream ever given to any human being. Aside from the handsome tribute paid by Driver in the sentence already quoted at the beginning of this chapter, Hebrew scholars and commentators, as Montgomery remarks, "have in general hardly done justice to the grandly conceived and artistic symbolism of the image.... Yet its simplicity, its magnificence of proportion, its originality, deserve their right valuation." - Commentary, page 185.

31. Thou, O king, saw, and, behold, a great image. This image, which was mighty, and whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the aspect thereof was terrible.

This dream image is rightly spoken of as a colossus, of which the ancient world gives us several examples. Herodotus tells us of a golden statue of Bel twelve cubits high, which still existed in his day; and the fame of the great stone colossi in Egypt had doubtless been spread over the ancient world. The word colossus comes to us as the specific name of the bronze Apollo erected 280 BC on the shore of the harbor of Rhodes, and in the myth which has since grown from it, reputed it to have stood astride the entrance to the harbor. It is said to have been more than 100 feet high, and was one of the seven wonders of the ancient world.

Whose brightness was excellent. The word "excellent" in old English always carried the distinctive meaning (which it has since lost) of pre-eminent or surpassing.

32. As for this image, its head was of fine gold, its breast and its arms of silver, its belly and its thighs of brass,

33. Its legs of iron, its feet part of iron, and part of clay.

The progressive deterioration of the materials, composing this colossus is one of its most noticeable and most surprising features. A large image or statue of any sort would naturally be an object of attention to any intelligent pagan, and this one was most extraordinary in its brilliancy and in its size. As the upper parts were bright and beautiful, the king may not at first have noticed how it deteriorated both in appearance and in quality as one looked it over from the top to the bottom. Yet when considered from the standpoint of stability, the shoddy, fragile feet rendered the entire colossus about as unstable and as surely doomed because of its construction as one could possibly conceive. The five parts into which it was divided grew progressively less beautiful, less valuable, and less stable, from the top to the bottom. Even if no stone had appeared to destroy it, anyone could easily see the utter impossibility of this statue's enduring permanently. It is evolution reversed which we find in this gradation from gold down to a mixture of iron and miry clay.

Two only of these materials call for comment. The term here rendered brass is more properly rendered "bronze" or "copper," the ancients not discriminating carefully between these different materials. The word given as clay is often used to signify "earthenware," as is shown by the marginal reading under verse 41.

The ancients were profuse in their use of bronze in making statues and images, and decorations of all kinds. There are also instances of tile work (probably what is meant by the earthenware or clay of the image) entering into the composition of an image or other art as a sort of decoration, similar to the examples which have been discovered of metals inlaid with enamels or porcelain. This may be ornamental in certain instances; but such combination of earthenware and metal would be nothing but a shoddy, flimsy pretense when used in place of iron in the foundation of a colossus like this.

34. Thou saw till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon its feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them in pieces.

35. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken in pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors. And the wind carried them away, so that no

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place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.

The sublimity and literary beauty of this passage have not been appreciated sufficiently. Karl A. Auberlen remarks:

“Where among all the poets and historians of antiquity and of modern times, is there a passage which, for simplicity and majesty, can be compared with these words?”

The climax of this symbolic colossus was brought about by a stone which was cut out without hands and smote the image on its feet. This stone was quarried without any human agency, implying that it was a work done directly by God. Any event we see take place without any visible agency which we can ascribe to natural law we are disposed to class as a miracle; hence the action of this stone has about it all the characteristics of the miraculous. This end of all these earthly kingdoms as here given is parallel to the end of the power called the “little horn” of chapter 8:25; and also similar to the end of the power described in chapter ii, which comes “to his end, and none shall help him” (chapter 11:45).

Threshing floors in the Orient were usually on elevated or exposed spots, where the wind would be felt most strongly, in order to carry away the chaff during the process of winnowing. When a metallic statue should be knocked down by some external moving object it would not naturally be so completely pulverized as is here described; this also may be regarded by the beholder as something decidedly out of the ordinary.

A great mountain. One of the astonishing facts revealed by archaeology is that the Chaldeans, the leading priests of the god Bel-Marduk, are also represented as priests of “The Great Mountain.” Thus we may identify the cult of The Great Mountain with that of Bel-Marduk. This cult of Shadu Rabu, or The Great Mountain, was one of the most powerful cults of Babylonia; so at the mention of this term by Daniel, the king’s mind would inevitably receive the impression that this miraculous Stone was to become a visible manifestation of the God of heaven who was giving this vision and revealing these things to the king through His chosen messenger, Daniel. On this point see Boutflower,

36. This is the dream; and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king.

37. Thou, O king, art king of kings, unto whom the God of heaven hath given the kingdom, the power, and the strength, and the glory;

38. And where so ever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the birds of the heavens hath He given into thy hand, and hath made thee to rule over them all: thou art the head of gold.

In and Around the Book of Daniel, pages 35-45, where the original authorities are cited.

This young king, still in his early twenties, was accustomed to flattery and homage; but here was an announcement which must have secured his profound attention. He had been born to the royal power, his father, Nabopolassar, being the founder of the dynasty. In union with Cyaxares the Mede, Nabopolassar had revolted against Assyria, had captured Nineveh in 612 BC, and in this way had made Babylon an independent kingdom with himself as its head. In 605 BC he died and was succeeded by his son, Nebuchadnezzar, who became one of the most illustrious sovereigns of the ancient world, enjoying a long and prosperous reign of some forty-three years.

Thou art the head of gold. This does not mean that the king himself was here designated, but his kingdom. The terms king and kingdom are used interchangeably in this connection, both in this chapter and in the following ones, particularly the eleventh.

The details of the history of Babylon may be obtained from any reliable history of these times. See Source Book for Bible Students, pages 45-59.

39. And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee; and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth.

The “critics” perversely desire to assign a pseudo kingdom of Media as the second of the series, the one here mentioned as “another kingdom inferior to thee.” They know well that there was no such Median kingdom between the Babylonian and the Persian. Dr. R. H. Charles, in the latest and most authoritative work by this school of “critics,” acknowledges that this Median empire is “a mythical one.”-

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Commentary, page 177. Yet with one voice they declare that Daniel teaches there was such an intercalary empire of the Medes between Babylon and MedoPersia. They refer to such texts as Daniel 5:31 to prove that this is what Daniel believed and therefore what is here “meant” by the empire immediately following Babylon. All this, of course, depends upon the theory that this book of Daniel is not really an inspired revelation from God, but a literary work by a clever, pious Jew of the time of Antiochus Epiphanes. This man, they say, wished to encourage his people by a romantic picture of the ultimate triumph of the kingdom of God, but was often mistaken about the facts of history. This theory of an intercalary Median empire was one of those historical “mistakes.” The object of these “critics” is to avoid the conclusion that the fourth empire of Daniel is Rome, but they can attain this only by charging Daniel with blundering in inserting this mythical Median empire after the Babylonian.

With such a pseudo interpretation of the symbols of this dream image we have nothing to do here. It remains for us to point out that Cyrus the Persian conquered Babylon in the year 539, and thus Medo-Persia became the empire outlined in this prophecy as the one to follow Babylon.

There has been much speculation concerning this expression inferior to thee. Even a superficial glance at ancient history reveals that Medo-Persia was not inferior to Babylon in either power or extent of territory. It doubtless was inferior in the matter of unity and compactness of organization, and some have thought that it may have been inferior in riches and grandeur, though this is doubtful. However, we must remember that this problem of relative inferiority does not concern these two empires alone; it is a universal comparison all down the entire image from the top to the bottom: Every one below is represented as inferior in value and in beauty to the one preceding. So whatever problem there is must not be considered solved until we have covered the entire ground.

And another third kingdom of brass or bronze. Obviously this must refer to the empire of Alexander, which succeeded that of Medo-Persia when Alexander won the battle of Arbela in 331 BC. The Greeks were noted far and wide for their brass armor, which was a new thing under the sun, and which gave them a great superiority over their enemies. Later even this efficient style of weapons, defensive and offensive, was displaced by the still more efficient iron or steel. This displacement was a gradual one and, as Lucretius points out, was contemporary with the rise of the Roman power. Boutflower has an enlightening chapter on this subject, dealing with the metals represented by the various parts of the image. Op. Cit., Pages 24-34.

40. And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron, forasmuch as iron breaks in pieces and subdues all things; and as iron that crushes all these, shall it break in pieces and crush.

In all the visions of the world empires recorded in the book of Daniel, the fourth of each series gets about as much space and description as all the others put together. So in this instance. The others are passed over hurriedly, with a mere mention; but the fourth is characterized in detail, and the divisions into which it split up are also set forth with considerable minutiae. Further consideration also is devoted to the everlasting kingdom of God which is to succeed them all.

The description here given of the fourth kingdom must mean Rome and no other. It fits Rome and no other. Also in all the other three visions, those of the seventh, eighth, and eleventh chapters, the fourth kingdom or power as described means Rome, their descriptions fit Rome, and they fit no other power before or since. This comparative application of these four lines of prophecy is the strongest proof that this application must be the correct one.

Gibbon has never been accused of evangelical prejudices; yet he could not fall to see how wonderfully appropriate is the prophetic description when applied to Rome. It is almost superfluous to quote his words, as they are so much a classic as to be known by all who have read extensively along these lines; but we insert them here, as no other words so fittingly characterize this prophecy:

“The arms of the republic, sometimes vanquished in battle, always victorious in war, advanced with rapid steps to the Euphrates, the Danube, the Rhine, and the ocean; and the images of gold, or silver, or brass, that might serve to represent the nations and their kings, were successively broken by the iron monarchy of Rome.” - The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, chapter 38; General Observations at end of the chapter, paragraph.

41. And whereas thou saw the feet and toes, part of potters' clay, and part of iron, it shall be a divided kingdom; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou saw the iron mixed with miry clay.

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42. 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.

43. And whereas thou saw the 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 does not mingle with clay.

Since this prophecy must extend down the centuries from imperial Rome even to the Second Coming of Christ (as do also all the other visions of Daniel), we have here the extension of the iron legs into feet and toes, which are expressly spoken of as “a divided kingdom.” The two legs are not designed to represent the Eastern and the Western parts into which imperial Rome was divided. Nor is there any express mention of there being ten toes, as there are ten horns expressly mentioned in the symbolism of the seventh chapter, and also in the parallel visions of the Apocalypse. All that we are definitely told is that there would be a division of the kingdom—not, it should be noted, a conquest of this empire by some external power. It is tacitly asserted that this Roman Empire would not be conquered by any other or later power, as had been the case with all the preceding world empires, but that in its divided state it would be prolonged and would extend down to the establishment of the eternal kingdom of God.

Far too much stress also has been placed upon the alleged division of Rome into ten parts or ten minor kingdoms. The number ten does come into the prophecy in the seventh chapter; and in that place we shall deal with the matter. Here there is no express mention of the number of parts into which it is divided; though the mention of “toes” would seem to imply the number ten.

In chapter 7 the fourth beast is said to have ten horns, and they are explained as meaning ten kings (or kingdoms) which were to arise from the breaking up of the Roman Empire. The ten horns are also mentioned in the Revelation in several places (Revelation 12:3; 13:1; 17:1 11, 16); so the expression “the ten kingdoms of Western Europe into which Rome was divided,” is correct enough. But no definite mention of ten toes is made here.

Moreover, as will be seen later (in the note on chapter 7:8), it is quite probable that the number ten is used as an indefinite but comparatively large number, rather than as an exact number. The fact that this number ten is ever afterward maintained, when chapter 7:8 definitely tells us that three of them were plucked up to make place for another little horn (an eleventh), this number ten being always maintained throughout the subsequent prophecies in the book of Revelation, is a strong argument in favor of the suggestion that the number ten is used only as a round number.

While the specific number ten is not mentioned here in connection with the toes, another related fact is mentioned, and it is given with almost tedious repetitiousness, namely, that there are to be elements of weakness running through the entire lower part of the image—“partly strong, and partly broken” [margin, brittle].

Some scholars have thought that the meaning is that some of the toes would be of iron and some would be of the clay or tiling or terra cotta. Montgomery contends that the underlying meaning of the whole description is that “each leg, each foot, every toe, are severally composed of non coherent stuffs, all equally subject to fracture and crumbling.” - Commentary, page 189. This seems a most fitting characterization of the modern nations of Europe, the resultants of the old Roman Empire.

It seems truly extraordinary that Hippolytus, one of the earliest Christian writers on prophecy (about AD 236), in dealing with this verse foretold that the ten kingdoms into which Rome would be divided would pass from monarchies to democracies. Simcox wrote nearly three quarters of a century ago: “Few things were humanly speaking less likely in his days, few more so in ours.” - Revelation, page 107. Cambridge University Press, 1902.

They shall mingle themselves with the seed of men. This undoubtedly refers to the perennial attempts all down through the centuries to cement friendships among the various incongruous parts by marriage alliances between the various royal families. To such an extent has this been carried that at a certain point in the latter part of the nineteenth century, Queen Victoria was quaintly termed “the grandmother of all Europe.”

44. And in the days of those kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed, nor shall the sovereignty thereof be left to another people; but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.

In the original the “it” is emphatic, in contrast with the other kingdoms. This verse carries us on into the future to the miraculous setting up of the eternal kingdom of Christ. In the verses immediately

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preceding we are brought down past the division of the Roman Empire into its various parts, a division which had not even commenced in the days of Christ and the apostles; accordingly the setting up of this kingdom could not have been done in their days. It could not have been done until after the division of the Roman Empire, which was carried on between AD 351 and 476. This text says, “in the days of those kings” clearly referring to the divisions represented by the feet and toes of the image.

It is completely false to interpret this setting up of the everlasting kingdom as having taken place at the first part of the Christian Era, or in the days of Christ and His apostles, for the following reasons:

1. This everlasting kingdom is not to exist contemporaneously with earthly governments, nor even to overlap with some of them, but to succeed them, and to do so catastrophically, by utter violence, resulting in their total destruction.

2. This everlasting kingdom, the fifth of the series, is symbolized by the stone which struck the image. But what part did it strike? Not the legs, which were the parts existing in Christ’s day; but the feet and toes. Verse 34. Let us remember that the successive parts from the head downward represent accurately a chronological succession; and from this point of view we may say that the feet were not in existence until about four centuries after the death of Christ and the establishment of the visible church. Hence this stone cannot possibly represent the Christian church. In the days of Christ and His apostles, to use the apt words of Uriah Smith, the image was developed only down as far as the thighs or the knees; hence the smiting if done by the church, would have had to be done on the legs, not on the feet, where the prophecy locates the smiting. The feet of the colossus had not been formed when the Christian church was founded.

3. The stone which smites the image is spoken of as having been quarried out of the mountain without hands. Verse 45. This surely represents, not the church acting in a quiet and orderly way in spreading the good news of salvation, but an obviously miraculous work, a sudden and catastrophic work of annihilation and complete displacement. Such a work will be accomplished when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God. Then will be the time when this everlasting kingdom will be set up, and not until then.

Down in the feet of iron and of clay,
Weak and divided, soon to pass away;
What will the next great, glorious drama be?
Christ and His coming, and eternity.

In Revelation 17:12 we are told of ten kings or kingdoms which, at the time spoken of, had received “no kingdom as yet,” but would at some time then future receive “authority as kings, with the beast, for one hour.” The time here spoken of is obviously well along in the Christian dispensation. Finally, these ten kingdoms are to be destroyed, along with the beast of Revelation 17, at the Second Coming of Christ. It should be self-evident that these ten kingdoms of Revelation 17 cannot possibly be identical with the original ten kingdoms into which Rome was divided, as represented by the ten horns of Daniel’s fourth beast (Daniel 7:24), and as represented in this second chapter by the toes (presumably ten, though no specific number is mentioned), into which the iron kingdom was divided. In Daniel’s vision of the four beasts we are told that three of the original ten horns were “plucked up by the roots,” never to exist again. This term, “plucked up by the roots,” obviously means that they were absolutely destroyed as nations, never to become nations again. They were to have no national successors.

Obviously the seven remaining could not become ten many centuries later, or immediately before the Second Coming of Christ, which is the period spoken of in this chapter in the Revelation. It is mere nonsense and trifling with sacred truths to speak, as some have done, of a readjustment of the modern map of Europe in such a way as to bring again into existence these three defunct kingdoms, which were extirpated, or plucked up by the roots.

Many attempts have been made to solve the puzzle. There is no difficulty at all, if we once realize that the number ten is often used in the Old Testament for an indefinitely large number, and is doubtless so used in these instances. Thus we are not under any necessity of supposing that the ten kingdoms of Revelation 17, down just before the Second Coming of Christ, have to be identical either in their boundaries or in their total number with the ones into which the empire of Rome was originally divided.

The ten kingdoms into which Rome was divided dominated Western civilization. Again, just before the Second Coming of Christ, the ten kingdoms which combine with the beast and the false prophet to make war against the Lamb and whom the Lamb overcomes (Revelation 17:12-14), also represent the nations of the entire world (Revelation 16:14); for the last, life-and-death struggle between right and wrong

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takes place on a global or world-wide scale.

45. Forasmuch as thou saw that a 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: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure.

In this concluding statement of Daniel we find a summary of all the major elements of the vision in a brief restatement of the grand outcome. This is followed by a solemn declaration of the truth of the entire vision, and the fixed inevitability of it all. The words he has spoken are God's vision and also God's own interpretation, not Daniel's; hence they are all reliable and true, not like the "lying and corrupt words" which the king had accused the priests of using. Verse 9.

46. Then the king Nebuchadnezzar fell upon his face, and worshiped Daniel, and commanded that they should offer an oblation and sweet odors unto him.

The king was profoundly impressed with what had been presented before him. The revelation of the secret thoughts of his mind, with the opening up of the future history of the world, all came home to him as actually from a supernatural power; and, in accord with this natural feeling of wonder and reverence, he was ready to do homage to the human instrument through whom such divine knowledge had been made known.

It is useless for us to ask how a strict monotheist like Daniel could permit himself to be treated in the fashion here spoken of, for we are not told anything of how Daniel reacted toward this homage. He may have been as strong in his protest and in his monotheistic explanation as Paul and Barnabas were to the people of Lycaonia. Acts 14:13-18. Jerome cites a somewhat parallel incident from Josephus. When Alexander the Great was approaching Jerusalem, the Jewish high priest came out to meet him dressed in his beautiful white priestly robes, with the golden breastplate on which was engraved the name of Jehovah. Alexander bowed in profound homage before the high priest, and when one of his officers, Parmenio, twitted him because of the act, Alexander retorted, as stated by Josephus: "I do not adore him [the high priest], but the God who hath honored him with his priesthood."

47. The king answered unto Daniel, and said, Of a truth your God is the God of gods, and the Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, seeing thou has been able to reveal this secret.

It is a mark of true greatness on the part of Nebuchadnezzar that he did not in the slightest resent the statement of the vision that his own kingdom would be replaced by another. Young as he was he was sufficiently a realist in human affairs to realize that no kingly line can hope to be permanent in this changing world. He was doubtless sufficiently familiar with the more esoteric teachings of the Babylonian religion to know that in its primal aspects all its reasonable ideas tended to head up in one supreme God. Even if we may not suppose him to be thus initiated into all the philosophic aspects of the inner mysteries of his country's religion, by which he would instinctively identify Daniel's God with the great Chief of all the "high" gods, we can fall back on what Montgomery states: "A polytheist can always take on new gods, the monotheist never."

48. Then the king made Daniel great, and gave him many great gifts, and made him to rule over the whole province of Babylon, and to be chief governor over all the wise men of Babylon.

We sometimes speak of the unchanging East, but there is no part of the world where such sudden and surprising changes in human affairs have occurred all down the line of history. Here we have Daniel promoted to the place of administrator of the chief province of the empire, in which was the capital itself.

Chief governor over all the wise men of Babylon. The literal of this is "chief of the sages," or prefects. As Pusey thinks, each college or group of the wise men had its own head, while Daniel had general authority over all. A Biblical precedent for this is found in the case of Joseph, who married a daughter of the chief priest of Heliopolis, and who held a high office under the Pharaoh; also in the case of Moses, who "was instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians." Acts 7:22. It may be questioned whether there was any more nonsense taught back there than in our modern universities, which are today considered so essential for a young man's advancement. At any rate, no one can attain to mental clearness who does

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not have the ability to reject the chaff and retain only the wheat in any system of education.

49. And Daniel requested of the king, and he appointed Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, over the affairs of the province of Babylon: but Daniel was in the gate of the king.

Daniel would feel more satisfied to have subordinates whom he could trust and who would do efficient work; hence the appointment of his three companions. In the gate of the king. This term has been misunderstood by some of the “critics,” who do not seem to have been familiar with the wide use of this phrase in the ancient East. Doubtless at first this word “gate” was a literal one; but soon it came to mean only the royal offices or the chancellery, and its locality may have been far removed from the actual entrance of the city. The Turkish royal offices used to be known as the Sublime Porte, and “porte” originally meant “gate.” This is a survival of the same idea. Daniel, if not exactly premier, was at least among the leading men of the nation; he was in the cabinet, as we would express it.

Thus we come to the close of the second chapter, which, like the first, is a document complete in itself. Considered as literature, it is sublime; as history, it is brief, though complete and accurate, and written hundreds of years in advance; as prophecy, it assures us of the future reality of the glorious kingdom of God, sealing to us this assurance by its preliminary outline of the successive stages of earth’s kingdoms which were to precede it. Since we now see that these successive stages have been fulfilled as predicted, we know for a certainty that God has spoken. In due season He will surely set up His kingdom, one that shall never be destroyed or given to other people.

O glorious kingdom of God! Long hoped for by the weary pilgrims of earth’s dark night, but now soon to be established in the times determined by the wisdom of the King of eternity! Hasten on, glad day, when all the faithful of the past, as well as those living among the last generation of mankind, will receive their inheritance together. Hebrews 11:39, 40.

Note on the Four World Empires of Daniel 2. All scholars admit that the symbols of this second chapter must be understood as parallel to those of chapter 7, where the same powers are represented as four beasts. The differences in interpreting these symbols have to do chiefly with the way of understanding the fourth empire, represented by the legs of iron in this second chapter and by the nondescript fourth beast of chapter 7, which had great iron teeth and nails of brass, which devoured the whole earth, and out of which came another blasphemous and persecuting power, speaking great words against the Most High, wearing out the saints of the Most High, and thinking to be able to change the times and the law of the Most High. The “critics” apply this fourth symbol to the petty Greek kingdom under Antiochus Epiphanes; the conservatives apply it to Rome, first in its stage of world empire, afterward in its stage of religion-political world domination.

At this point we will not stop to argue for or against either interpretation, but will touch briefly on the history of the interpretation of this second chapter, postponing until the end of the seventh chapter a fuller statement.

It is probable that the Jews of the Maccabean age and the decades following were chiefly interested in the symbols of this prophecy as it pictured the Messianic kingdom. Naturally, they were not prepared to give a correct evaluation of the symbolism of events still future. When we come down a little later, say a century or two after Christ, we find many of the early Christian writers who well recognized the empire of Rome as the one that fitted the specifications of the prophecy.

For instance, the following is from Hippolytus, a voluminous writer who was martyred about AD 235:

“Rejoice, blessed Daniel! thou has not been in error: all these things have come to pass. After this again thou has told me of the beast, dreadful and terrible. ‘It had iron teeth and claws of brass: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it.’ Already the iron rules; already it subdues and breaks all in pieces; already it brings all the unwilling into subjection; already we see these things ourselves. Now we glorify God, being instructed by thee.”

Plenty of evidence can also be given to show that, long before this date, Josephus and the Jews of his time quite generally applied this fourth empire to Rome. Further details on this point will be submitted at the end of the discussion of the seventh chapter.

As for the meaning of the stone which smote the image on its feet, then became a great mountain and filled the whole earth, we have already given argument to show that this cannot refer to the spread of the Christian church. The smiting did not take place when the legs were representing the victorious and undivided Roman Empire (as if this smiting had been done in the days of Christ); but the stone smote the

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image upon its feet that were of iron and clay or in its divided condition. It says further: In the days of those kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom.” It is absolutely clear, therefore, that this kingdom of God was not due in the days of Christ and the apostles, for Rome was not divided until some four hundred years after their time. Some Catholics would like to apply this prediction to their church, which came into power soon after that date, but they shrink from applying the parallel vision of the seventh chapter in the same way.

Looking at this whole matter in a broad and common-sense way, we must confess that this kingdom of God has not yet been set up; it can be set up only by a catastrophic end of all the present world powers; and this can take place only at the Second Coming of Christ as King of kings and Lord of lords.

3. THE FAITHFUL THREE

No date for this chapter is given in the Massoretic text, but the Septuogint and two other ancient versions, those of Theodotion and the Peshitto, insert here at the beginning, “in the eighteenth year,” which would be 587 BC. This is one year before Jerusalem was destroyed by this some Nebuchadnezzar. This date would seem to be very significant.

The king erects a gigantic golden statue on the plain of Durn, near Bobylon. He assembles all the officials within reach, asking them to bow down to this image, under penalty of death in a furnace. The three companions of Daniel refuse to obey the king’s command and are thrown into the furnace. They are miraculously delivered, whereupon Nebuchadnezzar proclaims the power of the God of the Hebrews.

1. Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold, whose height was threescore cubits, and the breadth thereof six cubits: he set it up in the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon.

The kings of Assyria, his predecessors, had been in the habit of erecting statues or other monuments to commemorate their conquests. Since Nebuchadnezzar had recently completed the conquest of the western countries, some have thought that this golden image was occasioned by these recent victories; but other considerations were doubtless also involved. Hippolyttis and other early commentators suggested that the king was probably trying to outdo the great metallic image which he had seen in his dream some sixteen years previously. That statue had a head of gold which Daniel had interpreted as meaning Nebuchadnezzar; but from the head downward there was a rapid deterioration, and finally the entire image was overthrown and destroyed by a supernatural stone which then spread out and occupied the whole earth. The young monarch resented this idea of deterioration and destruction, and was determined to erect a statue wholly of gold, to indicate that his kingdom was to stand forever.

The author of Prophets and Kings has outlined for us the psychology of the king, his boundless ambition and selfish pride. He forgot the many supernatural circumstances connected with his dream and its interpretation by Daniel, and defiantly determined to erect a symbol of “Babylon as an eternal, indestructible, all-powerful kingdom, which should break in pieces all other kingdoms, and stand forever.”-Page 504.

The sequel shows that this colossal egotism received a providential rebuke with so plain a meaning that he was once more taught an important lesson concerning the great facts of life.

Of gold. Doubtless not of solid gold, but of some other material overlaid with gold plates or gold leaf. The proportions here given, about ninety feet high by ten feet wide, indicate that there must have been a base or pedestal of a considerable size beneath the image proper, as the proportions of a human statue are quite different, or about 5 or 6 to 1.

In the plain of Dura. This locality has not been identified with certainty, for there are at least three places of this name in the vicinity of the capital. A small river called the Dura flows into the Euphrates some six or seven miles below Babylon; and near this river, about twelve miles southeast of the site of old Babylon, are a number of mounds carrying the name Dura. One of these mounds has a large rectangular brick structure, forty-five feet square at the base and some twenty feet high, which some have identified with the site of this ancient statue.

STORACLES OF PROPHECY

The Millennial Man

Daniel 2:1-49

The vast kingdom of Babylon was opulent and prosperous, yet Nebuchadnezzar the king stirred in his royal bed. How long would this golden era last, he wondered, and what would become of his powerful empire when he was gone?

With these disturbing questions in mind, the mighty monarch drifted off to sleep. That night, a vivid image of a towering multi-mineral man flashed into his mind with a panorama of color unlike anything he had ever experienced.



Throwing aside his embroidered covers, the king jumped out of bed and shouted to his bodyguards: “Call all the magicians and astrologers to come at once. I must know the meaning of this dream!”

The king’s wise men were roused and herded into the presence of the bewildered sovereign. “And the king said unto them, I have dreamed a dream, and my spirit was troubled to know the dream.” Daniel 2:3. One of the phony prophets smugly responded, “Tell your servants the dream, and we will give the interpretation.” But as often happens with dreams, the details had already grown cloudy in Nebuchadnezzar’s mind. These men had claimed divine insight, but the king was beginning to doubt their abilities. This would be the perfect test. “Tell me the dream and the interpretation, and you will be rewarded,” the king told his counselors, “otherwise I will cut you in pieces and turn your homes into dumps!”

The magicians and astrologers had no choice but to admit that they were powerless to explain the king’s dream without first hearing it. Furious with these imposters, the king commanded that all the wise men of Babylon be gathered for execution. However, the Lord still had one person in Babylon who could explain the dream of the colossal Millennial Man.

Fill in the blanks after reading each Bible text.

1. Why did God give the Babylonian king this dream?

Daniel 2:28 *But there is a God in heaven that revealeth _____, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the _____ days.*

NOTE: In this dream of the multi-mineral image, God outlined for all future millenniums the rise and fall of the empires that would have a direct influence on His people.

2. When the king's counselors failed to reveal and interpret the dream, what was Nebuchadnezzar's command?

Daniel 2:12 *The king ... commanded to _____ all the wise men of Babylon.*

NOTE: The astrologers and magicians of Babylon claimed to have supernatural power, but when they could not reveal the dream to the king, they were shown to be impotent imposters. If the king had recalled the dream, they would have simply manufactured a bogus interpretation. In his rage, Nebuchadnezzar commanded all the wise men to be slain—even those who were not present. Among those absent from the first meeting with the king was a God-fearing captive named Daniel, who had just been trained for the king's service.

3. When Daniel learned about the death decree, what did he ask of the king and what did he tell his friends?

A. Daniel 2:16 *Daniel went in, and desired of the king that he would give him _____, and that he would shew the king the _____.*

B. Daniel 2:17, 18 *Then Daniel went to his house, and made the thing _____ to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions: That they would desire mercies of the God of heaven concerning this _____.*

NOTE: Daniel requested a little time from Nebuchadnezzar and promised that he would reveal the dream and its meaning. The king, who was still desperate to know the significance of his vision, granted Daniel's request. Then he and his friends appealed to the only Source who could reveal the king's dream. They prayed to the God of heaven.

4. When the Lord revealed the dream to Daniel, to whom did he give praise and credit?

Daniel 2:23, 28 *I thank thee, and praise thee, O thou _____ of my fathers. ... There is a _____ in heaven that _____ secrets.*

NOTE: The rise and fall of empires may appear as if happening by the will of men, but Daniel's prayer of praise clearly reveals the essence of divine intervention. Nothing happens that God is not already aware of and has not allowed. Sometimes we may not understand what is happening in our world today or why, but it is comforting to know that God is still sovereign. Only Daniel could reveal the dream to the king, yet he clearly gives the credit to the One who revealed the dream to him—the God of heaven.

5. What two objects did Daniel say the king saw in his dream?

A. Daniel 2:31 *Thou, O king, sawest, and behold, a _____ .*

B. Daniel 2:34 *Thou sawest ... that a _____ was cut out without hands.*

NOTE: The first thing the king saw was a great image made of the following mineral elements:

1. The head was of **gold**.
2. The breast and arms were of **silver**.
3. The belly and thighs were of **brass**.
4. The legs were of **iron**.
5. The feet of **iron and clay**.

Next, the king saw a stone that had been cut without hands. At this point, King Nebuchadnezzar was no doubt sitting spellbound on the edge of his throne. Daniel had related the dream precisely as God had given it to him. Now the king eagerly waited, wondering what the dream meant. Daniel proceeded to explain the interpretation as the Lord had revealed it to him, and we would do well to take it just as He gave it. The only safe way to interpret the Bible and prophecy is to allow the Bible to explain itself.

6. What does the head of gold represent?

Daniel 2:38 *Thou art this _____ of gold.*

NOTE: The king was regarded as the head of the state. This is why Nebuchadnezzar represented Babylon, the empire that began the prophecy. Neo-Babylon ruled the world from 612-539 B.C. as one of the mightiest empires of antiquity—one that could aptly be described as the head of gold. Notice that the prophecy begins with Daniel’s time.

7. Would the Babylonian kingdom last forever?

Daniel 2:39 *After thee shall arise _____ kingdom inferior to thee.*

NOTE: Babylon’s supremacy would not last forever. Succeeding kingdoms, inferior to Babylon, would rule in their turn. Just as silver is inferior to gold, so the kingdom that followed Babylon enjoyed diminished glory. Led by Cyrus in 539 B.C., the Medo-Persian empire conquered Babylon and reduced it to ruins. The Medes and Persians were the ruling world power from 539-331 B.C. During their reign, all taxes had to be paid in silver.

8. What metal would represent the kingdom that followed Medo-Persia?

Daniel 2:39 *Another third kingdom of _____ ... shall bear rule over all the earth.*

NOTE: The brass kingdom of Greece came into power when Alexander the Great conquered the Medes and Persians at the battle of Arbela in 331 B.C., and Greece remained in power until about 168 B.C. Greek soldiers were called “brazen coated” because their armor was all bronze. Notice how each succeeding mineral depicted in the image is less valuable, yet more enduring than the one before it.

9. What metal represents the fourth kingdom?

Daniel 2:40 *The fourth kingdom shall be strong as _____.*

NOTE: The iron monarchy of Rome conquered the Greeks in 168 B.C. and enjoyed world supremacy until Rome was captured by the Ostrogoths in A.D. 476. Rome is the kingdom that dominated the world when Jesus Christ was born. Notice how Daniel foretold a thousand years of world history with unerring accuracy. The rise and fall of these four world empires—Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome—are clearly foretold in the Bible and proved by the history books.

10. What would happen after the fall of the Roman Empire?

Daniel 2:41, 42 *The kingdom shall be _____. ... As the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken.*

NOTE: When the Roman Empire began to crumble in A.D. 476, it was not overtaken by another world power. Instead, barbarian tribes conquered the Roman Empire and divided it—just as Daniel prophesied. Ten of these tribes evolved into modern Europe. They were the Ostrogoths, Visigoths, Franks, Vandals, Alemanni, Sueves, Anglo-Saxons, Heruls, Lombards, and Burgundians. Seven of them still exist today in Europe. For example, the Anglo-Saxons became the English, the Franks became the French, the Alemanni became the Germans, and the Lombards became the Italians.

11. Would these 10 kingdoms ever succeed in uniting?

Daniel 2:43 *They shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall _____
_____ one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay.*

NOTE: Through marriage, alliances, and treaties, men have vainly attempted to reunite the European continent. All throughout history, leaders such as Charlemagne, Napoleon, Kaiser Wilhelm, Mussolini, and Hitler have fought to build a new European empire; but these words of Scripture have stopped every single would-be world ruler. Revelation 13 tells us there will be another attempt to establish a universal religion, but Daniel’s prophecy clearly states that the world will remain politically divided for the rest of Earth’s history.

12. Who will set up the final kingdom?

Daniel 2:44 *And in the days of these kings shall the _____ of _____ set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed.*

NOTE: The next great universal kingdom will be the kingdom of heaven, which is described in Matthew 25:31-34.

13. What does the stone do to the other world kingdoms?

Daniel 2:34, 35 *A stone was cut out without hands, which _____ the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and _____ them to pieces. ... And the stone that smote the image became a great _____, and filled the whole earth.*

NOTE: The stone that was cut without human hands represents God's kingdom. It will not be a conglomeration of earthly kingdoms, but a total replacement (Revelation 21:1). The Scriptures declare that when Jesus Christ returns to earth, He will completely consume all the kingdoms of earth and establish an everlasting kingdom (Daniel 2:44). What exciting news! Jesus Christ is coming again! All history is moving toward this climactic conclusion, when the Son of God shall return in majesty to bring in the kingdom of everlasting righteousness. King Nebuchadnezzar may have thought that he had defeated the true God when he besieged Jerusalem and plundered the temple (Daniel 1:1, 2), but he was shown very quickly that God is ruler over all. Human events are under His control, and ultimately He will win the conflict. Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome, and the 10 divisions of the Roman Empire may have sought to usurp divine authority and destroy the people of God, but all earthly kingdoms will eventually be crushed by the coming of Christ. Thank God, He will win the great controversy!

14. After hearing Daniel's clear interpretation of the dream, what did Nebuchadnezzar say about the Lord?

Daniel 2:47 *The king answered unto Daniel, and said, Of a truth it is, that your God is a _____ of _____, and a Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets.*

NOTE: Having seen that God has complete control of world events, even Nebuchadnezzar readily acknowledged that the God Daniel served was above all the heathen gods of Babylon. How quickly the picture had changed! Daniel and his friends, because of their faithfulness to God, were elevated from their initial captivity in Babylon to positions of prominent leadership for the kingdom (Daniel 2:48, 49). God always honors those who honor Him (1 Samuel 2:30).

Your Response

Recognizing that God is in full control of earthly events, are you willing to let Him have full control of your life?

ANSWER: _____

Supplement

This section provides additional information for further study.

Gold = Babylon

The head of gold represented Babylon, which was the ruling world power from 612-539 B.C.

Silver = Medo-Persia

The chest of silver represented Medo-Persia, the ruling world empire from 539-331 B.C.

Bronze = Greece

The thighs of bronze represented Greece, the dominant world ruler from 331-168 B.C.

Iron = Rome

The legs of iron represented Rome, which enjoyed world supremacy from 168 B.C.-A.D. 476.

Iron and Clay = the Divided Empire

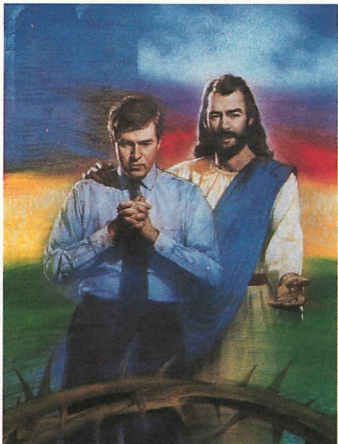
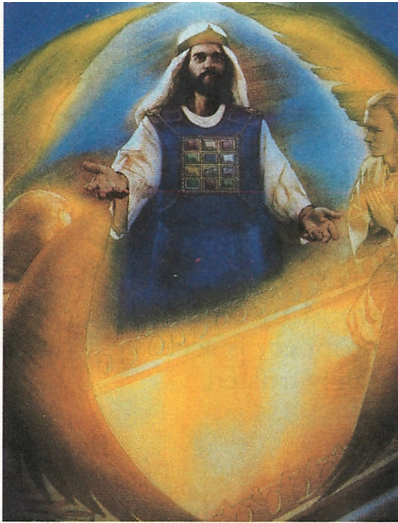
The feet that were partly iron and partly clay represented a divided empire that would not cleave together. No single power has ruled the world since A.D. 476, and it will remain divided until Christ's return.

Stone = Christ's Eternal Kingdom, His Word, and His Law





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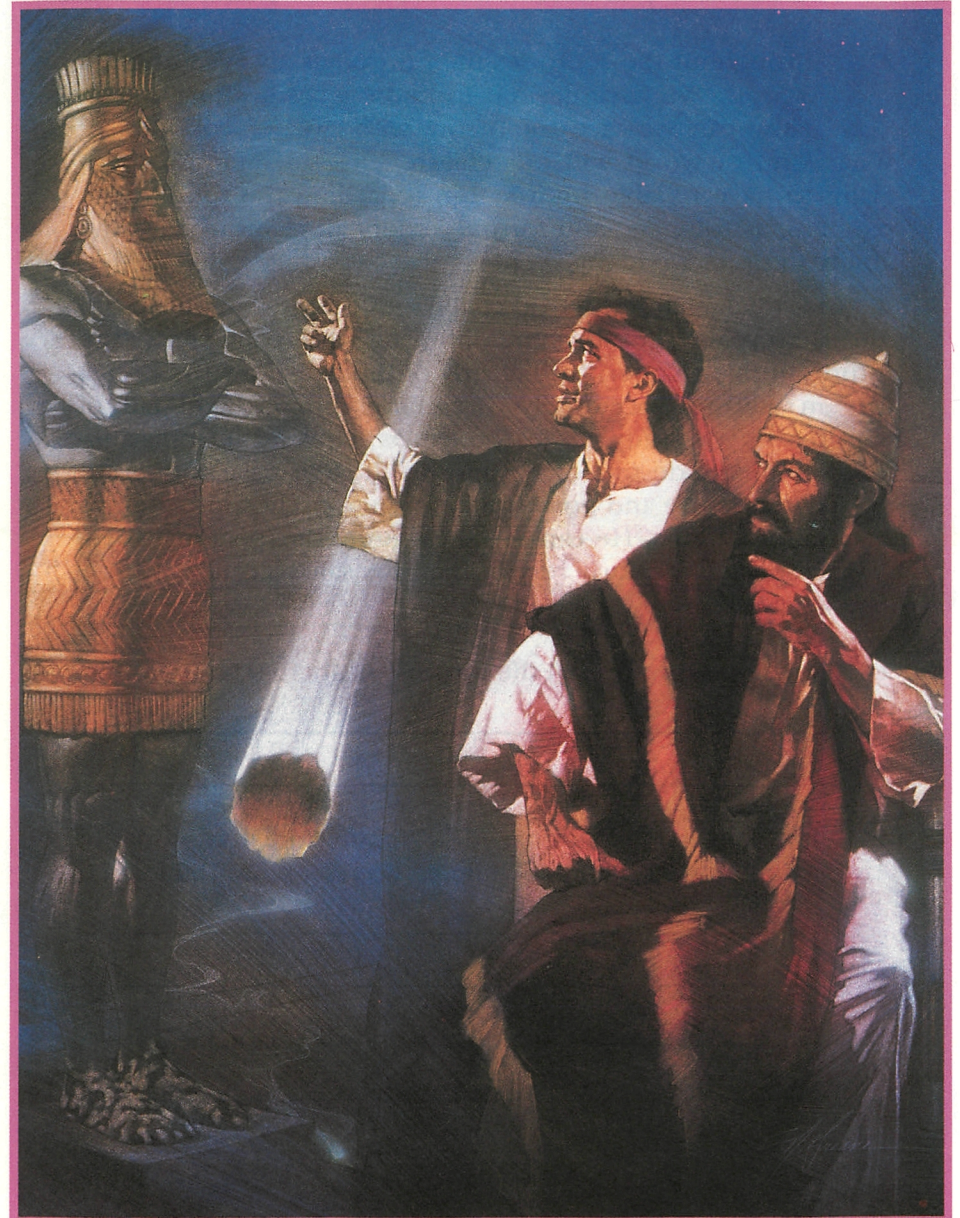
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Unsealing DANIEL'S MYSTERIES

WITH MARK FINLEY

◆ The Psychics vs. the Prophet ◆

2



ADVENTURES IN BIBLE PROPHECY



2

The Psychics vs. the Prophet!

Throughout the centuries the future has always intrigued people. We have desired to know what lies just ahead. How can we face tomorrow with greater confidence? What kind of world will our children live in? Many sources claim to have reliable information regarding the future. The psychics, astrologers, and fortune tellers all claim to have the ability to predict coming events.

In Daniel, chapter 2, God challenges the psychics head on! And He reveals Himself as the only One who really knows the future. In this chapter, God clearly outlines 2,500 years of history in advance, accurately foretelling the rise and fall of empires. As you study this lesson, you will marvel at God's ability to guide the destiny of the nations. If He is wise enough to predict the future and powerful enough to orchestrate the rise and fall of nations, He can certainly guide our personal lives. Our lesson today clearly reveals that it is safe to trust God.

An Ancient King's Dream

1. Who alone can foretell the future? Isaiah 46:9, 10.

2. What unusual experience did Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, have one night while he was sleeping? Daniel 2:1.

3. What was the king's immediate response? Daniel 2:2.

God's Word is clear. These seven prophetic words, "They shall not cleave one to another," have stopped every would-be conqueror of Europe through the centuries. Throughout history, political leaders such as Charlemagne, Charles V, Louis XIV, Napoleon, Hitler, and Stalin have attempted to rule the world by uniting Europe. Each has desperately failed. Bible prophecy is accurate. The future is in God's hands. He can be safely trusted.

Hope on the Horizon

13. What is the next event on the horizon of history? Daniel 2:44.

The rock that was cut out without hands represents the coming kingdom of God. Christ is the Rock (1 Corinthians 10:4). Soon all wickedness, evil, and rebellion will be gone forever. The forces of evil will be crushed, broken into pieces, and destroyed. God will establish His everlasting kingdom forever.

- My decision: Lord Jesus, I choose to follow You in all things and to be one of Your children. I want to be remembered when You come in Your kingdom.
- Lord, I surrender my life to You today, along with any habits that are not pleasing to Your will.

b. "Then another _____
 _____" Daniel 2:39, last part.

The nation of Greece overthrew the Medes and Persians. The Greeks ruled the world from 331 to 168 B.C. Alexander the Great conquered the world by the time he was thirty-three years old. We will study more about his meteoric rise to power in Daniel, chapter 8.

c. "And the fourth kingdom shall be _____
 _____" Daniel 2:40.

The Romans conquered the Greeks in 168 B.C. The Roman Empire ruled the world during the time of Christ. Caesar Augustus, a Roman emperor, passed the decree that all the world should be taxed. A Roman court tried Jesus, and Roman soldiers nailed Him to the cross.

11. What did the Bible predict would be the fate of Rome, the fourth kingdom? Daniel 2:41-42.

The prophet Daniel predicted that the Roman Empire would be divided. The break-up of the empire occurred from 351 to 476 A.D. No fifth world empire overthrew the Romans. Rome was divided exactly as the prophet predicted. The barbarian tribes from the north invaded the Roman Empire, and it was divided into separate, distinct states. The nations of Europe today—France, Germany, England, Spain, Italy, etc.—were predicted in this amazing dream.

Prophecy Fulfilled

12. Would the nations of Europe ever be united into one cohesive, lasting, political nation again? Daniel 2:43.

The wise men of Babylon utterly failed. Miraculously, God hid the dream from Nebuchadnezzar's mind. If the king could have remembered the dream, the psychics would have been able to make up a plausible interpretation.

The King Called in His Brightest Minds

- The magicians—used sleight of hand, magic, and trickery.
- The astrologers—observed the patterns of the stars as a means of attempting to forecast the future.
- The sorcerers—spiritualists who claimed to communicate with the dead for information regarding the future.
- The Chaldeans—the educated elite who attempted to tell the future by human genius, mathematical calculations, and an understanding of philosophy.

The angry king condemned all the wise men of Babylon to death when they could not tell him what he had dreamed.

4. How did Daniel respond to this crisis in the nation? Daniel 2:16-18.

5. What two qualities does God have in super abundance? Daniel 2:20.

God Reveals the Future

6. Who alone could reveal the king's dream? Daniel 2:28, first part.

What period of time does the dream especially apply to? Daniel 2:28, last part.

4 • UNSEALING DANIEL'S MYSTERIES

The book of Daniel especially reveals events in the last days of earth's history. The king's dream focuses on the end times. It foretells events which occur at the close of this earth's history.

7. What did Nebuchadnezzar see in his dream? Daniel 2:31.

8. Label the corresponding metals (see Daniel 2:32-35):

verse 32, first part

verse 32, middle part

verse 32, last part

verse 33, first part

verse 33, last part



verse 34

ILLUSTRATIONS: NATHAN GREENE

THE PSYCHICS VS. THE PROPHET • 5

According to Daniel's interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream, each corresponding metal represented a kingdom that would rule the world. Beginning with Babylon, the prophet traces the destiny of the nations through the centuries.

9. How did God describe Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom of Babylon? Daniel 2:38.

Gold is a fitting symbol for Babylon. Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom ruled the world from 605 to 539 B.C. Located in modern-day Iraq, some sixty miles south of Baghdad, the capital city of Babylon was the center of the most powerful nation in the Middle East at that time. Its chief god, Bel-Marduk, was crafted of solid gold. His golden image sat on a golden throne beside a golden candlestick before a golden table in a golden-domed temple. The prophet Isaiah also calls Babylon "the golden city" Isaiah 14:4.

Yet Babylon would not last forever. It would be overthrown by another dominant power.

10. How does the Bible describe the next three world powers? Daniel 2:39, 40.

a. "But after you shall arise _____"
verse 39, first part.

The Medes and Persians overthrew the Babylonians in 539 B.C. Cyrus, the general who led the Medo-Persian armies, is predicted by name 150 years in advance in Isaiah 44:28 and Isaiah 45:1. The Medes and Persians ruled the world from 539 to 331 B.C.

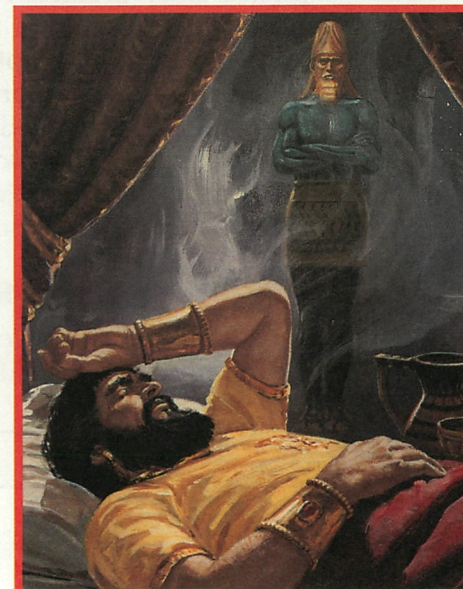
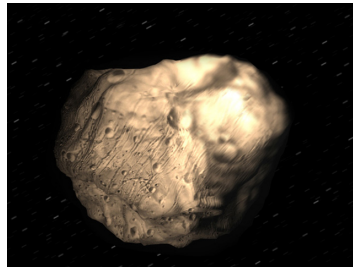


ILLUSTRATION: JOHN STEELE, PPTA

on the cruel cross to pay the debt for the sin of humanity. When He comes again, He comes as King of Kings and Lords of Lords. Friend, you can be a subject in His kingdom if you accept Him as your King and Saviour. His kingdom will last forever. Why not plan to be one of His subjects? It will be a kingdom of peace and happiness and what is more, you can live in it for eternity.



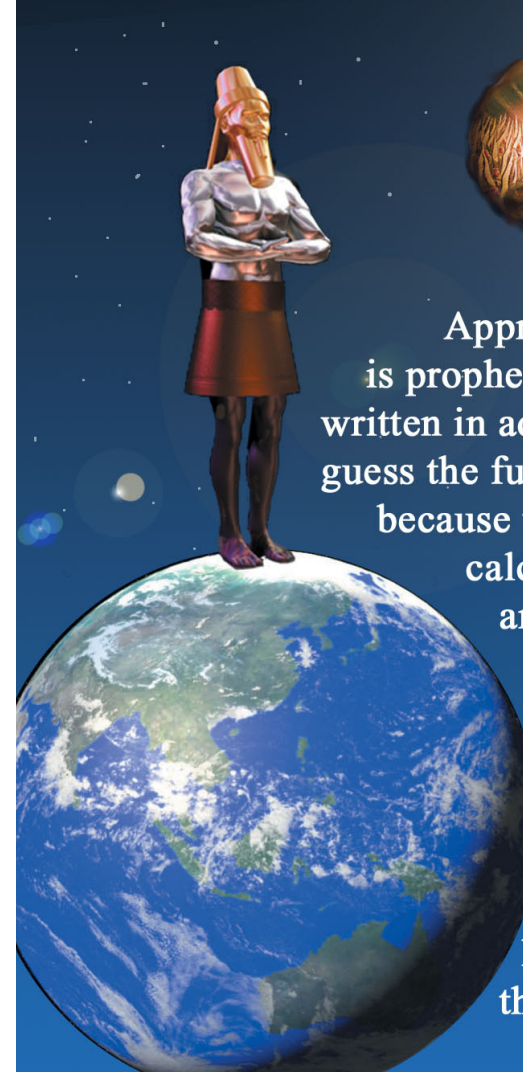
Do you plan to be a citizen of God's eternal kingdom? _____

	Head of Gold Babylon [B.C. 605 - 539]
	Breast of Silver Medo-Persia [B.C. 539 - 331]
	Thighs of Brass Greece [B.C. 331 - 168]
	Legs of Iron Rome [B.C. 168 - A.D 476]
	Feet of Iron & Clay Divided nation of Western Europe [A.D. 476 - 2nd Advent]

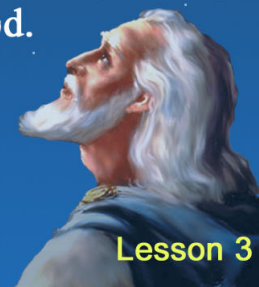
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Life's VITAL ANSWERS

Uncanny Predictions



Approximately one third of the Bible is prophecy. Prophecy defined, is history written in advance. Occasionally people guess the future, and are right, simply because they have made some logical calculations. Because this world and its affairs are so complex, it is almost impossible to foretell the future. A human attempt to predict what lies ahead is usually wrong: but not so with God. Bible prophecy is accurate – God knows the end from the beginning.



Isaiah 46:9,10 Remember the former things, those of long ago; I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me. _____, from ancient times, what is still to come. I say: My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please.

Prophecy is from God. He claims to be the only one who can make known the “end from the beginning”. God bases the proof of His existence on the accuracy of Bible predictions. Thus, if you prove any Bible prophecy wrong, then you prove God's existence is wrong. But, if one-third of the Bible foretells the future, and it all proves true, then we can confidently acknowledge the fact that there is a Supreme Being – the Great God of the Universe. Notice one marvellous prophecy of Scripture – a prophecy that gives so many details it could not be fulfilled merely by accident.

Daniel 2:1 In the second year of his reign, Nebuchadnezzar had dreams; his mind was troubled and he could not sleep.

Read verses 1-30 of Daniel Chapter 2.

Nebuchadnezzar had forgotten his dream (see verse 5). Nebuchadnezzar II was the greatest king of the second Babylonian Empire. He brought the power of ancient Babylon to the pinnacle of its glory about 600 B.C. Daniel was a young Hebrew captive in Babylon, a worshipper of the true God, who had already earned a reputation for great wisdom (see Daniel 1). Verse 29 shows that before Nebuchadnezzar fell asleep on the night of his dream, he had been worrying about the future of his kingdom. This was probably the reason why he was so anxious to recall the dream. It might contain some kind of key to the future.



Babylon's wise men failed to tell the king the dream or provide an interpretation. These men were members of a guild of magicians, soothsayers and astrologers, who claimed to be in direct contact with the Babylonian gods. This explains why Nebuchadnezzar became so

riod between 1850 and 1914, these too, have failed. Says historian Charles Downer Hazen:

“Europe has always refused to be dominated by a single nation or a single man, it has run the risk several times in its history of passing under the yoke, but it always, in the end succeeded in escaping it”. *Modern European History*, page 229.

Why have all past efforts to unite Europe failed? Because leaders have attempted to do what God has said would never be done! “The kingdom shall be divided” (verse 42). “They shall not adhere to one another” (verse 43).

In 1500 years no person has been able to break the spell of prophecy. Today we are down in the feet of iron and of clay. We have been there now for 1500 years. WHAT WILL HAPPEN NEXT?



Daniel 2:44,45 “In the time of those kings, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed, nor will it be left to another people. It will crush all those kingdoms and bring them to an end, _____. This is the meaning of the vision of the rock cut out of a mountain, but not by human hands—a rock that broke the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver and the gold to pieces. The great God has shown the king what will take place in the future. The dream is true and the interpretation is trustworthy.”

The stone cut out without hands represents the great kingdom of God. There will be a fifth World Empire, ruled by the King of Kings. This is great news for our world today, as leaders cannot solve the problems of world control – but God can. He will set up a kingdom that will fill the earth, and rule forever.

All details of this prophecy have been fulfilled accurately so far. This gives us the certain hope that the remaining portion will also come to pass. Jesus Christ will come to this earth and set up this kingdom. When He came the first time, He came as a man of sorrows, and died

_____ ; yet it will have some of the strength of iron in it, even as you saw iron mixed with clay.

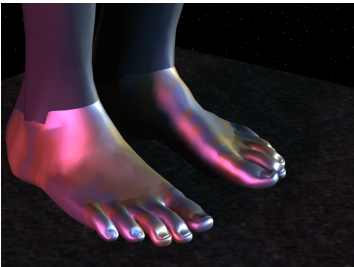
The Roman Empire was divided into parts of Western Europe. Daniel had foretold there would be but four world dominating Empires, and then would come the division into a number of parts. And as the prophecy has foretold, so it came to pass 1,000 years later.



The legs of Iron represented Rome

Daniel 2:42,43 As the toes were partly iron and partly clay, so this kingdom will be partly strong and partly brittle. And just as you saw the iron mixed with baked clay, so the people will be a mixture and will not remain united, any more than iron mixes with clay.

Here we see a divided Europe after the downfall of Rome. The prophecy states it will be partly strong and partly broken. This has been accurately fulfilled, as down through the history of Europe there have always been some nations strong, while others have been weak. The Roman Empire had been described as 'History's Humpty Dumpty'. After Rome's Downfall in A.D. 476, "all the king's men" – the warriors and diplomats of fifteen centuries – have failed to "put Humpty Dumpty together again".



The feet and ten toes represent Europe after the fall of Rome

Six notable rulers who have tried vainly to unite Europe were:

Charlemagne (of the Franks)	- 8 th Century
Charles V (of Spain)	- 16 th Century
Louis XIV (of France)	- 16 th Century
Napoleon (of France)	- 19 th Century
Kaiser Wilhelm (of Germany)	- 20 th Century
Adolf Hitler (of Germany)	- 20 th Century

Repeated efforts have also been made to weld the fragments of Europe by intermarriage between ruling families, especially in the pe-

angry with them. When put to the test, they confessed they did not have contact with the gods, after all, so their hypocrisy was openly unmasked (verse 11). Because of his reputation for wisdom, Daniel was evidently classed among Babylon's 'wise men'. Therefore, he too was involved in the death decree.



Note the simplicity and childlike faith of Daniel and his companions. In their extremity they got down on their knees in the manner of an old fashioned prayer meeting. And God heard their prayer. He will do the same for us today if we approach Him with Daniel's simple faith. Note also the reference to "the latter days" (verse 28): "after this" (verse 29) and "what would come to pass" (verse 29). God took the troubled mind of Nebuchadnezzar, filled with anxious thoughts about the future of his kingdom, and made it a channel through which to reveal the future history of the world!

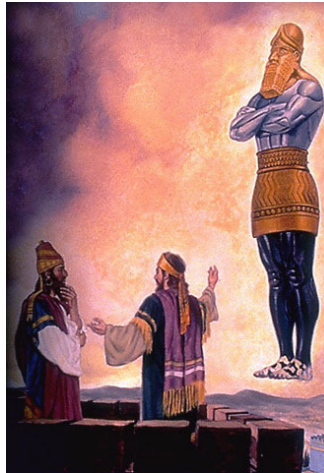
Daniel 2:31-35 "You looked, O king, and there before you stood a large statue—an enormous, dazzling statue, awesome in appearance. The head of the statue was made of pure gold, its chest and arms of silver, its belly and thighs of bronze, its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of baked clay. While you were watching, a rock was cut out, but not by human hands. It struck the statue on its feet of iron and clay and smashed them. Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver and the gold were broken to pieces at the same time and became like chaff on a threshing floor in the summer. The wind swept them away without leaving a trace. _____"

Here is the great metallic man, composed of five minerals. Now for the interpretation of the image. It is interesting to see how the Bible interprets itself – one portion gives enlightenment to another portion. The Bible must explain itself. This is the only way for correct interpretation.

Daniel 2:36 "This was the dream, and now we will interpret it to the king."

A divine hand is about to turn the pages of world history in advance. The ages are now to be burst open before the king's astonished eyes.

Daniel 2:37,38 You, O king, are the king of kings. The God of heaven has given you dominion and power and might and glory; 38 in your hands he has placed mankind and the beasts of the field and the birds of the air. Wherever they live, he has made you ruler over them all. _____



The head of gold is Nebuchadnezzar, but this is really speaking of the kingdom of which Nebuchadnezzar was the head. This is made clear in verse 39, when following kingdoms were referred to.

Isaiah 14:4 You will take up this proverb against the king of Babylon, and say: "How the oppressor has ceased, The golden city ceased! (NKJV)

Babylon was referred to as the golden city, so appropriately it was represented by the head of gold in the image. Babylon ruled the world from 606 - 538 B.C. Nebuchadnezzar had planned that his kingdom would last forever, but God gave this dream to show this would not be so. Babylon would dominate only the early portion of human affairs.



The Head of Gold represented Babylon

Isaiah 13:19,20 Babylon, the jewel of kingdoms, the glory of the Babylonians' pride, _____ like Sodom and Gomorrah. She will never be inhabited or lived in through all generations; no Arab will pitch his tent there, no shepherd will rest his flocks there.

God foretold how Babylon would not stand forever, but would meet complete destruction. Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed in the past because of their wickedness.

Daniel 2:39 "After you, another kingdom will rise, inferior to yours. Next, a third kingdom, one of bronze, will rule over the whole earth."

The second kingdom, represented by the chest of silver, was Medo-Persia, which ruled the world from 536 - 331 B.C. The armies of Cyrus of Medo-Persia overthrew Babylon. This is mentioned in Daniel 5:30,31, when Darius conquered the city.



The chest and arms of silver represented Medo-persia

The third kingdom, represented by the thighs of brass was Greece, which ruled from 331 - 168 B.C. Under Alexander the Great, Greece conquered the world in a few years. Daniel 7 and 8 illustrate these kingdoms by depicting them as certain animals. In Daniel 8:20,21 we can see how Greece did succeed Medo-Persia.

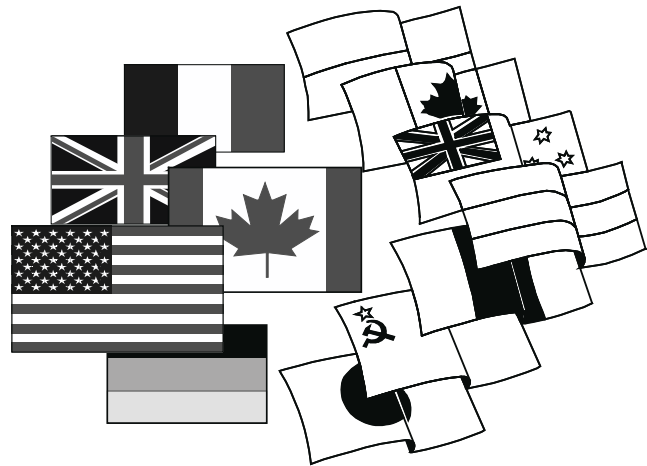
Daniel 2:40 Finally, _____—for iron breaks and smashes everything—and as iron breaks things to pieces, so it will crush and break all the others.

The fourth kingdom was Rome which ruled from 168 B.C. - 476 A.D. Rome ruled the world in Jesus' day (Luke 2:1). While the year A.D. 476 has commonly been given for the downfall of Imperial Rome, the disintegration of the Empire was actually a long-drawn-out process that lasted for over 200 years. Between A.D. 350 and 550, Rome's territories were penetrated by successive hordes of Germanic invaders. Some of these barbarian tribes passed quickly into oblivion, leaving scarcely a trace. Others succeeded in carving out more definite and permanent territories from the body of the prostrate Empire.



The thighs of bronze represented Greece

Daniel 2:41 Just as you saw that the feet and toes were partly of baked clay and partly of iron, _____



27. What will God's kingdom do to the kingdoms of men?

Daniel 2:44 " _____ "

28. What represented God's kingdom in Nebuchadnezzar's dream?

Daniel 2:45 " _____ "

29. What did Daniel say about the certainty of the dream and its interpretation?

Daniel 2:45 " _____ "

_____ "

"The king answered unto Daniel, and said, Of a truth it is, that your God is a God of gods, and a Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets."
Daniel 2:47.

The Imagery of Daniel 2

Head **Babylon**
of Gold (605–539 BC)

Breast & Arms **Medo-Persia**
of Silver (539–331 BC)

Belly & Thighs **Greece**
of Brass (331–168 BC)

Legs **Rome**
of Iron (168 BC – AD 476)

Stone **Kingdom of God**

Chapter 8: Ram Medo-Persia
Goat Greece
Four Horns Greek Divisions
Little Horn Rome

In the light of God's Word . . .



I understand that in the Bible God has accurately foretold world events long before they are to happen.

Yes No

I desire to understand the prophecies God has given for our time.

Additional comments:

Name: _____

Next Lesson: Could We Be Earth's Final Generation?



Will There Soon Be One World Government?

1. Why does God tell us His plans in advance?

John 14:29 " _____ "

2. Who is one prophet Jesus said we ought to understand?

Matthew 24:15 " _____ "

Read Daniel 2:1-30. Then find answers to these questions.

3. Why was King Nebuchadnezzar troubled?

Daniel 2:3 " _____ "

4. What did he ask the wise men to show him?

Daniel 2:6 " _____ "

5. Who had given him this dream?

Daniel 2:28 " _____ "

6. What was the dream to reveal?

Daniel 2:29 “ _____ ”

Read verses 31-35. Then find answers to these questions.

7. What did Nebuchadnezzar see in his dream?

Daniel 2:31 “ _____ ”

8. Of what was the image made?

Daniel 2:32 His head: “ _____ ”

His breast and arms: “ _____ ”

His belly and thighs: “ _____ ”

Daniel 2:33 His legs: “ _____ ”

His feet: “ _____ ”

9. What did Daniel tell the king the image’s head represented?

Daniel 2:36-38 “ _____ ”

10. What nation did Nebuchadnezzar represent?

Daniel 1:1 “ _____ ”

11. According to the interpretation, what would arise after Nebuchadnezzar’s golden kingdom?

Daniel 2:39 “ _____ ”

12. When Babylon did fall, what two nations, symbolized by the image’s silver breast and arms, shared world rulership?

Daniel 5:28 “ _____ ”

13. By what animal is Medo-Persia symbolized in Chapter 8?

Daniel 8:3, 4, 20 “ _____ ”

14. What animal smote the ram?

Daniel 8:5-7 “ _____ ”

15. What nation does this goat represent which would conquer Medo-Persia?

Daniel 8:21 “ _____ ”

16. Like the others, how extensively would this third kingdom rule?

Daniel 2:39 “ _____ ”

17. When the first king of Greece fell, the kingdom would be divided into how many parts?

Daniel 8:8, 21, 22 “ _____ ”

The great horn between the goat’s eyes represented Alexander the Great, who died at a young age without arranging for a successor to rule the conquered kingdom. True to prophecy, the territory was divided into four smaller kingdoms, and remained divided until superseded by the next world empire.

18. What then came forth?

Daniel 8:9 “ _____ ”

19. What kind of king was represented by this little horn?

Daniel 8:23 “ _____ ”

After Greece, the fourth and final nation to rule the world was the Roman empire.

20. The ram was “great” (v.4), the goat was “very great” (v.8). How did the little horn compare with them?

Daniel 8:9 “ _____ ”

21. From its point of origin, what directions did this kingdom spread?

Daniel 8:9 “ _____ ”

Rome, coming from the west, gained control of Egypt, Syria, and Palestine.

22. According to Nebuchadnezzar’s dream, this fourth kingdom would be as strong as what metal?

Daniel 2:40 “ _____ ”

23. What would then happen to this kingdom?

Daniel 2:41 “ _____ ”

The Roman Empire, the last to rule the world, was absorbed by Germanic tribes which divided up the territory and eventually became the modern nations of Europe.

24. How does the prophecy describe the attempts of later kings to unite themselves?

Daniel 2:42, 43 “ _____ ”

25. What prophetic statement has prevented modern kings from uniting under one world government?

Daniel 2:43 “ _____ ”

Time and again since the fall of Rome men have attempted to unite the world under a single government. But the Word of God has declared that it cannot be done, and according to that decree all attempts have failed.

26. When will God set up His eternal kingdom?

Daniel 2:44 “ _____ ”

Sermon 6 – The Kingdom

TEXT: And in the days of these kings shall the God of Heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and 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." Dan.2:44.

The second chapter of Daniel introduces five universal kingdoms which were to succeed each other. The first four kingdoms are earthly and perishable. The fifth is immortal, and will stand forever. The first four kingdoms are represented by the great metallic image, the several parts of which are composed of gold, silver, brass, and iron mixed with clay. When these shall be broken in pieces, and entirely removed, then will the immortal kingdom fill the whole earth. We will now call attention to Dan.2:31-45.

Verses 31-36: "Thou, O king, sawest, and behold, a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee, and the form thereof was terrible. This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, his legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay. Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out, without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces; 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; and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth. This is the dream, and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king."

But first let us notice some important points mentioned in this dream:

- 1. The stone smote the image upon his feet.
- 2. Then was the iron and clay, the brass, the silver and gold, broken in pieces.
- 3. The wind carried them away, like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors, so that no place was found for them. No language can describe
- 4. Then, and not till then, the stone that smote the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.

Verses 37, 38: "Thou, O king, art a king of kings; for the God of Heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art [or thy kingdom is] this head of gold."

Babylon was the first kingdom of universal empire. It was founded by Nimrod, the great-grandson of Noah. See Gen.10:8-10. It lasted nearly seventeen hundred years, though under different names; sometimes called Babylon, sometimes

Assyria, and sometimes Chaldea. It continued from the time of Nimrod, to that of Belshazzar, who was its last king.

Verse 39 (first part): "And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee." The Medo-Persian kingdom succeeded Babylon. See chap.5:28: "Thy kingdom [Babylon] is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians." The Medo-Persian was the second universal kingdom represented by the breast and arms of silver.

Verse 39 (last part): "And another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth." In chap.8:5-7, 21, we learn that Grecia conquered the Medo-Persian kingdom, and became a kingdom of universal empire. This took place under Alexander. Here, then, we have the third kingdom, which is represented by the brass of the image.

Verse 40: "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." The fourth kingdom is generally admitted to be Rome. It is a universal kingdom that is to break in pieces all that went before it.

Rome alone answers the description. That did have universal empire. See Luke 2:1: "And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed." Caesar Augustus was a Roman emperor. Here we have the fourth kingdom, represented by the legs of iron.

Verse 41 (first part): "And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potter's clay and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided." The Western Empire of Rome, between the years A.D. 356 and 483, was divided into ten divisions, or kingdoms:

1. The Huns, in Hungary, A.D. 356;
2. The Ostrogoths, in Mysia, 377;
3. The Visigoths, in Pannonia, 378;
4. The Franks, in France, 407;
5. The Vandals, in Africa, 407;
6. The Sueves and Alans, in Gascoigne and Spain, 407;
7. The Burgundians, in Burgundy, 407;
8. The Heruli and Rugii, in Italy, 476;
9. The Saxons and Angles, in Britain, 476;
10. The Lombards, in Germany, 483. Thus the kingdom was divided, as designated by the ten toes.

Verses 41-43 (beginning with last part of verse 41): "But there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay. 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. And whereas thou sawest 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."

This language is descriptive of the state of the kingdoms into which the fourth kingdom should be broken. Some of them should be strong as iron, and some feeble as clay. Yet as iron cannot be permanently united to clay, so the stronger kingdoms shall not be able to annex the weaker to themselves in a permanent union. Nor shall the intermarriage of the reigning families succeed in causing these kingdoms to cleave together. Next come the words of the text, which distinctly point to the period of the setting up of God's imperishable kingdom:

Verse 44: "And in the days of these kings shall the God of Heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and 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."

The kings mentioned in the text are most certainly the ten kings, or ten kingdoms, of the divided fourth kingdom; for they are the subject of discourse. The phrase, "In the days of these kings, " does not refer to the days of the kingdom of Babylon, of Media and Persia, of Greece, nor to the days of Rome before it was divided into ten kingdoms. But it does refer to Rome after it had been divided into ten kingdoms, represented by the ten toes of the image. Therefore the kingdom was not set up at the time of the first advent of Christ. Neither could it be set up, according to the text, until the Roman kingdom should be divided into the ten kingdoms, which division took place between the years A.D. 356 and 483. The setting up of this kingdom is evidently a future event.

The stone did not smite the image on the head, Babylon; nor on the breast, Media and Persia; nor on the sides, Grecia; nor yet on the legs, Rome Pagan. The stone did smite the image on his feet. But it could not smite the feet before they existed, and they were not in being till several hundred years after the first advent of Jesus Christ. We still wait for the dashing of the image, or the destruction of all earthly governments, before the stone shall become a great mountain and fill the whole earth, or the immortal kingdom be fully established in the earth.

The stone has nothing in common with the image. Mark well the events here stated. The stone breaks the image, and it becomes like the chaff of summer threshing-floors, and the wind carries it away so that no place is found for it. All earthly kingdoms are first broken, and cease to exist; then, and not till then, does the stone fill the whole earth.

The kingdom here mentioned is not a spiritual kingdom established in the minds and hearts of mortal men. In no sense of the word whatever can it be said that the kingdom was set up about the time of the first advent of Christ. If it be said that the

kingdom of grace was set up by our Lord Jesus Christ at his first advent, then we inquire, Had God no kingdom of grace before that time? If not, then Enoch, Noah, Lot, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, and the prophets, have perished without hope; for certainly no man can be saved without grace.

It is true that the phrase, "It shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms," gives the idea that the kingdom of God, for a time, is contemporary with perishable kingdoms. And in view of this fact, many adopt the popular view of the spiritual reign of Christ, the conversion of the world, commonly called the temporal millennium. Some others, who reject the spiritual reign, suppose they have a strong-hold in this phrase for the mixed millennium, the literal reign of Christ on the earth with the immortal righteous of all ages, among the mortal nations. But we reject both these views as being opposed to the plainest declarations of the sacred Scriptures, and invite attention to one which we regard as scriptural and harmonious.

The establishment of the eternal kingdom is by a succession of events, the first of which occurs prior to the destruction of earthly governments.

1. The Son of God, at the close of his ministration for sinners, and before his second appearing, will receive the kingdom from the Father. In the seventh chapter of this prophetic book we read these words: "I saw in the night visions, and behold, one like the Son of Man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom, that which shall not be destroyed." Dan.7:13, 14.

This language describes a grand transaction in Heaven between the Father and the Son. The Son, at his second advent to this world, does not approach the Father. So far from this, that the apostle represents the Father as remaining in Heaven, and sending his Son. "And he [the Father] shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you." Acts 3:20.

The words of the Psalmist are to the point: "Ask of me [says the Father to the Son], and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron, thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." Ps.2:8, 9.

Before the Son makes his second advent to this world, he receives from the Father "dominion, and glory, and a kingdom." The heathen are his, and the uttermost parts of the earth are his possession. Thus the God of Heaven sets up the kingdom by

investing his Son with royal authority before sending him to manifest it in the earth among his enemies.

2. After the coronation of the King of kings, the opening heavens will reveal him coming in grandeur and in glory, leading on the armies of Heaven to the last great conflict with the beast, the false prophet, and the kings of the earth.

See Rev.19. "His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns." "And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, "Kings of kings, and Lord of lords." His mission then will be to "judge and make war."

On one side will be the beast, and the kings of the earth and their enemies; and on the other side will be the King of kings, followed by all the holy angels. The armies of Heaven achieve a glorious victory.

"And the beast was taken, and with him, the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshiped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth."

In Rev.19, we see the complete destruction of all wicked men, or the dashing of the nations in pieces as a potter's vessel, (comp. Rev. 2:27) or the image broken by the stone, and utterly destroyed and removed like the chaff before the wind. (Dan. 2:35) The destruction of the enemies of the Lord, represented by the several names of "man of sin, " "mystery of iniquity, " and "that wicked, " is thus described by the apostle - "whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the with the brightness of his coming." 2 Thess.2:8.

3. At the second advent of Christ, the righteous dead will be raised, the living righteous will be changed, and thus the subjects of the eternal kingdom will be made immortal. 1 Thess.4:14-18; 1 Cor.15:51-55. This is the first resurrection at the commencement of the millennium.

4. The immortal subjects of the kingdom will ascend with their Lord to the eternal city, and reign with him in the judgment of the wicked a thousand years, during which time the earth will be desolate. We have seen from New-Testament testimony that all wicked men will be destroyed at the second advent. See 2 Thess.1:7-9; 2:7, 8; Matt.13:26-30, 37-43; 3:12; Luke 17:26-30. The prophets of the Old Testament clearly describe the desolation of the earth during the millennium. See Isa.6:8-11; 13:9; 24:1-3; 34:1-15; 28:21, 22; Jer.4:20, 27; 25:32-38; Zeph.1:2, 3; 3:6-8.

5. At the close of the millennium, the wicked will be raised from the dead. "But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished." Rev.20:5 They will then be destroyed. "And fire came down from God out of Heaven, and devoured them." Rev.20:9. Satan, and all the fallen angels, and all wicked men, will then be consumed by the fire of Jehovah's wrath. Rev.20:10; Matt.25:41; 2 Pet.2:4; Jude 6.

In the general conflagration of that time, the old earth and atmospheric heaven will pass away from the face of Him that sitteth on the great white throne. Rev.20:11. "The heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also; and the works that are therein shall be burned up." 2 Pet.3:10.

6. From the old earth, melted and cleansed from sin and sinners, will come forth, molded by the hand of the great Restorer, the new earth, free from all the marks of the curse. "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away." Rev.21:1. Then will be fulfilled the words of David: "For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be; yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be. But the meek shall inherit the earth, and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace." Ps.37:10, 11. And Christ refers to the same in his sermon on the mount. "Blessed are the meek; for they shall inherit the earth." Matt.5:5.

It is at the close of the one thousand years of Revelation 20, after the final destruction of all God's enemies, that "the saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom forever, even forever and ever." "And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom." Dan.7:18, 27.

Then will the kingdom in all its parts - the King, the subjects, the territory, the holy city being the metropolis - be complete. Then the stone will have become a great mountain, so as to fill the whole earth.

We have seen that the establishment of the immortal kingdom will be by a succession of events. The kingdom in its first stage, when set up in Heaven, by the God of Heaven, is represented by a stone cut out of the mountain. When complete and fully established in the earth, it is represented by a mountain filling the whole earth. The kingdom, in its stone condition, is contemporary for a while with the perishable kingdoms of this world. Hence it is said that "it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms." Dan.2:44. This accomplished, and the earth restored to its Eden glory, the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, will be the eternal inheritance of the redeemed.

Contrast with this harmonious series of events in the establishment of the kingdom, that view which has the kingdom established on the earth when Christ comes, and the one-thousand-years' reign of Christ with his people on the new earth. That view necessarily has Satan let loose on the new earth, after the saints, with Christ in their midst, have enjoyed its glories for a thousand years! Then Satan's vast army, "the number of whom is as the sand of the sea, " is raised from the dead out of the new earth! and, with Satan at their head, come tramping up over the fields of living green on the breadth of the new earth! to surround the city of the saints. And to crown the absurdity of this position, fire comes down from Heaven and consumes the vast multitude of the wicked of all ages upon the new earth! In our opinion, the inconsistencies of this view have led many to adopt the mixed millennium, and follow on in the almost endless fancies of what is called the Age-to-Come.

If it be objected that our view of the subject has the city of the redeemed resting upon the old earth before it shall be regenerated by fire, we reply: This may be in the plan of God, that all sinners may see what they have lost, that the redeemed may witness the terrors of that death from which they are saved, and that the assembled intelligences of the universe that have not sinned, may also be impressed with the holiness and dignity of the divine law, the penalty of which is death.

Tremendous execution! Satan, and all the angels that revolted with him, and all men who have died in their sins, from the murderer Cain, down to the last sinner that shall refuse salvation, perish in the lake of fire poured upon them as they gather around the city of the redeemed to take it. How fitting a place will the old world be - the marks of the curse now doubly visible - for this terrible execution.

"And his feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the Mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley." Zech.14:4.

At the close of the millennium, the Lord will stand upon the mount of his ascension; and, after his voice shall call forth the wicked dead, the mount will cleave asunder, leaving a plain sufficiently extensive to receive the New Jerusalem. Around this city, Satan and his vast forces will gather to take it. And at the very moment of attack, fire from Heaven will come down upon them to that extent that the vast scene, necessarily covering a large portion of the old earth's surface, is represented as a lake of fire and brimstone. Then "the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also." But whether that portion of the earth where the city shall rest, having been prepared by a miracle of divine power for the reception of the beloved city, will remain unaffected by the fires of that day; or whether the melting earth and heaven, fleeing from the face of Him that shall be seated on the great white throne, Rev.20:11, shall be removed from the city during regeneration

by fire, may not be important to the present discussion of the subject. Either of these can be done by the power of Him who will do greater things in the grand work of the restitution.

Two conditions of the people of God are expressed in the Scriptures by the word kingdom:

1. God's arrangement in the future reward of those who shall be saved by grace. This we shall term the kingdom of glory.
2. God's arrangement to save men by grace. This we shall term the kingdom of grace. "Let us, therefore, " says Paul, "come boldly unto the throne of grace." Heb.4:16. A throne of grace supposes a kingdom of grace.

It will appear evident that the word kingdom in many cases refers to the future immortal kingdom, and cannot be applied to the means of grace. That the immortal kingdom was not set up at certain periods spoken of in the New Testament, will appear by referring to some of those Scripture expressions which apply to the future kingdom of glory. It was not set up when our Lord taught his disciples to pray, "Thy kingdom come." Matt.6:10.

The prophets, Christ, and the apostles, all point the church forward to the coming and kingdom of Christ as the time of the consummation of her faith and hope, the end of her toils and sorrows, and the fullness of her joys. Hence, in the pattern prayer for the Christian church of all ages is the petition, "Thy kingdom come."

The mother of Zebedee's children understood the kingdom to be future when she desired our Lord to grant that her two sons might sit, "the one on the right hand, and the other on the left, " in his kingdom. Matt.20:20, 21.

Again, the kingdom was still future when our Lord ate the last passover with the twelve. He said to them, "I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come." Luke 22:18.

But did Christ set up the kingdom before his ascension to Heaven? Just before his ascension, the disciples inquired, "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" It was not then set up.

When James wrote his epistle, the immortal kingdom was yet a matter of promise. He says: "Hearken, my beloved brethren, hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?" James 2:5.

Both Jesus and Paul associate the kingdom with the second advent. Jesus addresses those who are waiting for his coming and kingdom, thus: "Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning; and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding; that, when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately." Luke 12:35, 36. In this connection he comforts his people with these precious words: "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Verse 32. Paul solemnly charges Timothy: "I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom." 2 Tim.4:1.

The apostle also states that "we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God." Acts 14:22. This address was made to those who were already Christians, yet they were not in the kingdom. The immortal kingdom is the reward to be given to all who march boldly on through tribulation here. And again he says, "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." 1 Cor.15:50. This settles the question that there is a kingdom not to be enjoyed by the saints till they put on immortality, or till they enter the immortal state, which the apostle says, verse 52, is "at the last trump."

The miniature exhibition of the kingdom of God at the transfiguration is designed to show the nature of the kingdom, and when it will be set up. "For the Son of Man shall come in the glory of his Father, with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works. Verily I say unto you, There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom." Matt.16:27, 28. "Till they see the kingdom of God." Luke 9:27.

This promise was shortly fulfilled on the mount. "And after six days, Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart, and was transfigured before them; and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light. And behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him. Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here. If thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias. While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and behold, a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." Matt.17:1-5.

Notice the following points:

1. Jesus Christ appeared there in his own personal glory. His countenance shone like the sun, and his raiment was white as the light.
2. The glory of the Father was there. It was a "bright cloud" of the divine glory, out of which came the Father's voice.
3. Moses and Elias appeared; the one, the representative of those saints who shall be raised at Christ's coming, and clothed with glory; the other, Elias, the

representative of those who will be alive and be changed at the appearing of Christ. 4. The use the apostles made of the scene. Peter was one of the witnesses; and in view of the importance of the kingdom of Christ, he, in his second epistle, has given believers of all coming ages instruction how they may insure an abundant entrance "into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ." "For we have not followed cunningly-devised fables when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of his majesty." This, he says, was "when we were with him in the holy mount." 2 Pet.1:16-18.

This scene was a demonstration of Christ's second, personal, and glorious, coming, and shows that the kingdom will be immortal when set up, and that it will be set up at the period of the second advent, and resurrection of the just.

It will also appear evident that in many instances the word kingdom applies to the means of grace, and can have no reference to the future kingdom. The word is so used in many of the parables of our Lord.

The parable of the wheat and the tares applies to the present imperfect state, when sinners may enjoy the means of grace, and not to the future state of glory. This is evident. But the sowing mentioned in this parable did not commence at the first advent of the Son of God. The children of the kingdom, and the children of the wicked one, both appeared long before Jesus died for sinners. Abel and Cain represented the two classes. During the entire period from the time of these sons of Adam to the close of the day of grace, this parable has a clear and forcible application.

In this parable the word kingdom is used four times. Once it refers to the earth, which will be the territory of the immortal kingdom, and once it has a distinct reference to the future kingdom of glory when fully established in the earth. The word kingdom may refer both to the means of grace necessary to prepare men for the future life, and also to the future life itself. No doubt, in this parable both the kingdom of grace and the kingdom of glory are brought to view. They are very nearly related, the kingdom of grace reaching down very near to, and being preparatory to the enjoyment of, the kingdom of glory.

The parable of the mustard seed forcibly illustrates the kingdom of grace, embracing at first only our first parents immediately after the fall, and finally, in its grand results, embracing all the redeemed of every age, and from every land. "The kingdom of Heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field; which indeed is the least of all seeds; but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof." Matt.13:31, 32.

The parable of the leaven hid in three measures of meal illustrates the work of grace in the believer's heart. "The kingdom of Heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened." Matt.13:33

This parable teaches entire sanctification of the mind and heart to God. The apostle expresses this sentiment when he says, "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body, be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Thess.5:23.

The parables of the treasure hid in the field, and of the pearl of great price, teach the value of salvation through Jesus Christ, and the sacrifices that should be cheerfully made to obtain it. "Again, the kingdom of Heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field. Again, the kingdom of Heaven is like unto a merchantman, seeking goodly pearls; who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it." Matt.13:44-46.

The parable of the net that gathered good and bad fish, shows that although both good and bad men may be gathered into the church, the final separation will declare the true character of each. "Again, the kingdom of Heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind; which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away. So shall it be at the end of the world. The angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire. There shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth." Matt.13:47 -50.

In Matthew 25, the kingdom of Heaven is likened to an Eastern marriage. This parable illustrates the action of the church just before, and not after, the second advent. "Then shall the kingdom of Heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom."

In this connection our Lord points to a specific time, in which the work of divine grace upon the minds and hearts of believers would give them an experience that would be likened to an Eastern marriage.

The mental struggle in order to break away from the powers of darkness, and by faith receive the blessings of the kingdom of grace, is thus described by our Lord: "And from the days of John the Baptist, until now, the kingdom of Heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force." Matt.11:12 See Luke 16:16.

The apostle speaks of the blessings of the kingdom of grace thus: "For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy

Ghost." Rom.14:17. The connection shows that Paul applies the word kingdom to the present dispensation, and not to the future period of reward.

John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and saying, "Repent ye, for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand." Matt.3:1, 2. "Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent ye, and believe the gospel." Mark 1:14, 15. And as Jesus sent forth the twelve to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, he said to them, "And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of Heaven is at hand." Matt.10:5-7.

We have now reached a very important point in the discussion of this subject. Many will meet us here with the popular view that the kingdom was set up at the time of the first advent. They will use the phrase, "The kingdom of Heaven is at hand, " expressed by John, Jesus, and the twelve, with force upon the minds of those who do not study the subject in all its bearings. But, as we have shown, in no sense of the word whatever was the kingdom set up at the time of the first advent of Christ. The words, "kingdom of Heaven, " and "kingdom of God, " have but two significations: first, the plan to save men by grace; and second, the future condition and reward of the saved. The plan of salvation, or the kingdom of grace, was instituted soon after the fall; and the reward of the saved, or the kingdom of glory, is future.

The Greek word translated "at hand, " as used by Jesus, John, and the twelve, is engizo, and is defined by Greenfield as follows: "To approach, draw near. By metonymy, to be at hand, to impend. Matt.3:2; 4:17; 10:7; Luke 10:9, 11; Mark 1:15" The immortal kingdom was not at hand, according to this definition, or the obvious meaning of the phrase, in the days of John and of Jesus. In fact, Paul warned the church at Thessalonica against the idea that the day of Christ - the day to destroy earthly kingdoms, and establish the immortal kingdom - was even then at hand. "Be not soon shaken in mind, " says the apostle, "or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand." 2 Thess.2:2.

The Greek work translated "at hand" in this text is enistemi, and signifies, according to Greenfield, "To place in, or upon; to stand near, be at hand, impend. 2 Thess.2:2." In their bearing upon the subject of the kingdom, there is really no difference in the signification of these two Greek words.

But, does Paul contradict John, Jesus, and the twelve? Certainly he does not.

What, then, did John and Jesus mean in proclaiming the kingdom of Heaven at hand? Not that the kingdom of grace was soon to be set up. No; that had been instituted more than four thousand years before that proclamation. Neither did they

urge immediate repentance on the ground that the kingdom of Heaven was at hand in the sense of being the next universal kingdom! With this view, their fervent announcement would seem to lose its force. But their proclamation had direct reference to the wonderful manifestations of divine power and grace immediately to follow, during the work of confirming the covenant, Dan.9:27; first, by Christ, for three and a half years, and by the apostles, Heb.2:3, the same period of time. John looked forward to the ministry of Jesus, which was approved of God "by miracles, and wonders, and signs, which God did by him, " Acts 2:22, and proclaimed the kingdom of Heaven at hand. And Jesus looked forward to his own ministry, and also to that of the apostles as "they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following, " Mark 16:20, and proclaimed the kingdom of Heaven at hand.

This view of the subject is sustained by the commission given by our Lord to the seventy: "Go your ways. Behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves." "And into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you. And heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you." Luke 10:3, 8, 9. The kingdom of God in this connection can mean nothing more, and nothing less, than the manifestation of divine power and grace.

And with this agree the words of Christ addressed to the worthy scribe. "And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, he said unto him, Thou art not far from the kingdom of God." Mark 12:34. This scribe was sound on the fundamental principles of God's government. He only needed to know Christ and the power of his great salvation, in order to enjoy all the privileges and blessings of the kingdom of grace.

Deception has been the work of Satan ever since he so successfully deceived Eve. He led the Jews to expect in the Messiah a ruling monarch, instead of the meek and lowly teacher, and finally the sacrifice for sinners.

The Pharisees supposed the kingdom of Israel would then be established with outward show. "And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation; neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you." Luke 17:20, 21. But was the kingdom within the unbelieving Pharisees? The marginal reading - " among you" - helps the case. What was then among them? Christ had just cleansed ten lepers who showed themselves to the priests, and one of them returned to give glory to God. In their midst were the wonderful manifestations of divine power and grace in the miracles of Christ; hence he said to the Pharisees, "The kingdom of God is among you."

At the time of the second advent, and the establishment of the eternal kingdom, the people will doubtless be under as great deception relative to the nature of the

coming and kingdom of Christ, as the Jews were relative to his mission at his first advent. Then he came as the humble teacher of the people, closing his mission with giving himself a sacrifice for sinners. The Jews rejected Jesus because he did not meet their vain expectations. Satan led them to look for the coming of Messiah with outward show, and grandeur, when he was to come in humility. And now that he is to appear the second time in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory, Satan has the delusion prepared for the people, that Christ comes at death, at conversion, or in the outpouring of the Spirit of God. Jesus anticipates the heresies of our time, and says: "The days will come, when ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of Man, and ye shall not see it. And they shall say to you, See here! or, See there! go not after them, nor follow them. For as the lightning that lighteneth out of the one part under heaven; shine unto the other part under heaven; so shall also the Son of Man be in his day." Luke 17:22-24.

But in order to enter the kingdom of glory, we must first be in the kingdom of grace, sharing all its privileges and blessings. The faithful John bears testimony: "I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ." Rev. 1:9. John was in the kingdom of grace.

Paul to the Colossians delineates true Christian experience in a style wonderfully rich and full. He sets forth the change necessary for a moral fitness to be partaker of the eternal inheritance, in words that should stir the soul, and burn their way to every Christian heart.

"For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness; giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light; who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son; in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins." Col. 1:9-14.

The apostle here sets forth real conversion. When compared with this, most experiences will be found spurious. True conversion is not always the work of a day, or of a year. It is, however, always an onward work, widening and deepening as it progresses. Those who are truly converted are delivered from the powers of darkness, and are translated into the kingdom of grace. In Christ they have a moral redemption, "even the forgiveness of sins." This passage has no reference to the physical redemption at the resurrection of the just. Its words of stirring interest describe the preparation necessary to inherit the eternal kingdom of God.

XIV.

Daniel.

LESSON CVII.

THE GREAT IMAGE, DANIEL 2.

I. Introduction—Object of Prophecy.

1. Prophecy is given for the benefit of man, and may be understood, and should therefore be studied carefully. Amos 3:7; Deut. 29:29; Matt. 24:15.

2. Prophecy serves as a light, revealing where we are living on the stream of time. 2 Peter 1:19; Matt. 24:15-20.

3. God uses similitudes or symbols in prophetic visions, which should be illustrated by charts. Hos. 12:10; Hab. 2:2.

II. Nebuchadnezzar's Dream.

4. God revealed to Nebuchadnezzar in a dream things to come to pass in the future, by means of a great image, interpreted by Daniel. Dan. 2:28-31.

5. The king saw:

(a) A great image, with a head of gold, breast and arms of silver, and sides of brass, legs of iron and feet of iron and clay. Dan. 2:31-33.

(b) A stone smote the image and broke it in pieces, after which it became a great mountain and filled the whole earth. Verses 34, 35.

III. Daniel's Interpretation.

6. Daniel interpreted the dream as follows:

(a) The head of gold was a symbol of the kingdom of Babylon. Dan. 2:32, 36-38.

(b) The silver was a symbol of the following kingdom, or Medo-Persia. Dan. 2:32, 39; 5:25-31; 8:20.

(c) The brass was a symbol of the third kingdom, or Grecia. Dan. 2: 32, 39; 8: 20, 21.

(d) The iron symbolized the fourth kingdom, or Rome. Dan. 2: 33, 40; Luke 2: 1.

(e) The fourth kingdom was to be divided. Dan. 2: 33, 41-43; 7: 23, 24.

(f) The stone was a symbol of the kingdom of God, to be established upon this earth some time after the division of the Roman kingdom. Dan. 2: 34, 35, 44, 45.

7. The prophecy is centered upon Christ's kingdom, which will be established upon the earth after the fall of all earthly kingdoms. Dan. 2: 44, 45; 2 Tim. 4: 1; Matt. 25: 31-34.

QUESTIONS.

1. For whose benefit is prophecy given?
2. What purpose does it serve?
3. What does God sometimes use as illustrations?
4. What was revealed to Nebuchadnezzar?
5. Of what was the different parts of the image composed?
6. What smote the image, and what did it become?
7. Who interpreted the dream?
8. Tell what the head of gold denoted.
9. What did the silver symbolize? The brass? The iron, and the mixture of iron and clay in the feet?
10. Of what was the stone a symbol?
11. When and where will God's kingdom be set up?
12. What is the central theme of this line of prophecy?

LESSON CVIII.

KINGDOM OF GLORY.

Note.—The plan to save man by grace was revealed to man immediately after the fall through Jesus Christ, who is priest and king upon his Father's throne. But this reign of grace will end when probation closes and then will begin the reign (the kingdom) of glory. See lesson LXVIII on the kingdom of grace.

1. That which is necessary to a kingdom is territory, subjects, law, ruler and his throne.

viour when he comes. Reader, remember that the book of Daniel has been specially prepared for your enlightenment. God has provided it, and preserved it until our day, and now a copy is within reach of all. While he says that the wicked will do wickedly, and none of the wicked shall understand, yet we have the assurance that the wise shall understand. Which class do you desire to be among?



CHAPTER VI.

The Prophetic History of the World

1. Who was Nebuchadnezzar?

King of Babylon. Dan. 1:1.

2. Who was Daniel?

Daniel was a Hebrew whom Nebuchadnezzar had carried, with many others, from Jerusalem to Babylon about the year 606 B. C. Dan. 1:3-6.

3. What special wisdom did God give Daniel?

"Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams." Dan. 1:17.

4. What unusual experience did Nebuchadnezzar have in the second year of his reign?

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

NOTE.—By reading the first eighteen verses of this second chapter, it will be seen that the king sought an explanation of his dream at the hand of the wise men of Babylon, who

claimed to be able to give such information. After saluting the king, the wise men asked the king to tell them his dream, promising him to show the interpretation. But this the king refused to do. He had either forgotten it, or else was so impressed with the importance of the dream and a proper interpretation, that he had determined to keep it secret, and demanded of the wise men that they not only show him the interpretation, but also tell the dream, taking their ability to show the dream as a guarantee that their interpretation was correct. If they were not able to do this, their professions were false, and he gave them to understand that but one decree awaited them, and that was death.

5. What answer did the wise men make the king?

"The Chaldeans answered before the king, and said, There is not a man on the earth that can show the king's matter; . . . there is none other that can show it before the king, except the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh." Dan. 2: 10, 11.

NOTE.—This answer angered the king, and he at once gave the decree to destroy all the wise men of Babylon. Daniel and his three companions, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, were counted among the wise men. It appears, however, that they had not been in before the king with the other wise men, and consequently knew nothing of what had happened. As soon as he was informed of the king's decree, Daniel went in unto the king, promising to show him the dream and its interpretation, providing he would give him time. To this the king consented, and Daniel returned to his home, and in company with his three companions earnestly sought God for a revelation of the secret.

6. What was the result?

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

7. As Daniel was brought in before the king, what answer did he make?

"Daniel answered in the presence of the king, and said, The secret which the king demanded, cannot the wise men . . . show unto the king; but there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days." Verses 27, 28.

8. What was the king thinking about when God gave him his dream?

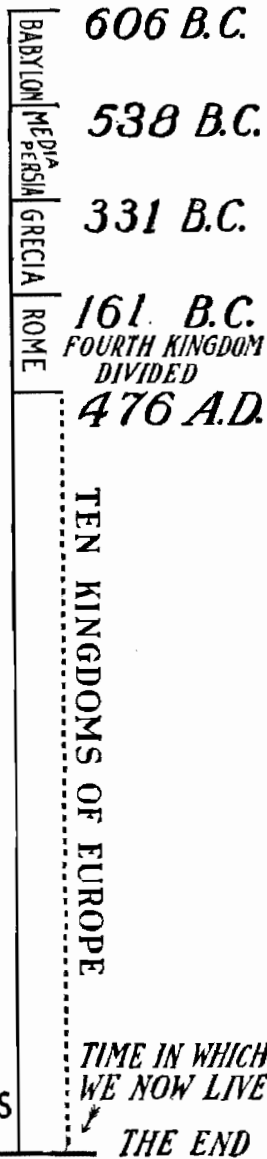
"As for thee, O king, thy thoughts came into thy mind upon thy bed, what should come to pass hereafter; and he that revealeth secrets maketh known to thee what shall come to pass." Dan. 2: 29.

NOTE.—Babylon, over which Nebuchadnezzar ruled, was then mistress of the world. The question of its continuity would naturally suggest itself to his mind. Would Babylon continue forever, or would it, like other nations, finally be overthrown? God revealed to the king what the future would bring, not only to Babylon, but to all other worldly kingdoms, by giving him this dream.

Daniel Reveals the King's Dream

9. What does Daniel say the king saw in his dream?

"Thou, O king, sawest, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee, and the form thereof was terrible. This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, his legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay. Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet, that



were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. 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; and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth. This is the dream, and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king." Dan. 2:31-36.

NOTE.—You will notice that this image, composed of different metals, its subsequent destruction by the stone, revealed to the king "what should come to pass hereafter." Therefore, it must be prophetic in nature.

The Dream Interpreted

10. What does Daniel say is represented by this 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; and wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thy hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold." Verses 37, 38.

11. What do the silver and brass represent?

"After thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee: and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth." Verse 39.

NOTE.—This makes it plain that this image is prophetic in nature, and that each metal represents a kingdom. The head of gold represents the kingdom of Babylon, over which Nebuchadnezzar ruled. Babylon was a golden kingdom of a

golden age, and is fitly represented by the head of gold. But with all its grandeur, pomp, and power, God reveals to the king the fact that it must give way to an inferior kingdom, represented by "the breast and arms of silver." Bear in mind, reader, that we now have a starting point, and we will find ourselves rapidly carried down through the stream of time past the rise and fall of kingdoms, past the setting up and overthrow of nations, past our own time, past the destruction of all worldly kingdoms, over into the eternal state.

Babylon was conquered by the Medes and Persians on the night of Belshazzar's feast to a thousand of his lords, 538 B. C. See Dan. 5:1-31. Thus the kingdom represented by the head of gold is past, and now begins the rule of an inferior kingdom, the Medo-Persian empire, which ruled the world from 538 to 331 B. C., when it, in turn, was overthrown by the third kingdom of brass, which was to bear rule over all the earth. This was the Grecian kingdom, under Alexander the Great. All who are acquainted with history will remember how Alexander, at the head of the Grecian army, overthrew the Persian kingdom, and conquered the world in an incredibly short time. The sovereignty of this empire, under its different heads, ruled the world, in the place of Medo-Persia, from 331 until 168 B. C., when it was overthrown by the iron kingdom of Rome.

12. What will be the nature of the fourth kingdom, represented by the legs of iron?

"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." Verse 40.

NOTE.—The fourth kingdom was to conquer all the territories and peoples ruled over by the three previous kingdoms. This was literally fulfilled in the Roman empire; so

completely did she break in pieces and bruise all other kingdoms, that she is known in history as "the iron monarchy." She had so far completed the conquest of the world that, in the year Christ was born, Cæsar Augustus could issue a decree "that all the world should be taxed." See Luke 2:1. The supremacy of Rome properly begins with the overthrow of the Macedonian kingdom at the battle of Pydna, June 22, 168 B. C., at which time the last vestige of the once powerful kingdom of Alexander perished.

13. What is represented by the mixture of iron and clay in the feet?

"Whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potter's clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided." Verse 41.

NOTE.—Rome ruled the world as one massive kingdom for over four hundred years, after which she began to be broken up, and was finally divided into the ten kingdoms of Europe, now represented by England, Germany, France, Spain, Italy, etc.

14. What will this mixture of iron and clay in the feet forever preclude in Europe?

"Whereas thou sawest the 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.—Thus the iron and clay in the feet introduce an element which forever precludes the possibility of another universal kingdom of Europe or the Eastern world. Here is a wonderful test of the prophecy. Beginning with Babylon, the prophetic image indicated four universal kingdoms, represented by four metals. The fourth kingdom was to be divided,

which would mark the end of universal kingdoms in this present world. It is a well-known fact that history usually repeats itself. This was so with the first four kingdoms. One universal kingdom immediately arose on the ruins of another. But when we come to the overthrow of Rome, this rule fails. Rome was divided into the European nations over twelve hundred years ago, and has remained in this divided state ever since. Thus the prophecy has been literally fulfilled, in saying, "They shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay." Time and again have great kings arisen and endeavored to again unite the nations of Europe under one head, but every time the scheme has failed. Napoleon Bonaparte was the last to make the attempt, a little over one hundred years ago. He, having failed to accomplish his purpose by force of arms, introduced another scheme, which is noticed in the prophecy; namely, that of intermarriage. The prophecy says, "They shall mingle themselves with the seed of men, but they shall not cleave one to another." This work of intermarriage among the crowned heads of Europe has steadily progressed during the last few years, until to-day every royal family in Europe is related to the others by the ties of marriage. The obvious purpose of this is again to bring the rule of Europe under the head of one royal family. But God's word declares, "They shall not cleave one to another," and just so it is; for with all their royal relation, they still remain separate and distinct as ever.

The Kingdoms of this World to be Destroyed in Our Day

15. What does God say will take place in the days of these kings who are attempting to consolidate Europe under the rule of one royal family, by intermarriage?

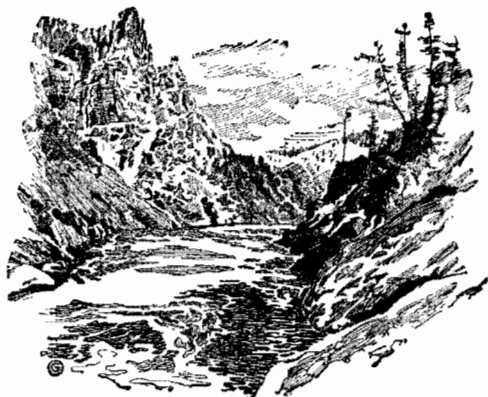
"In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed; . . . but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever. Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in 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; and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure." Verses 44, 45.

NOTE.—In this text the note of doom is sounded to all worldly kingdoms. The day comes on apace when sin and sinners shall have an end. The judgments of an avenging God are soon to be visited upon the nations of earth, who are fast filling up the cup of their iniquity; and so terrible will be the visitations of that day that all worldly kingdoms will be ground to powder, and so completely destroyed that no place shall be found for them.

Since the day when the prophet of God stood before the king, and by the dictation of the Holy Spirit gave the assurance that the dream was certain and the interpretation thereof sure, not one word of this prophecy has failed; by this we can rest assured that the remaining portion will as surely be fulfilled.

In the study of this prophecy we have passed rapidly over the history of this world, beginning with the days of Babylon, past the rise and fall of the first four kingdoms, past the division of the fourth, down to the very toes of the image, where we now find these fragments of the fourth kingdom indulging, with one consent, in a vain attempt to unify themselves by intermarrying. But God has decreed that in the days of these kings the end of all worldly kingdoms will come. Christ's coming is right upon us. Soon, yes, very soon, the day of God's wrath will burst upon this wicked world in all its fury. Soon the stone, which the builders have rejected, will

fall upon the nations of this wicked world, and grind them to powder, and he "whose right it is" will reign, "and of his kingdom there shall be no end." To this all who are loyal to Christ, and who are praying for his kingdom to come, will say, "Amen. Even so come, Lord Jesus."



CHAPTER VII.

Rise and Work of the Papacy

The Vision

1. What king was reigning on the throne of Babylon when the vision contained in the seventh chapter of Daniel was given?

"In the first year of Belshazzar, king of Babylon, Daniel had a dream and visions of his head upon his bed." Dan. 7: 1.

2. In this vision, what first attracted Daniel's attention?

"Daniel spake and said, I saw in my vision by night, and, behold, the four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea." Verse 2.

3. What was seen coming up out of the sea as a result of this striving of the winds?

"And four great beasts came up out of the sea, diverse one from another." Verse 3.

4. What was the first beast like?

"The first was like a lion, and had eagle's wings." Verse 4.

5. What was the second beast like?

"And behold another beast, a second, like to a bear." Verse 5.

1 Cor. 1:22; 2 Cor. 10:5, margin; Acts 17:16-22; 2 Tim. 3:7. Exalting reason above God's word, sin of ancient Greece. Same spirit is manifested in higher criticism at the present day. E. 227.

Dan. 7:25. All four nations persecuted the people of God more or less, but *Rome* only presumed to *change the law of God*.

Rev. 13:14; Isa. 30:8-12, margin. Some spirit manifest in the closing history of the world. P.K. 187, 188.

Dan. 2:35. God,—Pride, self-exaltation; silver,—cruelty, and over-bearing spirit; brass,—exalt man's reason above the word of God; iron,— change God's law to suit the mind of man. Any of these characteristics cherished in the heart means utter destruction, when God destroys all nations.

Isa. 42:8. God demands full surrender. P.K. 189.

Second Chapter Of Daniel

In this line of prophecy the character of the kingdoms is represented under the symbols of different beasts.

Dan. 7:2. Striving winds and a turbulent sea.

Dan. 11:40; Zech. 7:14. Winds denote war.

Rev. 17:15. Water denotes multitudes and nations.

Dan. 7:3. Beasts diverse one from another.

Dan. 7:4. Babylon represented by a lion.

Jer. 50:17. Same symbol used forty years before.

Hab. 1:6-8. Wings denote rapid conquest.

Jer. 17:9. Man's heart denotes wickedness,—nation ready for destruction.

Isa. 13:17, 18. More than 100 years before, Isaiah said Medes were cruel.

Dan. 7:5. When Daniel saw the bear arise, devouring flesh, he recognized it as the nation of which Isaiah had written.

Dan. 7:6. Leopard,—symbol of Greece. Hab. 1:6-8 gives wings as a signal of rapid conquest. Jeremiah used a leopard to represent evil. Jer. 13:23. The spots would seem to indicate a mixture of good and evil.

Dan. 7:7. The fourth a great and terrible beast.

Dan. 7:15, 16. Asks for the meaning.

Dan. 7:17, 18. Four kingdoms followed by God's kingdom.

Dan. 9:2, 3. Daniel was a student of the prophecies and understood the first three symbols.

Dan. 7:19-23. He asks about the fourth.

Dan. 7:23. Fourth beast, fourth kingdom.

Luke 2:1. Rome, the fourth kingdom.

Dan. 7:24. Ten divisions; divided between 356 and 483 A.D.

Dan. 7:24. A different power arises after the division and subdues three kings. The papacy arose in 538; Heruli, Ostrogoths, and Vandals overthrown to make way for it.

Dan. 7:25. Character of the power and length of supremacy. G.C. 439.

Dan. 11:13, margin; Rev. 13:5; 12:6; Num. 14:34. Explain the period of 1260 years. G.C. 54, 55.

Bible Study Lectures

“Probably you will be surprised to know that the agnostic envies you your faith in God, your settled belief in a heaven after death, and your blessed assurance that you will meet with your loved ones in an after life in which there will be neither sorrow nor pain. He would give anything to be able to embrace that faith and be comforted by it.

“For him there is only the grave and the persistence of matter. As he can see beyond the grave is the disintegration of the protoplasm and psychoplasm of which his body and its personality are composed.

“But in this material view I find no ecstasy nor happiness. Is this the end of all human life an endeavor? Therefore would I try to convey to your mind and heart something of the wistfulness and loneliness of the man who does not believe in God.

“Your agnostic may put on a brave front and face life with heroic smiles. But he is not happy-standing in awe and reverence before the vastness and majesty of the universe, knowing not whence he came nor why, appalled by the stupendous vastness of space and the infinitude of time, humiliated by the infinite smallness of himself, cognizant of his frailty, his weakness and brevity, think you not that he, too, sometimes yearns for a staff on which to lean? He, too, carries a cross.

“Your agnostic is tremendously impressed by the power of your faith. He has seen drunkards and libertines and moral degenerates transfigured by it. He has seen the sick, the aged, and the friendless comforted and sustained by it. And he is impressed by your wonderful charities, your asylums, your hospitals, your nurseries, your schools. He must shamefacedly admit that agnostics, as such, have built few hospitals, and few homes for orphans.

“To him this earth is but a tricky raft adrift upon the unfathomable waters of eternity, with no horizon in sight. His heart aches for every precious life on the raft, drifting, drifting, whither no one for a certainty knows.

“You have met one of the most lonesome and most unhappy individuals on earth.”

A DESPAIRING CRY

“What then has the infidel to offer?” asked Mr. Mitchell. “Mr. Saunders has given you the answer. But I now ask you to listen to the words of another whose name will be more familiar to your ear. I refer to the renowned skeptic, Robert Ingersoll. In the face of the majesty of death, at the graveside of a dearly loved brother, the veil of the mind was torn aside, and he uttered those famous words that have circled the earth: ‘Whether in mid-sea or among the breakers of the farther shore, a wreck must mark at last the end of each and all. And every life, no matter if its every hour is rich with love and every moment jeweled with joy, will, at its close, become a tragedy, as sad, and deep, and dark as can be woven of the warp and woof of mystery and death. Life is a narrow vale between two eternities. We strive in vain to look beyond the heights. We cry aloud, and the only answer is the echo of our wailing cry.’”

The preacher in closing contrasted this with the bright hope of the resurrection, and eternal life through the Christ of Christianity.

11. FROM NEBUCHADNEZZAR’S KINGDOM TO CHRIST’S

“From 603 BC to Eternity,” was the subject of an arresting prophetic lecture sermon delivered by Pastor Mitchell in the Naval Hall on Sunday night. He commenced with an interesting question:-

“How many here this evening would undertake the task of writing the outstanding world events, including the rise and fall of empires, for 2,500 years in advance? Such a remarkably brief, yet comprehensive history in advance would command the thoughtful attention of the most profound scholar,” said Pastor Mitchell. “Just such a remarkable prophetic composition exists. It was written shortly after the establishment of the mighty Babylonian empire, 603 BC. Our time tonight will surely be well spent, for we are now to study this astounding superhuman literary phenomenon.

“More than one historian has found difficulty in recording history briefly. When young Prince Zemir succeeded his father on the throne of Persia he summoned an assembly of his most learned men, to prepare for him a history of the world, so that he, as ruler, might be guided by the wisdom of the past.

“Alter ‘twenty years the learned men with a caravan of twelve camels, each bearing five hundred volumes, came into the presence of the king. Their secretary made a short speech and presented the 6,000 volumes. The king, fully occupied with the affairs of state, expressed his gratitude. But he said, ‘I am now middle aged, and even if I live to be old, I shall not have time to read such a long history. Abridge it!’”

Bible Study Lectures

“Twenty more years, then three camels bore 1,500 volumes, to the king; but the king said, ‘I am now an old man. Abridge further, and with all possible speed!’ After the lapse of ten years, a young elephant carried their abbreviated work, this time of 500 volumes. ‘This time we have been exceedingly brief,’ they said. ‘Not yet sufficiently so’, replied the king. My life is almost over. Abridge again!’ But when, after five years passed in the fourth laborious attempt, the secretary returned alone, walking with crutches, leading a small ass, whose load was one book, the king was dying and could not read it.

HISTORY IN ADVANCE

“Now where do you suppose we will find the 213 world history in advance? There is but one book whose writings have peered into the future, millenniums ahead. We now turn to that Book which revels in the humbly impossible, finding the composition worthy of the study of sa ges, in the Book of Daniel, chapter 2.

“Our message is the interpretation by a prophet of God, of a God-given dream to King Nebuchadnezzar at the time when his kingdom, Babylon, held universal sway. After the failure of the other wise men of the kingdom to retell and interpret the dream, Daniel is seen coming in before the king. He bears a God-received explanation stating, ‘There is a God in heaven that revealed secrets and makes known . . . what shall be in the latter days.’ This message, then, reaches right on to our time, ‘the latter days.’ That is why I am interested, and call your attention to it at this time.

“Daniel reminded the king that the subject of the dream, which had so disturbed his peace of mind that he had threatened death if the wise men failed to explain it, was a huge metallic image. The image was composed of a head of gold, breast and arms of silver, sides of brass, legs of iron, and feet of mingled iron and clay. The whole image is broken to pieces by a stone, ‘cut out without hands.’ The stone then develops, and fills the whole earth. ‘This is the dream; and we will tell the interpretation thereof,’ said Daniel.

“Daniel starts with the golden head, representing Nebuchadnezzar’s empire. With the words of Daniel 2:38 - addressed to the king of Babylon, ‘You art this head of gold,’ Daniel foretells the rise and fall of kingdoms, of mighty monarchies, right up to the time of the establishment of the kingdom of God in this world, as recorded in verse 44. Just 213 words from the kingdom of Babylon established in 603 BC to the time of the establishment of the eternal kingdom after the coming of Christ.

“The prophecy outlined four monarchies that would hold universal supremacy. The fourth, unlike the first three, was to disintegrate into ten lesser kingdoms. True to prophecy, Babylon ruled from, 608 to 538 BC, when it was displaced by the Medo-Persian kingdom. The Medo-Persian empire held dominant sway from 538-331 BC.

GREECE TO THE FORE

“Then Alexander the Great led the Grecian armies to conquest after conquest, till the recognized civilized world lay bleeding at his feet. Greece held world dominance from 331 to 168 BC. In 168 BC Rome seized the scepter, and held world sway right through the time of the birth of the Savior and His ministry on to AD 475.

“The ten toes of the feet represent the ten divisions into which the fourth kingdom was to be divided. Rome was not subjugated as was the previous universal monarchies; but, true to the prophecy, it was divided, and into exactly ten kingdoms. The list of these ten kingdoms is given by the historian Gibbon as the Alemanni, Franks, Burgundians, Vandals, Suevi, Visigoths, Saxons, Ostrogoths, Lombards, and the Heruli. The Franks are the French, the Alemanni the Germans, Anglo-Saxons the English, Suevi the Portuguese, Visigoths the Spaniards, Burgundians the Swiss, Lombards the Lombards and Italians.

“According to the prophecy, these kingdoms will never be united. ‘They shall mingle themselves with the seed of men, but they shall not cleave one to another.’ Daniel 2:43. Many have attempted to unite Europe as in the days of Caesar, but every attempt has failed. Napoleon could never understand why he lost the battle of Waterloo on June 1815.

To the end of his days he would say, ‘But I should have won that battle.’ When asked to account for his victory, the Duke, remembering the odds that were against him, replied in awed tones, ‘the hand of God was upon me.’ The French also recognize the fact that an unseen power overruled at Waterloo.

“The same thing happened at the time of the Great War from 1914 to 1918. The miracle of that war was that at the time of its commencement, the strongest fighting machine of all time, the cream of

Bible Study Lectures

Germany's undefeated armies, failed to pass beyond the thin Allied lines that were worn down with ceaseless fighting.

PROPHECY FULFILLED

“Every feature of this prophecy has been correctly fulfilled except the closing part of it as mentioned in verse 44, ‘And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and 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.’ Just as each detail of the prophecy has been fulfilled to date, just so surely will Christ return, ‘and consume all these kingdoms,’ and establish the kingdom of God on this earth.”

12. OUR AGE OF MARVELS; ITS WARNING MESSAGE

“WE are living in an age of wonders. In fact so many marvelous inventions have suddenly come into existence that we have almost ceased to wonder. Our ancestors of a century ago, or even fifty years ago, lived in a different world. Were they to arise today and be transported to the great centers of our busy world, they surely would wonder which of the planets they were visiting. They would hardly dream that this was the planet on which they had spent their lives. The nineteenth century was an age of wonders, and the twentieth is an age of greater marvels, with less wonder.” Thus spoke Pastor Mitchell when introducing his subject, “Our Age of Marvels, and Its Warning Message,” in the Naval Hall on Sunday night.

A statement from the Scientific American, fiftieth anniversary edition, published toward the close of the nineteenth century, July 25, 1896, was read: “The material world has advanced so rapidly during the last half century, and with a pace so accelerated, that mankind has almost lost one of its most important faculties and one essential to happiness—that of surprise—the most marvelous developments are taken as a matter of course. The condition of things fifty years ago is seldom pictured to the mind; and all the material blessings which we now enjoy are used as conveniences of daily life, and no more. Notwithstanding the pages of matter and quantities of illustrations, we feel that the task of telling about the progress of a lifetime can at least be only inadequately performed so much has been done.”

Mr. Mitchell questioned: “What did this mean? Why did the world continue for nearly 6,000 years, and then all of a sudden blaze out into an era of marvelous invention and knowledge? Why have all the marvels of invention come in one unique era? Why were not some of these things seen in former ages? Early in the nineteenth century, after the origin of the steamboat in 1807, and the first railway service (from Stockton to Darlington, England) in 1825, men were so amazed that they thought the acme of all invention had been reached.

“Listen to the following incident recorded in the Scientific American of October 15, 1915: ‘Someone poring over the old files in the United States Patents Office at Washington the other day found a letter written in 1833 that illustrates the limitations of the human imagination. It was an old employee of the Patents Office, offering his resignation to the head of the department. His reason was that as everything inventable had been invented, the Patents Office would soon be discontinued, and there would be no further need of his services, or the services of any of his fellow clerks. He therefore decided to leave before the blow fell.’”

SCIENTIFIC ACHIEVEMENTS

“But what marvels has the world produced since then? Here is a statement that, ‘Recently the 1,90,000th patent of the United States was issued’ Here are a few of the thousands of the scientific accomplishments of the past century, as outlined in the book, ‘Is the End Near?’ by John L. Shuler:-

“Ocean steamship in 1838; electric railway in 1889; automobile about 1890; airplane, first successful flying, December 17, 1903. The story of the advance in communication has been marked out in this wise: First successful telegraph line in 1844, first ocean cable 1858, telephone in 1876, wireless telegraphy in 1896, trans-continental telephone in 1915, radio broadcasting in 1921, telephotography in 1924, radio beam wireless in 1926, transatlantic wireless telephone in 1926.

“Some of the principal inventions and discoveries of modern times in the fields of medicine, industry, and business are as follows: Anesthesia by ether in 1846, by chloroform in 1848, X-ray in 1895,

44. NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S DREAM

1. What statement did Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, make to his wise men whom he had assembled?

"And the king said unto them, I have dreamed a dream, and my spirit was troubled to know the dream." Dan. 2: 3.

2. After being threatened with death if they did not make known the dream and the interpretation, what did the wise men say to the king?

"The Chaldeans answered before the king, and said, There is not a man upon the earth that can show the king's matter: therefore, there is no king, lord, nor ruler, that asked such things at any magician, or astrologer, or Chaldean. And 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." Verses 10, 11.

3. After the wise men had thus confessed their inability to do what the king required, who offered to interpret the dream?

"Then Daniel went in, and desired of the king that he would give him time, and that he would show the king the interpretation." Verse 16.

4. After Daniel and his fellows had sought God earnestly, how were the dream and its interpretation revealed to Daniel?

"Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a night vision. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven." Verse 19

5. When brought before the king, what did Daniel say?

"Daniel answered in the presence of the king, and said, The which the king hath demanded cannot the wise men, the astrologers, the magicians, the soothsayers, show unto the king; but there is a God in heaven that reveals secrets and makes known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days. Thy dream, and the visions of thy head upon thy bed, are these!" Verse 27, 28.

6. What did Daniel say the king had seen in his dream?

"Thy dream, and the visions of thy head upon thy bed, are these; . . . Thou, O king, saw, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible." Verses 28-31.

7. Of what were the different parts of the image composed?

"This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, his legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay!" Verses 32, 33.

8. By what means was the image broken to pieces?

"Thou saw till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces." Verse 34.

9. What became of the various parts of the image?

"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: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth." Verse 35.

10. With what words did Daniel begin the interpretation of the dream?

"Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. And where so ever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath He given into your hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold." Verses 37, 38.

NOTE - The character of the Babylonian Empire is fittingly indicated by the nature of the material composing that portion of the image by which it was symbolized-the head of gold. It was "the golden kingdom of a golden age." The city of Babylon, its metropolis, according to history, towered to a height never equaled by any of its later rivals. "Situated in the garden of the East; laid out in a perfect square sixty miles in circumference, fifteen miles on each side, surrounded by a wall three hundred and fifty feet high and eighty-seven feet thick, with a moat, or ditch, around this, of equal cubic capacity with the wall itself; divided into six hundred and seventy-six squares, laid out in luxuriant pleasure-grounds and gardens, interspersed with magnificent dwellings-this city, containing in itself many things which were themselves wonders of the world, was itself another and still mightier wonder. . . . Such was Babylon, with Nebuchadnezzar, youthful, bold, vigorous, and accomplished, seated upon its throne."

11. What was to be the nature of the next kingdom after Babylon?

"After thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee." Verse 39, first part.

12. Who was the last Babylonian king?

"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." Dan. 5: 30, 31. See also verses 1, 2.

13. To whom was Belshazzar's kingdom given?

"Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians." Verse 28.

14. By what is the Medo-Persian Empire represented in the great image?

The breast and arms of silver. Dan. 2: 32.

15. By what is Grecia, the kingdom succeeding Medo-Persia, represented in the image?

"His belly and his thighs of brass." Verse 32. "And another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth!" Verse 39.

16. What is said of the fourth kingdom?

"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.

17. What scripture shows that the Roman emperors ruled the world?

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

NOTE-Describing the Roman conquests, Gibbon uses the very imagery employed in the vision of Daniel 2. He says: "The arms of the republic, sometimes vanquished in battle, always victorious in war, advanced with rapid steps to the Euphrates, the Danube, the Rhine, and the ocean; and the images of gold, or silver, or brass, that might serve to represent the nations and their kings, were successively broken by the iron monarchy of Rome."-"Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," chap. 38, par. 1, under "General Observations," at the close of the chapter.

18. What was indicated by the mixture of clay and iron in the feet and toes of the image?

"And whereas thou saw the feet and toes, part of potters' clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided." Dan. 2: 41.

19. In what prophetic language was the varying strength of the ten kingdoms of the divided empire indicated?

" 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 [margin, brittle]." Verse 42.

20. Were any efforts to be made to reunite the divided empire of Rome?

"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.

NOTES - Charlemagne, Charles V, Louis XIV, and Napoleon all tried to reunite the broken fragments of the Roman Empire, but failed. By marriage and intermarriage ties have been formed with a view to strengthening and cementing together the shattered kingdom; but none have succeeded. The element of disunion remains. Many political revolutions and territorial changes have occurred in Europe since the fall of the Roman Empire in AD. 476; but its divided state still remains.

This remarkable dream, as interpreted by Daniel, presents in the briefest form, and yet with unmistakable clearness, the course of world empires from the time of Nebuchadnezzar to the close of earthly history and the setting up of the everlasting kingdom of God. The history confirms the prophecy. The sovereignty of the world was held by Babylon from the time of this dream, 603 BC. until 538 BC., when it passed to the Medes and Persians. The victory of the Grecian forces at the battle of Arbela, in 331 BC. marked the downfall of the Medo-Persian Empire, and the Greeks then became the undisputed rulers of the world. The battle of Pydna, in Macedonia, in 168 BC., was the last organized effort to withstand a world-wide conquest by the Romans, and at that time therefore the sovereignty passed from the Greeks to the Romans, and the fourth kingdom was fully established. The division of Rome into ten kingdoms is definitely foretold in the vision recorded in the seventh chapter of Daniel, and occurred between the years AD. 351 and AD. 476.

21. What is to take place in the days of these kingdoms?

"And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: . . . but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever." Verse 44.

NOTE-This verse foretells the establishment of another universal kingdom, the kingdom of God. This kingdom is to overthrow and supplant all existing earthly kingdoms, and is to stand forever. The time for the setting up of this kingdom is to be "in the days of these kings." This cannot refer to the four preceding empires, or kingdoms; for they were not contemporaneous, but successive; neither can it refer to an establishment of the kingdom at Christ's first advent, for the ten kingdoms which arose out of the ruins of the Roman Empire were not yet in existence. It must therefore still be in the future.

22. In what announcement in the New Testament is the establishment of the kingdom of God made known?

"And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever." Rev. 11:15.

23. For what have we been taught to pray?

"Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." Matt. 6: 10.

24. What event is closely associated with the establishment of God's everlasting kingdom?

"I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom." 2 Tim. 4: 1.

25. With what prayer do the Scriptures close?

"He which testifies these things says, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus." Rev. 22:20.

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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.

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The Worlds History in Prophecy

1. THE prophecies can be understood. 2 Peter 1:19.
2. Christ's instruction in reference to the book of Daniel. Matthew 24:15. Prophecy is "history In advance." Daniel 2:1.
3. The remarkable dream of Nebuchadnezzar.
4. What did Daniel tell the king that God had made known to him? Verse 28.
5. What was the dream? Verses 31-35.
6. After relating the dream, what did Daniel immediately proceed to do? Verse 36. What does the Lord command those who explain these visions of Daniel and Revelation to do? Habakkuk 2:2.
7. What did he say was represented by the head of gold? Verses 37, 38.
8. Did he refer to Nebuchadnezzar as an individual, or to his kingdom? Verse 39.
9. What was the name of the kingdom over which Nebuchadnezzar ruled? Daniel 1:11.

This kingdom, In prophecy, dates from BC 606, because it then became connected with the people of God y the capture of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, and his people. It reached the height of its glory under Nebuchadnezzar, to whom this dream was given. The metal used to represent this kingdom is the finest of all metals, and fitly represents the kingdom of Babylon, as it was the grandest of all earthly kingdoms. The city of Babylon, its capital and metropolis, well represents the entire kingdom. This city was laid out in a perfect square, surrounded by a wall 350 feet high, and 87 feet thick, with a moat or ditch, outside, of the same cubic capacity. It had fifty streets, twenty-five running each way, each 150 feet in width and fifteen miles long, raved with polished stones. It contained 225 miles of enclosed surface, laid out n luxuriant pleasure-grounds and gardens interspersed with magnificent dwellings. The River Euphrates running through the center with a wall on either side. Taking thirty miles of river wall. 150 gates of solid brass: and hanging gardens rising terrace above terrace until they equaled in height the walls themselves.

Among the large buildings was the temple of Belus three miles in circumference at the base; also two royal palaces-one three and one-half miles, the other eight miles in circumference-connected with each other by a subterranean tunnel under the River Euphrates. Never before had the earth seen such a city and never since has it seen its equal. See Rollin's Ancient History. Book 3, chapter 1, section 1.

10. Was this kingdom of Babylon to stand forever? Daniel 2:39; Isaiah 13:19-22.

Alexander the Great employed 10,000 workmen in an unsuccessful attempt to rebuild Babylon, himself dying in the midst of the work, the project consequently falling through.

11. How many kingdoms were there to be? Four. Daniel 2:39, 40.

The kingdom of Medo-Persia, represented by the breast and arms of silver, succeeded Babylon. Daniel 5:28. The third kingdom was Greece. Daniel 8: 21.

12. What are the legs of iron said to represent? Daniel 2:40. The fourth universal kingdom was Rome Luke 2:1, also Gibbon's "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," chap. 3, par. 37.

13. What was indicated by the fact that the feet and toes of the image were part of clay and part of iron? Daniel 2:41. "The kingdom shall be divided."

The Roman Empire was at last divided into ten parts, between the years AD 356 and 483. These divisions were the Alernaul, Ostrogoths, Visigoths, Franks, vandals, Suevi, Burgundians. Herull, Anglo-Saxon, and Lombards. These are now known as England, Germany, France. Austria, Prussia, etc. See "Newton on the Prophecies," Machiavelli, Gibbon, etc.

14. In the first part of verse 43, what is it said that these kingdoms should do? Mingle themselves with the seed of men. This probably indicates that they should seek to strengthen their powers by the marriage alliance, which history records has been done. Witness the existing relationship between all the crowned heads and princes and princesses of Europe and England.

15. Were they to succeed in this attempt? Verse 43, last clause.

16. The division of the Roman Empire was completed in AD 483.

17. What kingdom was to be set up in the days of these kings? Verse 44.

This cannot refer to the introduction of the gospel, for in the days of Christ's earthly ministry, Rome was in its undivided form. Luke 2:1.

18. Then since the God of heaven was to set up his kingdom "in the days of these kings," it could not have been set up in the days when Christ was on earth. These kings had not then appeared.

19. What part of the prayer which the Lord has given for us shows that the kingdom has not yet been set up? Thy kingdom come." Matthew 6:9, 10.

20. What did the prophet say would be done to the other kingdoms when the kingdom of God should be set

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up? Daniel 2:44.

21. By what was this prefigured in the vision? Verses 34, 35.

22. Has any such great event yet occurred? No. There is a kingdom of grace and a kingdom of glory. We are in the kingdom of grace, but the kingdom of glory is not yet set up, for “flesh and blood cannot inherit It.” 1 Corinthians 15:50. God’s people are now only heirs of that kingdom. James 2:5. Jesus gives a parable to correct the view that it was set up in his day. Luke 19:11,12. It will be set up at his second coming. 2 Timothy 4:1.

23. When it is established, how long will it continue? Daniel 2:44.

24. What is indicated by the words, “The kingdom shall not be left to other people.” That the subjects of that kingdom will be immortal.

25. Can there be any doubt in regard to the fulfillment of this prophecy? Daniel 2:45.

RECAPITULATION. We see from this prophecy that the four universal kingdoms of earth were to be followed by the everlasting kingdom of God. From history, we learn that there have been four universal kingdoms, - Babylon, Medo-Persia, Grecia, and Rome. We have passed all these way marks, and are now living, not in the kingdom represented by the head of gold, as was Daniel, but in the days of those kings represented by the feet and toes of the image.

26. Then what will the next great event in this world’s history be? The destruction of all earthly governments, to make room for the everlasting kingdom of God. Verse 44.

27. What must we do in order to gain an entrance into that kingdom? 2 Peter 1:2 -11.

The saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom.” “This gospel of the kingdom” was the theme of Christ and his apostles. “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand,” was the burden of their preaching. How much more should it now be ours, as the signs indicate the kingdom near. With the penitent thief let us pray, “Lord Jesus, remember me when thou comes in thy kingdom.”

The Kingdom of Christ

1. FOR what purpose did God make the earth? Isaiah 45:18.

2. Did the Lord design that the wicked should inhabit the earth? Proverbs 10:30.

3. To whom did the Lord give the earth? Psalm 115:16.

4. To what man did God especially promise the earth? Genesis 13:14, 15.

5. This promise includes the whole earth. Romans 4:13.

6. Did the Lord fulfil his promise to Abraham before his death? Acts 7:2-5.

7. Did his children receive the fulfillment of, this promise? Hebrews 11:13.

8. For what did Abraham look? Hebrews 11:10.

9. Christ was the seed spoken of in the promise to Abraham. Galatians 3:16.

10. Who are included among the children of Abraham Galatians 3:29.

11. Then are not all Christians interested in this promise made to Abraham?

12. If those to whom these promises were made died without having received them, how will God keep his promise to them? Ezekiel 37:12-14.

13. What has God promised to do with the earth, before giving it to his people? Isaiah 65:17.

14. For what did the early Christians look? 2 Peter 3:13.

15. Seeing we look for such things, what kind of persons ought we to be? Verses 11, 14.

16. John, the beloved disciple, was shown the new heavens and the new earth. Revelation 21:1.

17. Isaiah gives a description of the beauties of the new earth. Isaiah 35.

18. What besides the new heaven and new earth did he see? Revelation 21:2.

19. This is the capital city of Christ’s kingdom. Revelation 22:3.

20. What is the size of this city? Revelation 21:15, 16.

Dividing twelve thousand furlongs by eight, -the number of furlongs in one mile -we learn that the city measured fifteen hundred miles, or three hundred and seventy-five miles on each side. The custom of measuring cities in Bible times was to measure all around them; for example the city of Babylon was said to be sixty miles in measurement; it was actually fifteen miles on each side, sixty miles in circumference.

21. What description is given of the walls and gates of the city? Verses 10-14.

22. Of what was the wall made? Verses 18-20.

23. Of what were the gates made? Verse 21.

24. What is said of the light of the city? Verse 23.

Our Firm Foundation

remnant church. So let us enter upon our study.

Contemporary Recognition of Fulfillment the Rule

Now trace with me, first of all, the great, generally recognized sequence of world empires-the unfolding of the basic outline prophecies, primarily of Daniel 2 and 7. This is foundational. These have been universally recognized by Jew, Catholic, and Protestant alike as the ABC of all prophecy. They constitute the common denominator generally assented to by all groups who study prophecy.

It is marvelous to see how, from the very dawn of prophetic interpretation onward, men have realized progressively just where they were in the advancing course of time and the divine plan and outline of the ages. And this has taken place just as rapidly as history has clearly fulfilled the prophesied events. This recognition was not simply by one man, or two, but by many men-whole groups of students of prophecy, scattered over many lands. The historical record begins with the Jews before Christ. In fact, it begins back with the Hebrew prophet Daniel himself, who expressly identified the Babylonian, Medo-Persian, and Grecian as the first three of the four world powers of God's master outline of the course of empire from Daniel's day onward.

And in the very hour of transition they were anxiously watching the change-over from Persian to Grecian domination, and applied the symbol of the swift-moving he-goat to the conquering march of Alexander, the Macedonian monarch, and declared the notable first horn to be Alexander the Great. [2] Then they watched with concern the establishment of the Roman fourth power-which they even named, as stated in their paraphrastic translation of the book of Daniel-as the next in the prophetic line to assume control.

In addition, we find that these pre-Christian Jews understood and clearly applied the year-day principle to the seventy weeks-the one and only prophetic time period of Daniel then applicable to the Jews-a prophetic truth for the time then present. God has always had a present truth a special truth for emphasis during each period along the highway of the centuries. These Jewish exegetes also clearly understood and stated that a "time" represented a year, and that "king" indicated a kingdom. And these foundational principles for all prophetic interpretation enunciated by the early Jewish church before Christ, were carried over into the Christian church and became the accepted heritage of the early church.

Men have known where they were all along the designated course of empire, and what principal events were to follow. This is a matter of simple record. In the days of Roman might and power Jew and early Christian alike then applied Daniel's prophetic fourth empire symbols to Rome. There was no question in their minds concerning the application.

Take the early Christian churchmen, the Ante-Nicene Fathers, from Justin Martyr onward. It is most astonishing to see how many of the very men who helped to lay the foundation for the great Latin departure in other matters, had this unique characteristic-that they still held tenaciously to the basic principles of sound prophetic interpretation long after certain of the other gospel foundations of the early church were crumbling and apostasy was beginning to overwhelm and distort the fundamental doctrines of the primitive church. As the mighty Amazon sweeps out into the South Atlantic for hundreds of miles, bearing its sweet, fresh water amid the surrounding brine, so the distinct stream of sound prophetic interpretation continued on until, by the fifth century, it was finally swallowed up by the surrounding apostasy.

A single early example must suffice. Hippolytus, bishop of Portus Romanus (died C. AD 236), an opponent of two of the bishops of Rome, wrote the earliest systematic commentary on the book of Daniel that has been preserved for us. In striking phrases he paralleled the prophecies of Daniel 2 and 7, naming the four empires from Babylonia to Rome, identifying his own place as in the legs of iron," and the fourth beast-the then-present Roman Empire-the fourth and last of the world empire series. He then declared the breakup of Rome would be the next world-shaking event in line, portrayed through the symbolism of the succeeding ten toes and the ten horns of these chapters. [3]

And he further declared the smiting stone of Daniel 2, in the time of Rome's divisions, to be Christ coming in judgment. But most remarkable of all, he expressed the belief that the little horn of Daniel 7, springing up among the Roman divisions, represented the coming Antichrist-whose development, however, and identity as an ecclesiastical system spanning the Middle Ages he did not and could not yet envision. Rather, he wondered whether it might not be some heinous, atheistic Jew. Time was foreshortened to all these early men. They did not and could not yet grasp the stretching centuries that

Our Firm Foundation

would be involved. The year-day principle had not yet been applied to the 1260 years, and the papal apostasy had not yet developed to the point of clear identification. But the grand outline was all there—the four empires, the division of Rome, the appearance of Antichrist, and finally the Second Advent.

So our teaching today, on this basic outline, is none other than the revival and restoration of the early church interpretation on the four empires, and the permanent division of the fourth. Thus we clasp hands firmly across the years with Hippolyttis and his contemporary expositors. We have simply revived and carried forward his teachings and those of others. [4] We have merely raised up the sturdy foundations of those early generations, back near the dawn of the Christian Era. That is our strength. Rome was the tremendously present fourth empire in Hippolyttis' then present-truth emphasis. And this basic concept was shared by scholars scattered from one end of the Roman Empire to the other, writing in Greek, Latin, Syriac, and Hebrew. That was indisputably the early church teaching, and it constituted a powerful group of witnesses.

Rome's Breakup, and Disintegration of Interpretation

Next comes the era of the breakup of the Roman Empire into its lesser parts, or component nations. Sulpicius Severus (died 420 AD) and Jerome (died 420 AD) are typical of this epoch, and were striking expounders in this crucial period. These and other men definitely declared that the great predicted division was now already under way. [5] The brittle clay was clearly being intermingled with the sturdy iron. Statecraft and church craft were being fatally intermingled. The breakup was a present actuality. And this now became the new point of clear contemporary recognition and concern. It was the new area of emphasis of their present truth. So we are the restorers of this added section in the foundational structure laid by the generations of the fourth and fifth centuries.

And then the next major event in the line of inspired prediction—the appearance of Antichrist, whoever he might be—was awaited with gravest apprehension. Men prayed for the continuance of the then-present Roman Empire, for they feared the more sinister depredations and persecutions of the coming Antichrist. They likewise held the clear outline of the four world powers. Many, such as Tertullian, had written that Rome was the final withholding power, [6] and that its passing would make possible the rise of Antichrist—or the beast, or little horn, as it was already variously called under the alternate symbols of Antichrist. And many feared the dread opponent would appear in the church.

Then the first great breakdown in prophetic interpretation began to take place. First subtle and then open apostasy began to appear—fatal departures from that earlier prophetic faith, brought about through the impact of such men as Origen of Alexandria, Eusebius of Caesarea, and Augustine of Hippo. Origen, the Neoplatonic philosopher, began first to pervert the interpretation of the prophecies by allegorizing them away from literal intent. The four empires of Daniel 2 and 7 were just spiritual progressions, advances, ascendant principles, one following the other. The literal interpretation of the promise of Christ's Second Advent was just a crude concept for the immature mind, he asserted.

Eusebius represented the first resurrection as the widespread Christian conquests through conversion of the pagans, he devil's binding typifying the restriction of his power through the early conquests of the gospel.

By Augustine the resurrection was spiritualized into the spiritual awakening of souls dead in sin, the kingdom of God was crudely carnalized and materialized into the then-present apostatizing church, and the millennium was ingeniously thrust back so as to begin with the first Advent. People were then living, Augustine stoutly asserted, in the millennial thousand years of the Apocalypse. It was a revolutionary reversal and repudiation.

Moreover, the stone that was to smite the image on the feet was already, Augustine asserted, the mountain kingdom of God, which was to fill the earth. But this, they held, was to be accomplished through man's endeavor, and the stone was to crush the nations into subjection to the advancing kingdom of God. Thus the early shadow of the coming Inquisition was already cast in those transition times, under this gross misconception. And these flanking attacks upon the early precepts of prophecy, as well as the direct attacks—by Porphyry the sophist upon the historicity of the book of Daniel, and by Dionysius striking against the apostolicity of the Apocalypse—brought tight about the collapse of early church interpretation and the obscuring of the early sound exposition. For centuries bleak shadows crept over the earth, and darkness covered the understanding of men.

35. Signs That His Coming Is Near

AFTER Jesus had assured His disciples that He would come again, they came to Him with the earnest in enquiry: "Tell us, when shall these things be? And what shall be the sign of Thy coming, and of the end of the world?" Matt. 24:3. Jesus' answer to this question was positive and clear. As recorded by Luke, He declared, "There shall be signs." (Luke 21:25.) This was an encouraging assurance. Christ's people would not be left in darkness concerning this crowning event in the work of redemption.

Comes Not in Secret

Since the visits of the Son of God to this earth are of vital importance to those who live here, they are not carried out in secret. Long before His coming, He makes strong announcements of His intentions and warns men everywhere to prepare for the momentous event.

Prior to Christ's first coming, He revealed through His prophets the very year in which He would be baptized and anointed and the exact time of His crucifixion. Had His people believed the Scriptures, they would have been expecting Him and would have made preparation of heart to meet Him. When John appeared in the wilderness of Judea, he announced with great earnestness and power, "The time is fulfilled." He realized that the hour had struck for Christ to appear, and he warned men everywhere to seek a preparation of heart to receive Him.

Most of the people were engrossed in slothfulness and sin. Their hearts were overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness and with the cares of this life. They were filled with pride and self righteousness, and felt no need of a Savior who could deliver them from sin's bondage. They were not watching and waiting for His appearing; therefore, they were not prepared to receive Him when He came.

Just so it will be with the masses of humanity when He comes the second time. It will overtake them "as a snare" or as a thief in the night," and they will be taken "unawares." It will come upon them as an overwhelming surprise.

But it is not necessary that the people of earth be surprised by His coming, for "there shall be signs"; and these signs, if heeded, will clearly indicate the time of His appearing.

Yes, "there shall be signs." Signs where? There will be signs everywhere in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars, and upon the earth. (Luke 21: 25.) Wherever one looks-in earth, sea, or sky-the signs of His coming will be on display.

These were Jesus' words. It was His divine prediction; and it is, therefore, with confidence that we may look 'for these promised omens that will reveal the time when His coming is due. The exact day and hour is not revealed, but so nearly so that His people may know when He is near, yes, even at the door. See Matt. 24:33.

Jesus personally revealed some of the signs of His coming, but not all of them. Others had long since been foretold by the ancient prophets. The Bible, from beginning to end, is filled with prophetic utterances foretelling conditions that will prevail on the earth in the last days. These conditions will constitute signs of His coming. Some of the prophets were led by the Spirit of God to foretell the entire history of the world, including the rise and fall of nations from the time of the prophecy to the end. The burden of every such prophecy was to warn men of that day of days and urge them to prepare to stand before Him.

Daniel's Prophecy

Thus it was with Daniel's prophecy which was based upon the great metallic image shown to King Nebuchadnezzar in vision. When called to stand before the king to explain the meaning of the vision, Daniel declared:

"Thou, O king, saw, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible. This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, his legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay. Thou saw till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. 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: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth." Dan. 2:31-35.

This was the dream. In interpreting its meaning, Daniel stated that the head of gold represented the empire of Babylon, over which Nebuchadnezzar ruled. "Thou art this head of gold." Verse 38.

"And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth. And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron." Verses 39, 40.

The second kingdom, represented by the breast and arms of silver, was Medo-Persia, which conquered Babylon in 538 BC.

The third kingdom "of brass?" was Grecia, which overcame Medo-Persia in 331 BC. And the fourth kingdom, represented by the legs of iron, was the "iron monarchy of Rome," which overthrew Grecia in 168 BC.

Then came the disintegration of the fourth great universal monarchy, as was represented by the ten toes of the image, which were a mixture of iron and clay.

"And whereas thou saw the feet and toes, part of potters' clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou saw the iron mixed with miry clay. 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. 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." Verses 41-43.

What a fit illustration is this of the breaking up of the great Roman empire into many fragments! Through internal disintegration, Rome in her later years lost her moral and political power and became a prey to the hordes of barbarians that began to pour across her borders about AD. 351. This started the falling apart, the separation of the weak from the strong; and in a short time ten separate and independent kingdoms were established on her ruins.

The ten kingdoms of western Europe, into which Rome was divided, find their posterity in some of the modern nations of today. The Alemanni were the sires of the Germanic race; the Franks were the forbears of the French; and the Anglo-Saxons are now known as the English, etc.

The prophecy indicates that efforts would be made again to cement these nations into another world empire, but that all such plans would fall. "They shall mingle themselves with the seed of men." Verse 43. This would indicate intermarriage among the rulers of the nations, which is exactly what has been done through the centuries since Rome's decline and fall. "But," declared the Word of God, "they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay." Verse 43.

Christ the Next World Ruler

There are to be no more universal world empires "until He come whose right it is; and I will give it Him." Eze. 21:27. This is a declaration of the Almighty. Christ's kingdom is to be the next in succession. Hear it, as the prophet of God continues his interpretation:

"And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever. 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: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure." Dan. 2:44,45.

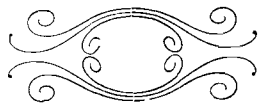
This is God's program. Not a Hitler nor a Stalin nor a Hirohito, but the Christ of Calvary will become the next universal ruler. As He appears in the opening heavens, His face will far outshine the sun, and His garments will be as white as the light. His eyes will be as a flame of fire, and on His head will be many crowns. On His vesture, which has been dipped in blood, will be written in glowing characters, "KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS." See Rev. 19: 11-16.

At that time the nations of earth will be broken in pieces, and become "like the chaff of the summer threshing floors," and will be blown away. Then they will be supplanted by the eternal and glorious kingdom of the Son of God. We are now living "in the days of these kings," and this is a sign that the time for the setting up of the kingdom of Christ is at hand.

Increase of Knowledge

Another sign of Christ's coming is revealed in the prophecy recorded in Dan. 12: 4: "But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro,

out his hands to a disobedient and gainsaying people. And as he spoke by the mouth of Jeremiah, so will he do by Israel, and by all people. The Lord Jesus said directly to the Jews: "The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." Matt. 21:43. The words of the forerunner of Christ to the Jews were: "Think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father; for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham." Matt. 3:9. It is not accident of birth which finds favor with God, it is not because of honoured ancestors that his blessing abides with us. He prizes above all things "the upright heart and pure," and his blessing abides with those whose characters are forming by faith in Jesus Christ according to his revealed will. And all will find their labour vain who try to make void the word of the Lord.



CHAPTER VII.

THE KINGDOM AND THE KING.

God made the earth to be inhabited by the children of men. Isa. 45:18; Ps. 115:16. When the intention was expressed to make man, it was said: "And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth." Gen. 1:26. More may have been implied than is here expressed. There is order in Heaven; some are appointed to higher stations than others, but all is harmony, for all delight to do the will of their Creator. When the earth is freed from the curse, there will be different orders among the children of men. Rev. 21:24. How natural to suppose that, had Adam remained innocent, as the earth was filled with his posterity, great respect would always have been shown to him, the head of the race. But now that glory and honour will be borne by the second Adam.

In addition to the gift of the land, and the blessing of the nations, the Lord said to Abraham: "And kings shall come out of thee." Gen. 17:6. The same words were repeated to Jacob. Gen. 35:11. And the idea of royalty is incorporated into the covenant at Horeb. "Ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests." Ex. 19:6.

In the days of Samuel the prophet the people asked for a king. The motive that actuated them was not good; they wanted a king that they might be like all the nations. 1 Sam. 8:19, 20. The Lord had given directions for their conduct, with a view to keeping them separate from, and unlike, the nations. He was their ruler, their guide, and protector. Doubtless the heathen who knew not God, held them in derision

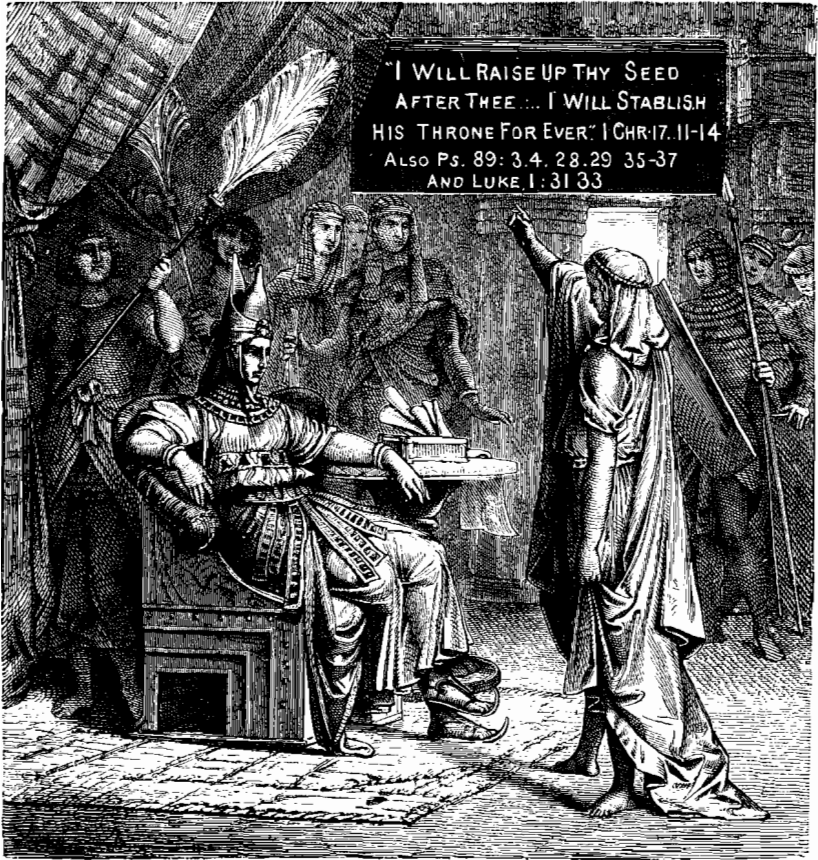
because they had no king, no visible ruler; and this may have had an ill effect upon them. But God, while he disapproved of their request, listened to them, only reserving to himself the right to choose their king for them. He did not resign the right to rule over them; he was still their actual sovereign, guiding and directing their kings in the government of the kingdom.

Samuel was directed to anoint Saul, the son of Kish, of the tribe of Benjamin. When Saul had reigned sixteen years, he disobeyed the word of the Lord, who had before appointed Amalek to utter destruction for their sins. Ex. 17: 8-14; Deut. 25: 17-19. Therefore the Lord rejected Saul, and took the kingdom from his house. Samuel was sent to Bethlehem, and there anointed David, the youngest son of Jesse, of the tribe of Judah. This was about seven years before the end of Saul's reign. In the year 1055, B. C., David was made king over Judah, and reigned in Hebron seven years. At the end of that period all Israel sought after him, and he reigned in Jerusalem thirty-three years.

In the thirteenth year of his reign, David expressed his intention to build a house for the ark of the Lord, which had always rested under curtains from the time the tabernacle was made by Moses in the desert of Arabia. But the Lord would not suffer him to build a temple to his name, because he had been engaged in many wars; but the promise was then made that his seed should build a house for the Lord, and should be established upon his throne forever. The language of the promise was very expressive:—

“I will raise up thy seed after thee, which shall be of thy sons; and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build me an house, and I will establish his throne forever. I will be his father, and he shall be my son; and I will not take my mercy away from him, as I took it from him that was before thee; but I will settle him in mine house and in my kingdom forever; and his throne shall be established forevermore.” 1 Chron. 17: 11-14.

Thus the Lord said to David, he shall be thy seed and my son. As in the promise in Gen. 3: 15, and also in that to Abraham, we shall find in this to David, that this promise to his seed does not refer to his posterity in general, nor to his



"I WILL RAISE UP THY SEED
AFTER THEE ... I WILL STABLISH
HIS THRONE FOR EVER." I CHR. 17. 11-14
ALSO PS. 89: 3. 4. 28. 29 35-37
AND LUKE. 1: 31 33

DAVID ON HIS THRONE.

immediate son, but to one remote, namely, to Christ. He alone is at once the seed of David and the Son of God.

But even as the children of Israel possessed the land of Canaan, so Solomon built a temple for the sanctuary of God. This, of course, was a type of the real temple, "the true tabernacle" (Heb. 8:2), which the seed of promise was to build.

This promise, dwelt upon in Ps. 89, is as follows:—

"I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant, Thy seed will I establish forever, and build up thy throne to all generations." "His seed also will I make to endure forever, and his throne as the days of Heaven." "His seed shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before me." Ps. 89:3, 4, 29, 36.

Solomon enjoyed a peaceable reign of forty years, but when his son, Rehoboam, took the kingdom, there was a revolt, and the kingdom was divided into two branches of Judah and Israel. This was 975 years B. C. The kings of Israel, in order to separate themselves entirely from Judah, and thus maintain a separate supremacy, corrupted their worship, and during its entire existence there was not one truly pious king in Israel. Nearly two hundred and sixty years after this division took place, the king of Assyria utterly overthrew the kingdom of Israel, taking the people captive and scattering them in his own dominions, and peopling Samaria with strangers. 2 Kings 1:7. About forty years after this, 677 B. C., the king of Assyria took Manasseh, king of Judah, captive, and carried him to Babylon, for he had done very wickedly, and the Lord delivered him into the hand of his enemy. And thus in 677, B. C., the twelve tribes were without a king in either house.

To those who cannot look beyond this present state or dispensation for a fulfilment of the promises to David, this seems to be a sad commentary on those promises of everlasting glory to his throne and kingdom. There was temporarily a change in the condition of the kingdom of Judah. Manasseh humbled himself, and they restored him to his throne; and kings reigned in Jerusalem about the space of seventy-five years longer, when the king of Babylon took Jerusalem, and put kings over Judah according to his own mind. He exalted

Zedekiah to be king, but Zedekiah rebelled against him, and the king of Babylon took him captive and put out his eyes, and destroyed the temple and the chief houses in Jerusalem. This was 588 years before Christ. 2 Kings 25:4-10; 2 Chron. 36:14-20.

The temple built by Solomon stood 417 years, from 1005 to 588 B. C. But before the utter destruction of the city, in the days of Jehoiakim, B. C. 606, Nebuchadnezzar came and took the king captive, and carried away some of the vessels of the house of God, and some of the goodliest of the children of Judah he took to Babylon, to be instructed in the learning of the Chaldeans. Compare Dan. 1:3, 4; 2 Kings 20:16-18; Isa. 37:5-7. Among the captives were Daniel and his three brethren, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, of the children of Judah.

It was only about five years before the captivity of Zedekiah, and the destruction of the temple and the city, that the prophet Ezekiel spoke of the utter subversion of the kingdom, and also of its future restoration, as follows:—

“And thou, profane wicked prince of Israel, whose day is come, when iniquity shall have an end, thus saith the Lord God: Remove the diadem, and take off the crown; this shall not be the same; exalt him that is low, and abase him that is high. I will overturn, overturn, overturn it, and it shall be no more, until he come whose right it is, and I will give it him.” Eze. 21:25-27.

The kingdom, the crown, had passed under various changes. After many wars it was taken by the king of Babylon, who set rulers in Judah according to his will. But under Zedekiah, a most rebellious prince, the prophet said, “it shall be no more”—it shall be utterly cast down, “until he come whose right it is.” And whose is the right to the kingdom and throne of David? It is the right, by an unfailing promise, of that certain one of the seed of David, who, said the Lord, “shall be my son.” In his right it shall endure as the sun, even as the days of Heaven. And more than a hundred years before this time, another prophet spoke of this:—

“And thou, O tower of the flock, the stronghold of the daughter of Zion, unto thee shall it come, even the first dominion; the kingdom shall come to the daughter of Jerusalem.” Micah 4:8.

The first dominion was that which was given to Adam—dominion over all the earth. The tower of the flock is no other than the seed of the woman—the seed of Abraham. He is heir of the world, and through him shall the kingdom come to the daughter of Jerusalem. This is a most interesting prophecy, connecting the first dominion—the original gift of the earth—with the kingdom which the seed of David shall inherit. All prophecy, all promise, all hope, centers in the stronghold, the tower of the flock. As the seed of the woman, he will bruise the head of the serpent, and recover the lost dominion. As the seed of Abraham he is the heir of the world, and a blessing to all nations. As the seed of David, he will possess the kingdom forever, and his throne shall endure as the sun, even as the days of Heaven. As the Son of God, he will save his people from their sins, and restore life to the race of Adam; to all who accept his salvation. All blessings come through him. Let all blessing and honour and glory be paid to him.

About fifteen years before the destruction of the city of Jerusalem and the temple, in the third year of the captivity of Daniel and his brethren, a prophecy of the restoration of the kingdom was given by means of a dream to Nebuchadnezzar, and its wonderful interpretation by Daniel. This is of greater interest than the prophecies that had preceded it, inasmuch as it gives a series of events easily understood by all, thereby beginning to open to us the time of the restoration of the kingdom and throne of David. This dream was given to Nebuchadnezzar by the Lord, for the express purpose of making known what shall be in the last days. Dan. 2:28. The king was reflecting upon the future, with a strong desire to look into its secrets; and the Lord caused him to understand according to his desire.

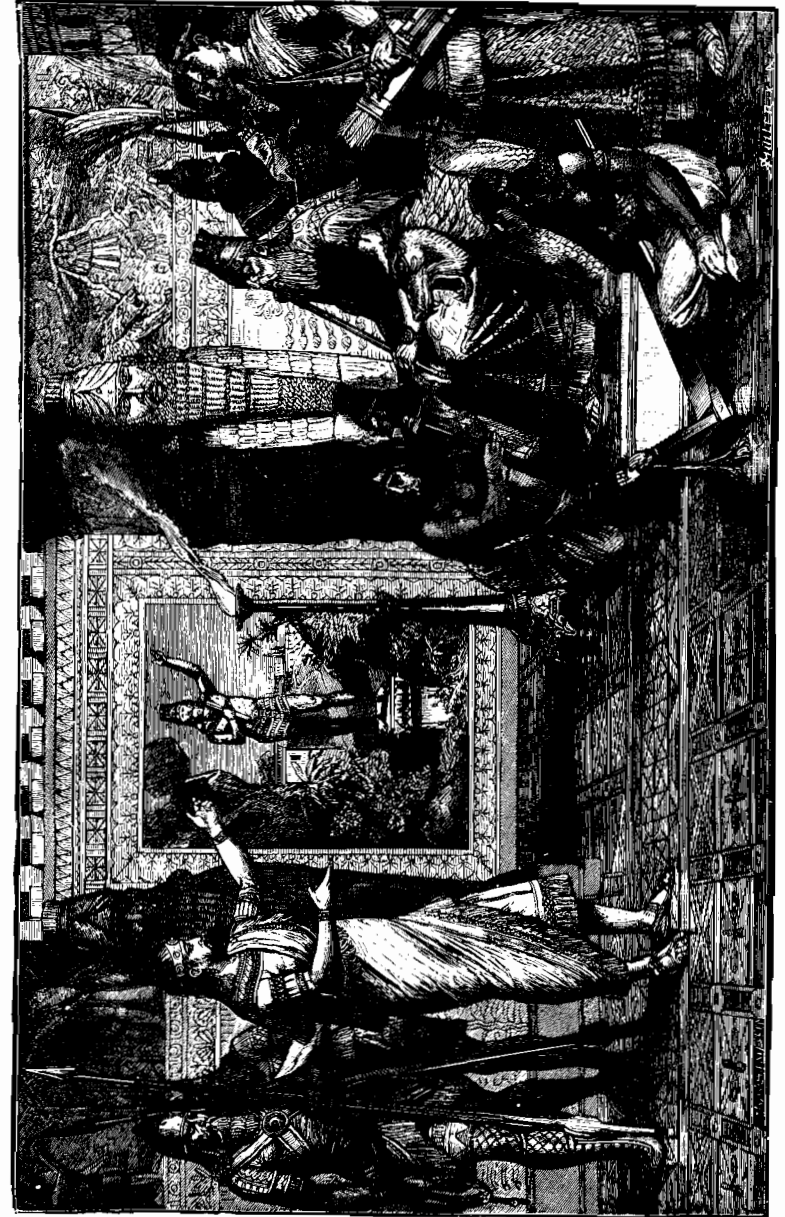
The interpretation of this dream was given under very peculiar circumstances. The dream troubled the king, though he could not remember it. This resembled a freak of the mind with which we are all acquainted. We are often troubled or perplexed over our inability to call to mind that which seems so near to our remembrance, but still eludes its grasp.

In this dilemma the king resorted to his wise men, many of whom professed knowledge which, if they had possessed it, should have served them in this emergency. He demanded that they should both tell him the dream, and give him the interpretation. Some have denounced this as a most unreasonable demand. But when we consider the pretensions of the astrologers and soothsayers, for such were some of them, we cannot call the demand unreasonable. They asked him to tell them the dream, promising then to give the interpretation. The king was apparently so disappointed in them, that he lost all confidence in their professions and promises. Perceiving the character of their pretensions to superior wisdom, he accused them of having "prepared lying and corrupt words;" for if he should tell them the dream, it would not require any great amount of ingenuity to invent some kind of interpretation. "Tell me the dream," said he, "and then I shall know that ye can show me the interpretation thereof." Dan. 2:9. If they failed to do this, he decreed that they should all be put to death. The alternative was terrible, but they were compelled to confess that they could not do it; that it required a wisdom greater than was possessed by any that dwelt on the earth. There was no chance for them to practice their wonted deception; they well knew that they could not invent anything that the king would recognize as his dream.

Daniel and his brethren had not been directly appealed to by the king, but inasmuch as they were counted among the wise men of Babylon, the officer who was appointed to execute the king's decree sought them to put them to death. But Daniel desired time, which was granted, and the young captives betook themselves to prayer, and the Lord revealed to Daniel both the dream and its interpretation. This saved not only the lives of Daniel and his brethren, but of all the professedly wise men; for the matter being revealed, the king was content to let them all live.

The dream was related to the king in the following words:—

"Thou, O king, sawest, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof



DANIEL INTERPRETING THE DREAM.

was terrible. This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his sides of brass, his legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay. Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. 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; and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth." Dan. 2: 31-35.

The test that the king put upon the wise men was a severe one, but here it was perfectly met. How must the great king have been struck, as the young Hebrew captive—a mere boy—stood before him and declared to him his secret thoughts, and every particular of his dream, which he had forgotten. Now it all flashed clearly upon his mind; he knew that that was what he saw in his dream, and he had all confidence that this young captive was capable of giving him the correct interpretation.

But Daniel disclaimed having any wisdom to reveal the king's secret. He said also that neither astrologer, magician, nor soothsayer, could make it known.

"But there is a God in Heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days." "But as for me, this secret is not revealed to me for any wisdom that I have more than any living, but for the intent that the interpretation may be made known to the king, and that thou mightest know the thoughts of thy heart." Dan. 2: 28, 30.

The margin of the English Version is here copied, it being the correct reading. Dr. Barnes says: "The margin is the better rendering, and should have been admitted into the text." The Revised Version has adopted it.

The common English rendering of verse 30 is not only incorrect, but it does great injury to the prophecy as being a revelation from God of what shall be in the last days. The common reading implies that the matter was made known for the sake of those who should interpret it, which is altogether a wrong idea. It would effectually make it of private interpretation. Prophecy is not given to answer any personal ends. The whole matter, both the dream and the interpretation, was for the purpose of making known what shall be in the last

days, and when the kingdom of Israel, that was being subverted, should be restored, and the throne and the crown given to him whose right it is.

And being such, it was not for Nebuchadnezzar alone, nor for those of that age. It is the beginning of one of the most important chains of prophecy in all the Bible. All the circumstances give the most undoubted assurance that the Lord has therein made known to all his people what shall be in the last days. In examining the interpretation each particular will be noticed as we pass.

Verse 36. "This is the dream; and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king."

In verse 30, Daniel frankly declared that he had no wisdom above others to tell the dream; he gave all the honor to the God of Heaven. Here he says: "We will tell the interpretation," including his brethren in making known the interpretation. It was in answer to their united prayer that it was made known to Daniel.

Verses 37, 38. "Thou, O king, art a king of kings; for the God of Heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold."

Several interesting points are here presented for consideration.

1. The God of Heaven had ordered the kingdom of Babylon for purposes of his own. He selected Babylon to chastise his people for their sins. He made it a surpassingly glorious kingdom, to represent the gradation of events and kingdoms in the world, even to the last days. It was the most glorious kingdom that has ever existed, being fairly represented by its capital city, the like of which never existed, either before or since.

2. Nebuchadnezzar was king over the kings of the earth. In describing his greatness and the extent of his rule, the words of Daniel, in a most striking manner, agree with the terms of the original gift of the dominion to Adam, namely, over the beasts

of the field, and the fowls of the heaven, wheresoever the children of men dwelt, that is, over all the earth. In this we get the first idea of the full intent of this revelation, as more clearly set forth in the interpretation in verses 44, 45, as will be noticed when we come to those texts.

3. By comparison of the Scriptures, we learn that in all cases the king represents the kingdom over which he rules; and Nebuchadnezzar was the head of gold, inasmuch as he stood at the head of an empire which was well symbolized by the most precious metal. The distinction of empire and kingdom is not known in the Scriptures.

Verse 39. "And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee."

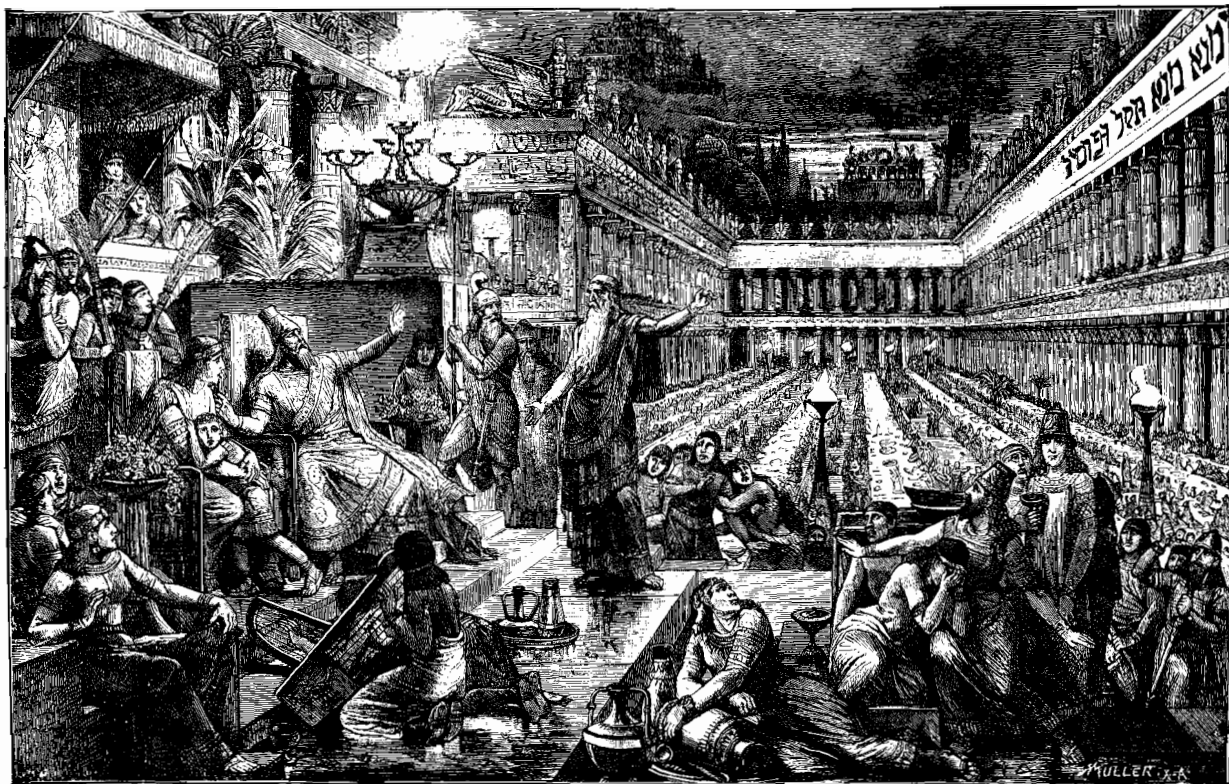
The succession was not merely of a king, but of a kingdom. This next kingdom is represented in the dream by the breast and arms of silver. What this kingdom was may be easily learned from this book of Daniel's prophecy. In chapter 5 we read that Belshazzar, king of Babylon, made a great feast to a thousand of his lords; and while drinking wine before them, he commanded to bring the vessels which his father (grandfather) Nebuchadnezzar, had taken from the temple in Jerusalem, "that the king, and his princes, his wives, and his concubines, might drink therein." While committing this act, they "praised the gods of gold, and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone." The circumstances of that night, not related in the Scriptures, but well known in history, must be briefly noticed.

The royal houses of the Medes and the Persians were united by marriage. There was war between the Medes and the Babylonians, and Darius, king of the Medes, was aided by the Persians under Cyrus, their prince, the nephew of Darius. Cyrus was an able general, and the whole empire had submitted to his arms, except Babylon, the imperial city. This he besieged. But the city was so well prepared for a siege, that it could have held out for an indefinite time if it had been faithfully guarded. History informs us that there were provisions within the city for a siege of twenty years, while the

squares were so spacious that very large gardens were found everywhere. There was much land within the walls available for raising provisions, and it was exceedingly productive. The walls were very high and strong, the entrances being guarded by heavy gates of brass. From their high walls the Babylonians laughed their besiegers to scorn, considering any means of defence useless, aside from the security offered by their walls, and believing that the besiegers would in time become convinced of the folly of their efforts.

But wickedness almost invariably attends upon the steps of worldly prosperity; and Babylon had filled up the cup of her iniquity, and the Lord had spoken by his prophets, saying that it should be not only overthrown, but utterly destroyed. To all human appearance, no power could overthrow it. Infidels might scoff at the prophecy, but no word of the prophets of God has ever failed, however improbable its fulfilment appeared at the time it was given. While Belshazzar and his proud princes were in the midst of their drunken revelry, praising the gods of their own making, and insulting the God of Israel, defying him by the sacrilegious use of the vessels consecrated to his service in Jerusalem, suddenly they were startled by the appearance of the fingers of a man's hand writing upon the wall of the royal banqueting house. Instantly their boasting was turned to consternation, and the king was so affrighted that "his knees smote one against another." The astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers were called, but they could not make known that which was written. It appears that, in the changes of rulers, Daniel was neglected if not forgotten; but when the queen called attention to his having made known the dreams of Nebuchadnezzar, he was sent for, and read the writing to the king.

But first he uttered a most fitting rebuke to the proud and insolent Belshazzar. He reminded him of the benefits which God had conferred on his grandfather, Nebuchadnezzar, and of his having been driven from his kingdom because of his forgetfulness of God. "And thou, his son, O Belshazzar, hast not humbled thine heart, though thou knewest all this; but



THE FEAST OF BELSHAZZAR.

hast lifted up thyself against the Lord of Heaven." He then read the writing upon the wall, as follows:—

"And this is the writing that was written: MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN." Dan. 5:25.

Many conjectures, all quite useless, have been indulged in, as to the character in which these words were written. Implicit reliance upon the record must lead us to believe just what it says, "This is the writing that was written;" the words set down in the record must have been the identical words upon the wall. The words are Chaldaic, but this is so closely related to the Hebrew, that the words, very much alike, are found in both languages. If they were written in the same form in which they are transmitted to us, it would make the truthfulness of the interpretation more directly apparent to all who heard Daniel speak. As in the case of the dream of Nebuchadnezzar, where the test put upon the wise men was such as to make sure to the king that the interpretation was correct, so here, if the words were those which were common to the Chaldeans, it would show to all present that the interpretation had a close relation to the words that were written. On the other hand, if they were written in some form not at all known to those present, the interpretation would lack the certainty, in their minds, which would attach to it if they had a knowledge of the words.

The wise men were unable to explain them, which is the sense in which their inability to read them should be taken. No one, except he were inspired of the God of Heaven, could possibly tell what was meant by the words themselves. Certainly, Daniel, by his own wisdom, could no more tell that MENE, which simply means "he hath numbered," meant that God had numbered and finished the kingdom, than he could tell what the divisions meant in the image of Nebuchadnezzar's dream. And the same may be said of TEKEL, which only means weighed, or, "he has weighed." Inspiration was necessary to determine that it meant, "Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting." And no less difficulty attends the word UPHARSIN. The prefix U (sound of oo), is

the conjunction, and *Pah-ras* means, he divided; *parsin* is the same word, with the Chaldaic plural termination. The change in the form of the words which Daniel made in the interpretation would certainly lead to the conclusion that is here adopted, namely, that he was examining words in their own language, just as they are written. With a different pointing, and thereby with a different pronunciation, this last word means the Persian. But there was no reference, by any construction, to the Medes, though there was to the Persians. Yet the hearers could readily see the force of the interpretation when it was said the kingdom was numbered, and finished, and divided, for they all knew that the united forces of the Medes and Persians were at that moment surrounding the city. And thus, as has been remarked, the interpretation was much more forcible and convincing if the words were written with the characters known at least to the wise men who were present; and, of course, the more generally they were known, the more effect would the interpretation have on the minds of the vast assembly.

Now turn again to the facts of history. Cyrus caused a new channel to be made for the Euphrates, and made excavations on the plain, to receive the waters when he wished to divert them from the channel that ran under the walls and through the city. Yet all this labor would have been useless to him had the city been continually guarded with diligence and care; for, inside the city, walls were built on the banks of the river, so that if any passed the outer wall and followed the bed of the river inside the city, they would still be as effectually shut out from communication, with the city or from entering it, as if they were entirely outside, unless the gates were open which led to or across the river. But the prophet of God had spoken the word that Babylon should be destroyed, and Providence was on the side of the besieging army. An occasion was soon offered to Cyrus to take advantage of the preparation that he had made. Rollin, in his "Ancient History," thus speaks of it:—

"As soon as Cyrus saw that the ditch, which they had long worked upon, was finished, he began to think seriously upon the execution of his vast

design, which as yet he had communicated to nobody. Providence soon furnished him with as fit an opportunity for this purpose as he could desire. He was informed that in the city a great festival was to be celebrated; and that the Babylonians, on occasions of that solemnity, were accustomed to pass the whole night in drinking and debauchery." Vol. 1., p. 30, Harpers, 1865.

Knowing all this, Cyrus judged that diligence in guarding the city would be relaxed; and those within deemed it impossible for the enemy to pass the main or outer walls. Turning the waters into the new channels that he had cut, the river bed under the walls and through the city was soon dry enough for the soldiers to pass within. Xenophon, quoted by Dr. Barnes, Notes on Dan. 5:30, said that Cyrus and his generals had an idea that the gates inside the city would be left open, as all inside the city would naturally join in the revelry. He said:—

"And indeed those who were with Gobryas said that it would not be wonderful if the gates of the palace should be found open, as the whole city that night seemed to be given up to revelry.' He then says that as they passed on, after entering the city, 'of those whom they encountered, part, being smitten, died, part fled again back, and part raised a clamour. But those who were with Gobryas also raised a clamour as if they also joined in the revelry, and going as fast as they could, they came soon to the palace of the king. But those who were with Gobryas and Gadates being arrayed, found the gates of the palace closed, but those who were appointed to go against the guard of the palace fell upon them when drinking before a great light, and were quickly engaged with them in hostile combat. Then a cry arose, and they who were within having asked the cause of the tumult, the king commanded them to see what the affair was, and some of them rushing out opened the gates. As they who were with Gadates saw the gates open, they rushed in, and pursuing those who attempted to return, and smiting them, they came to the king, and they found him standing with a drawn sabre. And those who were with Gadates and Gobryas overpowered him; and those who were with him were slain—one opposing, and one fleeing, and one seeking his safety the best way he could. . . . When it was day, and they who had the watch over the towers learned that the city was taken, and that the king was dead, they also surrendered the towers.'"

The result is thus briefly stated in Dan. 5:30, 31: "In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain. And Darius the Median took the kingdom."

Thus ended the kingdom of the Chaldeans, the empire represented by the head of gold in the great image of Nebuchad-

nezzar's dream. The overthrow took place B. C. 538—sixty-five years after the dream was given; sixty-eight years after the captivity when Daniel and others were brought to Babylon; sixty-one years after Nebuchadnezzar made Zedekiah king of Jerusalem; and fifty years after the temple and the city of Jerusalem were destroyed. Thus wondrously does God fulfill his word, and thus plainly do the Scriptures and history agree in giving the succession of empire, showing that the breast and arms of silver, in the image of the dream of Nebuchadnezzar, represented the united houses of the Medes and the Persians.

We now return to the words of Daniel in the interpretation.

Dan. 2:39. "And another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth."

This third kingdom answered to the body of the image which was of brass, the third metal mentioned. And the identity of this kingdom is as easily determined as that of the Medes and Persians. In chapter 8 is the record of a vision that Daniel had in the third year of the reign of Belshazzar. He was in Elam, which had been an independent kingdom, and as a province of Babylon preserved its capital and palace. See Dan. 8:2. Daniel said that in this vision he saw a ram which had two horns, and one was higher than the other, and the higher came up last. And the ram became great and did according to his will. And then he saw a he goat which came from the west, which ran unto the ram in the fury of his power and brake his two horns, and stamped upon him; and the goat became very great. Other points in the history of these beasts are passed by for the present, as it is only the purpose here to show what they represent. The angel Gabriel was commanded to explain the vision to Daniel, and of these beasts he said: "The ram which thou sawest having two horns, are the kings of Media and Persia. And the rough goat is the king [or kingdom] of Grecia."

Here it is seen that the Medes and Persians, represented by the breast and arms of silver in the image, were overthrown

by Grecia, which of course is represented by the next metal, the body of brass of the image. That the kingdom of the Medes and Persians was overthrown by the Grecians, is so well known that it is unnecessary to quote history to further show the fulfillment of the prophecy in this particular. Thus we have three parts of the image well and clearly explained, namely, the gold, the silver, and the brass—Babylon, Medo-Persia, and Grecia.

Dan. 2:40. "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."

It will be noticed that the dream of Nebuchadnezzar, and its interpretation, show that four great empires should rule over the earth. And it appears that the first, the gold, was to be the most glorious, while the fourth, the iron, was to be the strongest. The first three are named in the prophecy, as we have seen. The fourth is not; but it is brought to view in other scriptures, and abundantly identified in history. Thus we read in Luke 2:1, that their went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus that all the world should be taxed. Cæsar Augustus was emperor of Rome, and Rome was the only empire that has existed since the rise and fall of the kingdom of Alexander, the Grecian, that had power to tax the world. This expression proves universality of dominion, such as was held by Babylon, Persia, and Greece, the first three parts of the great image. No king can tax beyond his jurisdiction, and no part of the whole world could resist the power of Rome.

The description of the action of this empire, as given by Daniel, is very expressive. "As the iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise." Its rise to universal supremacy was emphatically by a breaking and bruising process. Its rise was not by a sudden overthrow of a ruling empire, as was the case with the Persians and the Greeks. The empire of Alexander was already divided into four parts, as was prophesied in Daniel 7 and 8. Of course no one of four kingdoms could be as strong as one universal kingdom. These divisions caused the Romans to carry on their conquests

in almost every direction, and almost everywhere; and this again led to their having a closer supervision over all parts of the world than did their predecessors. On this text, Dr. Barnes says:—

“Nothing could better characterize the Roman power than this. Everything was crushed before it. The nations which they conquered ceased to be kingdoms, and were reduced to provinces, and as kingdoms they were blotted out from the list of nations.”

Concerning the strength and extent of the Roman empire, and the watchfulness which the emperors exercised over this vast domain, Gibbon thus testifies:—

“But the empire of the Romans filled the world, and when that empire fell into the hands of a single person, the world became a safe and dreary prison for his enemies. The slave of imperial despotism, whether he was compelled to drag his gilded chain in Rome and the Senate, or to wear out a life of exile on the barren rock of Seriphus, or the frozen banks of the Danube, accepted his fate in silent despair. To resist was fatal, and it was impossible to fly. On every side he was encompassed with a vast extent of sea and land, which he could never hope to traverse without being discovered, seized, and restored to his irritated master. Beyond the frontiers, his anxious view could discover nothing, except the ocean, inhospitable deserts, hostile tribes of barbarians, of fierce manners and unknown languages, or dependent kings, who would gladly purchase the emperor's protection by the sacrifice of an obnoxious fugitive. Wherever you are, said Cicero, to the exiled Marcellus, remember that you are equally within the power of the conqueror.” Decline and Fall, chap. 3, paragraph 37.

Dr. George Weber, professor at Heidelberg, in his “Universal History,” says:—

“It was under Augustus that the Roman empire possessed the greatest power abroad, and the highest cultivation at home. It extended from the Atlantic ocean to the Euphrates, and from the Danube and Rhine to the Atlas and falls of the Nile.” P. 102, Brewer & Tileston, Boston, 1853.

The Romans were well represented by the iron, not only in the strength of their empire, but in the cruelty of their dispositions. They were iron-hearted, delighting in shedding human blood. Titus was considered one of the mildest of Roman conquerors, the most benignant of Roman rulers, so that his subjects gave him the title of “the delight of the human race;” yet Josephus, speaking of his conquest of the Jews, said:—

“While Titus was at Casarea, he solemnized the birthday of his brother

after a splendid manner, and inflicted a great deal of the punishment intended for the Jews in honour of him; for the number of those who were slain in fighting with the beasts, and were burnt, and fought with one another, exceeded two thousand five hundred.” Wars, Book 7, chap. 3, sec. 1.

At Berytus, a city of Phœnicia, he celebrated the birthday of his father in a similar manner, where a great multitude perished by the same means. The reader cannot fail to be interested in the following remarks of Professor Gausseu, of Geneva, in his “Discourses on Daniel,” on this subject:—

“The fourth empire was iron. Iron—no better definition than this can be given of the character of the Romans. Everything in them was iron. Their government was iron—merciless, hard-hearted, inhuman, inexorable. Their courage was iron—cruel, bloody, indomitable. Their soldiers were iron—never was there a nation more fearfully armed for battle; their breast-plates, their helmets, their long shields, their darts, their javelins, their short and heavy two-edged swords, all their weapons were ingeniously terrible. . . . Their yoke upon the vanquished was iron,—heavy, intolerable, and yet unavoidable. In their conquests they crushed everything; they made Roman provinces of all the subjected countries; they left them nothing of their own nationality, and in a short time had even deprived them of their language. It was soon commanded to speak Latin not only in all Italy, but in Germany, south of the Danube, in all France, in all Belgium, in Switzerland, in Geneva, in Spain, in Portugal, and even in Africa. . . . When Julius Caesar, who took all France, and made it a Roman province, finished the assault of the last city, he ordered that both hands be cut off from all the men that were found in it, which cruelty he proudly mentions in his Commentaries. They wanted human blood in all their joys.” Vol. I, pp. 146-8, Toulouse, 1850.

Luther, in his “Introduction to Comments on Daniel,” said:—

“The first kingdom is the Assyrian, or Babylonian; the second, the Medes and Persians; the third, that of Alexander the Great, and the Greeks; the fourth, the Roman. In this explanation and opinion all the world are agreed.”

We now return to the words of the young prophet in the explanation of the dream.

Verse 41. “And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potter's clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided.”

The iron kingdom was to be divided into different kingdoms, according to the number of toes on the image of a man. Daniel had a vision, recorded in chapter seven, in which he

saw four great beasts, which also represent four great kingdoms the same as the four metals of the great image, and the fourth beast had ten horns, which are said to be ten kingdoms. Verse 24. The ten toes of the image represent the same ten kingdoms.

"But there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay."

The fourth kingdom was not overthrown in the manner in which the preceding ones were, so as to let the power or dominion pass to another territory. It was to be divided, and the iron was to remain in the divisions; the power of the same dominion was to be exercised by ten kingdoms instead of by one universal empire.

Verses 42, 43. "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. And whereas thou sawest 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."

It would not be possible to find figures more appropriate than these to indicate that these kingdoms should never again be united. Go to the founders where the molten iron is poured into the clay. Sometimes the moulds are imperfect, become broken, and the iron finds its way in every direction—literally mingles with the clay; but they will never cleave to one another. When the mass cools, every particle of the iron can be picked out and separated from every particle of the clay. Partly strong and partly broken or brittle, well represents the condition of the several kingdoms which sprung up on the territory of the Roman empire. Bishop Lowth, in his "Commentary on Daniel," says:—

"The toes of the image signify the ten kingdoms who were in after times to divide the kingdom among themselves. . . . This partition of the Roman empire will divide its strength, and by consequence be a diminution of its power."

This dividing is another fact in the identification of the fourth kingdom as the Roman empire. It was not true of either of the other great kingdoms that it was broken into ten kingdoms

and thus stood for a long time. The Grecian empire was divided into four parts, as will be seen in Daniel seven and eight and as noticed in all history. But the Roman empire was divided into half a score of kingdoms, most of which remain unto this day. And there would be scarcely any earthly limit to their power were it not for one thing: the word of prophecy long ago declared, "They shall not cleave one to another." They may enter into confederacies and form alliances, but they shall not stand. Ambitious men, as Charlemagne, Napoleon, etc., may think to hold the kingdoms in their own power,—to unite the nations in their own interests, to serve their own purposes; but look again, and where are they? Now proudly riding on the waves of victory, they think that they can make a map of the world which shall remain as a monument of the success of their schemes. But suddenly their schemes have perished with them.

"Iron and clay" still expresses the condition of those who occupy the old Roman dominion. But the climax, the great object of this prophecy, remains to be noticed. Thus the young captive in Babylon said:—

"Verse 44. "And in the days of these kings shall the God of Heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed; and 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."

And thus, besides the four great empires represented by the gold, the silver, the brass, and the iron, another universal kingdom is to succeed them, represented by the stone, which shall be set up by the God of Heaven. In the dream it was shown that the stone became a great mountain and filled the whole earth. It is no other than the kingdom and throne of David restored in the hands of his seed, the first dominion recovered from the power of the enemy, and from the curse which has so long rested upon it. The prophecy concerning this kingdom, revealing its features, must yet be examined.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE TIME OF SETTING UP THE KINGDOM.

THE first words of the revelation of God concerning man are these, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness, and let them have dominion." Gen. 1:26. Thus the purpose was announced to make man that he might have dominion over the earth. It has been noticed that when Daniel spoke before Nebuchadnezzar of the extent of his dominion which the God of Heaven had given him, he used the same terms that were used in the first declaration of the purpose of God, and in the original gift to Adam, of dominion over all the earth.

When man was created, dominion was given to him in the following words:—

"And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth." Gen. 1:28.

We do not find these ideas expressed, or these terms again used, until Daniel reminds the triumphant king of Babylon of the source of his power. Thus he said:—

"Thou, O king, art a king of kings; for the God of Heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all." Dan. 2:37, 38.

The same witness was given by Daniel in speaking to Belshazzar, in the closing hours of this great empire:—

"The most high God gave Nebuchadnezzar thy father a kingdom, and majesty, and glory, and honour; and for the majesty that he gave him, all people, nations, and languages, trembled and feared before him." Dan. 5:18, 19.

We have seen that the parts of the image in the dream of Nebuchadnezzar represented four great kingdoms which should bear rule over all the earth. The interpretation of the dream shows that it was given as a prophecy of the kingdom which the God of Heaven should set up. In other words, it was a prophecy of the restoration of the kingdom and throne of David, in the hands of him "whose right it is." The king in this kingdom, the seed of David, is also the Son of God; he is the seed of Abraham, in whom all nations of the earth were to be blessed; the seed of the woman who should bruise the head of the serpent, and restore what was lost by the sin of our first parents. This kingdom is the same as "the first dominion," spoken of by the prophet Micah,—dominion lost by Adam. Now it seems altogether fitting that, in the prophecy of the restoration of the kingdom of the whole earth, the way should be prepared for a full understanding of the subject, by setting forth the kingdoms upon the same territory, by which the order of succession could be made plain. In Dan. 2:44, the characteristics of the kingdom which the God of Heaven should set up are pointed out; but these are prefaced with a declaration concerning *the time* when the kingdom shall be set up. The exact time is not revealed, either here or elsewhere; only an approximation to the time is given.

The statement on this subject is very explicit: "In the days of these kings shall the God of Heaven set up a kingdom. In the days of what kings? Some authors have assumed that it meant the Roman kings; that is, that the kingdom of Heaven should be set up in the time of the Roman empire. But there are insuperable objections to this view, and not a single good reason can be adduced in its favour. In the preceding verses the immediate antecedent of the expression, "these kings," are the ten kings that shall arise out of the fourth kingdom. If "these kings" did not mean the ten kings, then there is nothing to indicate that it refers to the kings of Rome more than to the kings of Greece, of Persia, or of Babylon. It is an evident truth that each part of the image represents one kingdom or king. In no case is either of them referred to in the plural

number. The plural is not used until we come to the ten kings. Therefore if the ten kings are not referred to, it yet remains to be proved that it refers to the Roman kings rather than to those of the others of the four. Then it would mean that the God of Heaven would set up a kingdom somewhere in the days of the four kingdoms—say somewhere between the days of Nebuchadnezzar and Constantine. But such a construction is very far from the truth; it is based on an unreasonable supposition. It is not in harmony with the declaration of the prophecy. The immediate antecedent, and the only grammatical antecedent of the expression, “these kings,” are the ten kings which are represented by the feet and toes of the image.

And this view is verified by the prophecy in its description of the kingdom of Heaven. It must be evident to every reader that, as Babylon was represented by the head of gold, and Medo-Persia by the breast and arms of silver, and Grecia by the body of brass, and Rome by the legs of iron, and the ten kings by the feet and toes of the image, so the kingdom to be set up by the God of Heaven is represented by the stone. Every point in the image or in the dream, has a corresponding fact in the fulfilment. The stone was cut out without hands; and the kingdom was to be set up by the God of Heaven—not by human agency. The stone broke in pieces and destroyed the image in all its parts; so the kingdom was to break in pieces and consume all the kingdoms of the earth. The stone became a great mountain and filled the whole earth; so the kingdom was to succeed all kingdoms under the whole heaven. Dan. 7:13, 14, 27. The history of the image is a history of the successive powers of the whole earth. Persia succeeded Babylon; Grecia succeeded Persia; Rome succeeded Grecia; the ten kings succeeded the Roman empire; and the kingdom of the God of Heaven succeeds the ten kings. It utterly destroys all the kingdoms of the earth. To show more clearly the proof that lies in this order of succession, we will examine the several parts of the image as they are presented in the successive kingdoms, in the order of their time.

First we have the head of gold, Babylon, which we date from the time that Nebuchadnezzar took captive Jehoiakim, king of Judah, and carried him to Babylon, with part of the vessels of the house of God, and some of the children of Judah, including Daniel and his brethren. 2 Chron. 36:5-8; Dan. 1:1-7. This was before Christ 606. The dream of Nebuchadnezzar, and its interpretation, were given in the year B. C. 603, while this king was in the height of his power and glory. Therefore, at the time of this dream, only this much of the image—the head of gold—was fulfilled.

In the interpretation of the dream Daniel said to the king, “Thou art this head of gold. And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee.” It was another kingdom that was to arise after him,—not merely another *king*. As the kingdom which was to succeed Babylon did not appear for half a century after this time, of course only the head of gold had an existence in the days of Nebuchadnezzar. But when Belshazzar was slain—when Darius the Median took the kingdom (Dan. 5:30, 31),—the second part of the image appeared in view, namely, the breast and arms of silver. Then two of the great divisions of the image were fulfilled, and the fulfilled parts stood as shown on page 90: the head of gold and the breast and arms of silver.

Belshazzar was slain in the year B. C. 538; therefore from the time of the dream of Nebuchadnezzar to the rise of the second kingdom, was sixty-five years. And in this manner the first two parts of the image stood for more than two centuries.

The first two kingdoms are identified in the clearest manner in the scriptures already noticed. The kingdom of Nebuchadnezzar was expressly declared to be the head of gold (Daniel 2); and the Babylonian kingdom ceased at the death of



Belshazzar, and was succeeded by the kingdom of the Medes and Persians. Dan. 5:30, 31. These were represented by the gold and silver of the image. "And another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth," continued the prophet. And this third kingdom is as clearly revealed in the Scriptures as are the first and second. The first, Babylon, is named in Daniel 2; the second, Medo-Persia, is named in Daniel 8; and the third, Grecia, is also named in Daniel 8, as we have seen. The ram was said by the angel to be the



kings of Media and Persia. The kings of the Medes and Persians are counted one kingdom; that which came into power on the death of Belshazzar. The rough goat overpowered the ram, and became very great, and of him the angel said: "The

rough goat is the king [or kingdom, see verse 22] of Grecia."

It was in the year B. C. 331 that Alexander the Grecian overthrew the Persians, and thus brought into existence another part of the image. From that time three parts stood in view, as shown on the next page. Thus it stood until the fourth, or strong kingdom, arose, more than a century and a half afterwards.

We have before remarked that the Romans did not rise to supreme power by one great victory, as was the case with the Persians and the Grecians. The rise of the Roman empire was very peculiar in this respect. It conquered the world by de-

grees, never yielding what it had gained, and sometimes gaining by the fears of other people, who peacefully resigned themselves into the hands of those who were everywhere triumphant, rather than to risk the chance of a destructive warfare, which, they were assured, would terminate in their own overthrow. Nothing stood before the people who were so well represented by the legs of iron of the image of Nebuchadnezzar, and by the fourth beast of Daniel 7, which was dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly.

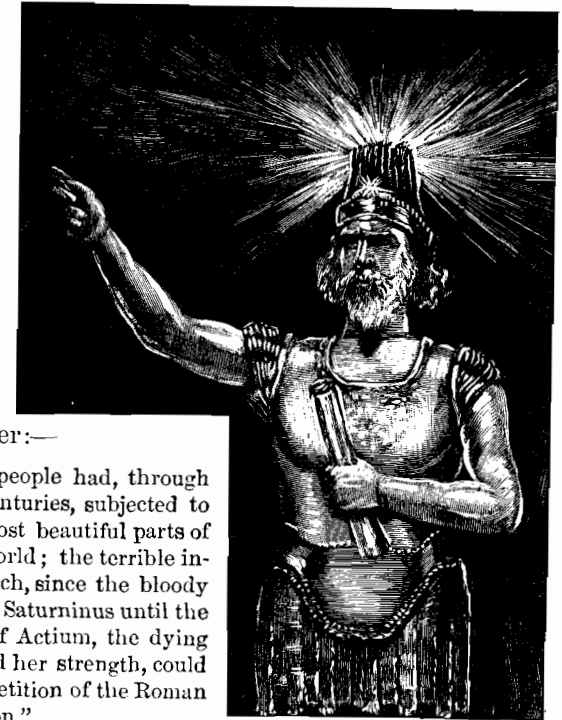
Becker's History of the World, Vol. IV., p. 1, speaks thus of the gradual rise of the Roman power:—

"The Roman people had, through the wars of four centuries, subjected to its authority the most beautiful parts of the then known world; the terrible internal wars, in which, since the bloody days of Glaucia and Saturninus until the time of the battle of Actium, the dying republic had wasted her strength, could not check the competition of the Roman world-wide dominion."

Gibbon presents a feature of the policy of the Romans in extending their dominion, as follows:—

"It was customary to tempt the protectors of besieged cities by the promise of more distinguished honors than they possessed in their native country. By such means they not only conquered their enemies, but turned them into honoured citizens, cemented and strengthened the empire wherever they went."

The Grecian empire was already divided into four kingdoms, which, however, were counted as so many parts of that



kingdom. See Dan. 7:6. But these divisions made it necessary for the Romans to carry on their conquests in many directions in order to bring all the world into subjection.

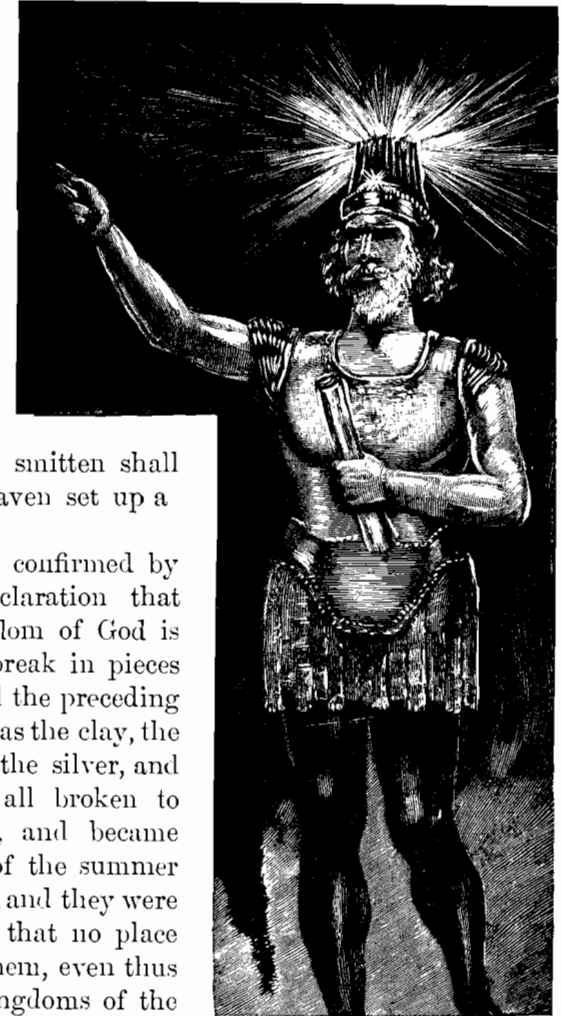
As we count the beginning of the empire of Nebuchadnezzar, not from its foundation, but from the time when the kingdom of Israel was entirely subverted and subjected to it, so we date the beginning of the Roman empire from the time when the Jews, restored by the united action of Cyrus, Darius, and Artaxerxes (Ezra 6:14), made a league with the Romans. Nations are brought prominently into prophecy when they are brought into close relations with the people of God. We therefore take the date of this league, B. C. 161, for the beginning of this empire as related to the prophecy. Here the tribes of Israel were merged into the Roman kingdom, and their land became a Roman province by their own consent. And from this time onward for several centuries after Christ, the image stood thus nearly complete, having the head, breast and arms, body, and legs of iron, in full view. And what is the next event in the order of the prophecy? A correct answer to this question is of the greatest importance, for upon it depends a true understanding of all the rest of the prophecy. As the introduction of one wrong figure into an extended calculation makes every part of the process wrong from that point, and renders a correct result impossible, so a mistake in one point in the interpretation of the whole prophecy, leads the inquirer in a wrong direction, and turns the interpretation of the whole prophecy into a wrong channel.

Many affirm, and with much apparent confidence, that the next event is the setting up of the everlasting kingdom by the God of Heaven. But this is not the order of the prophecy. That kingdom is represented by the stone; but when did the stone make its first appearance? Not when the legs of iron were developed, but when it smote the image upon the feet. But where were the feet at the time of the advent of the Son of God to this earth? Where were they on the day of Pentecost, when it is affirmed that the kingdom was set up? They were not in existence. Look at the representation of the image

as far as it was fulfilled up to nearly five hundred years this side of the beginning of the Christian era. The feet and toes did not make their appearance at all for nearly five centuries after the legs of iron were upon the stage of action. The stone did not smite the image upon the legs. Its first appearance was when it smote the image upon the feet; and this, in the interpretation, is explained as meaning that in the days of the kings thus smitten shall the God of Heaven set up a kingdom.

And this is confirmed by the further declaration that when the kingdom of God is set up, it shall break in pieces and consume all the preceding kingdoms; and as the clay, the iron, the brass, the silver, and the gold, were all broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors, and they were driven away so that no place was found for them, even thus were all the kingdoms of the earth to be consumed by the kingdom of the God of Heaven.

And the image was not fully

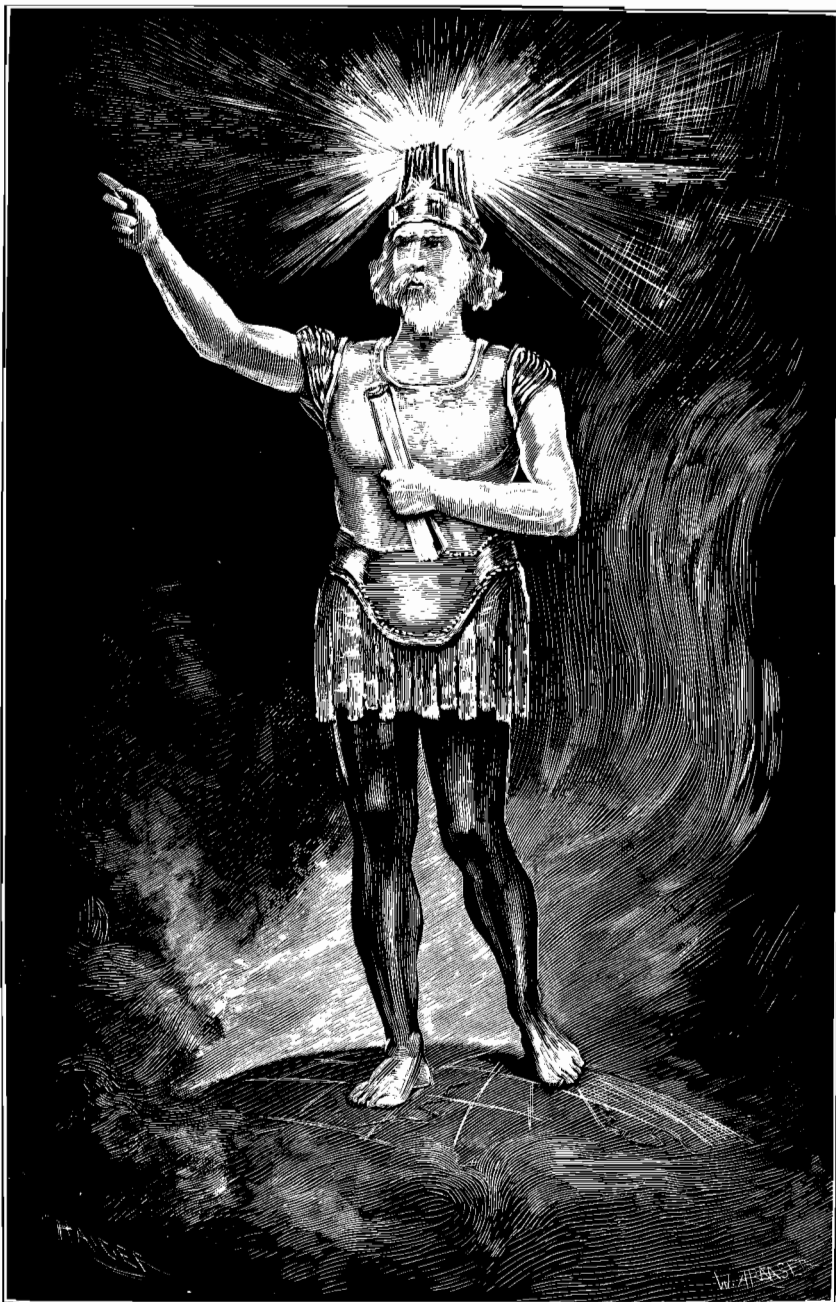


developed, as is shown, with the feet and toes standing upon the earth, until the Roman kingdom was divided into ten parts, as foretold in Daniel 2 and 7, which was not until near the close of the fifth century.

The difficulty with current interpretations of this prophecy is this: The setting up of the kingdom is confounded with the confirmation of the new covenant, or the preaching of the gospel by Christ and his apostles. But that view is very far from being the correct one. The preaching of the gospel is preparatory to the setting up of the kingdom. The gospel is intended to call out of the world and prepare a people who shall be fitted by grace to inherit the kingdom when it is set up. There is nothing in the description of the setting up of the kingdom which can reasonably be applied to the preaching of the gospel. Dr. Barnes clearly saw this difficulty, and stated it as follows:—

“Two inquiries at once meet us here, of somewhat difficult solution. The first is, how, if this is designed to apply to the kingdom of the Messiah, can the description be true? The language here would seem to imply some violent action, some positive crushing force; something like that which occurs in conquests when nations are subdued. Would it not appear from this that the kingdom here represented was to make its way by conquests in the same manner as the other kingdoms, rather than by a silent and peaceful influence? Is this language, in fact, applicable to the method in which the kingdom of Christ is to supplant all others?”

These questions are well calculated to cause the advocates of that theory solemnly to reflect upon the violence that they are doing to the plain language of the Scriptures. We confidently answer the questions put forth by the learned doctor in the affirmative; this language is, in fact, applicable to the manner in which the kingdom of Christ is to be introduced. But it is not at all applicable, as the doctor plainly says, to the theory that makes the kingdom set up by the mildness of the introduction of the gospel. There is not a text in all the Bible which speaks of the kingdom of God supplanting all other kingdoms by mild means; everywhere it is said to break and destroy them. This description can be true,—it is true,—and there is no necessity to force the language to make it mean



THE IMAGE OF NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S DREAM.

something entirely contrary to what it says. And this is by no means the only scripture that must be perverted to make that theory appear consistent. Turn to Ps. 2:7-9:—

“Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel.”

Strangely enough, this second psalm has been construed into a prophecy of the conversion of the world! What is the position of the Son during the preaching of the gospel? He is a priest, sitting at the right hand of his Father in Heaven. Heb. 8:1, 2. Now read Ps. 110:1, and there we learn the condition of the world when he leaves that position as a priest, as he prepares to return the second time to this world. “The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.” And thus the author of the book of Hebrews says he is seated at the right hand of the Father, from henceforth expecting till his enemies shall be put under his feet. When his priesthood is finished, then he will leave his position at the right hand of the Father; then his enemies will be put under his feet; then he will come to take vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the gospel. 2 Thess. 1:6-10. Then will the kings of the earth, the great men, the mighty men, try in vain to hide from the wrath of the Lamb, crying, “The great day of his wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?” Rev. 6:15-17. Then he will break them with a rod of iron, and dash them in pieces as a potter’s vessel; and then will Dan. 2:34 and 44 be literally fulfilled. Rev. 11:16-18 says that when it is announced that the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, then it is also said that the nations were angry, and the wrath of God is come, and the time to judge the dead, and to give reward to all his people, and to visit with destruction all those who corrupt the earth. And thus the question which appeared so perplexing to Dr. Barnes is easily solved, and the language of the prophecy is seen to apply naturally to the facts in the case. There is nothing in Daniel

2, when most literally construed, at all inconsistent with the other scriptures; and more might be quoted of like import.

We come down three centuries this side of our Saviour's advent. In Northern Europe there were great numbers of people, restless for new countries in which to settle, or to conquer for spoil. The empire of the Romans was losing its former strength and power. Describing these people of the North who were seeking new countries to inhabit, Machiavelli said:—

“These colonists have destroyed the Roman Empire, by the error of the emperors, who, having abandoned Rome, the true seat of the empire, to dwell at Constantinople, have, by this conduct, rendered the western part more feeble, not being able so well to defend it.” *History of Florence*, Book 1., p. 2.

A certain writer said that when Constantine removed his capital to Constantinople, he virtually left the seat of the Cæsars to the bishops of Rome. One thing is certain: the power of the emperors over Rome decreased in exactly the proportion that the power of the bishops increased. A history of the “Papal Supremacy,” published in Dublin in 1810, says: “It is most certain that if the emperors had continued to reside at Rome, the bishops never would have usurped a supremacy.” This is reasonable; it is conclusive. Early in the fourth century, the Northern Barbarians, as they have been called, made inroads upon some of the fairest portions of the empire, in Central Europe and along the Rhine. And before the close of the fifth century the empire was broken up into ten kingdoms, as before noticed. The Ostrogoths took possession of Italy, and ruled in Rome, until they were driven out by the army of Justinian, under Belisarius, in 538.

Now we take our stand near the beginning of the sixth century, and we behold these fragments of the Roman empire, exactly as pointed out by Daniel in the interpretation of the dream of Nebuchadnezzar. And there the image stands complete, as represented in the engraving. Not before this time could the stone smite the image, for it was to smite it upon the feet, and nowhere else. The stone is not introduced into the prophecy before that time.

What then? Was the kingdom set up at that time? It

was not. In this and other prophecies, where the history of the world is briefly outlined, the ultimate—the setting up of the kingdom of God—is introduced, without in each instance, filling up all the particulars. As prophecy follows prophecy, we find more and more of these particulars inserted, but the ultimate is always the same,—the establishment of the kingdom of God; the restoration of what was lost in the fall, closes up this world's history, and introduces the eternal state.

In Dan. 2:47, speaking of the ten kingdoms, it is said: “They shall mingle themselves with the seed of men; but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with miry clay.” These words plainly indicate that after these kingdoms arise, some time will elapse before they are smitten and destroyed; some time is allotted to their mingling and undergoing changes. How long this time would be, the second chapter of Daniel gives no intimation; it might be very short for all that we can learn in this chapter. But Daniel 7 gives additional facts in the history of the kingdoms of the world, and describes the coming up of another power after the rise of the ten kings, before whom three of the ten were plucked up. And it is shown that this other power wears out the saints, and prevails against them a long time before the kingdom is given to the saints of the Most High. The order of these events is marked out very plainly in Dan. 7:21, 22.

“I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the Most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom.”

We have seen that the ten kingdoms were not fully developed until the latter part of the fifth century after Christ. The horn that rose after them, which became stronger than they, and that persecuted the saints, was not fully established until the sixth century. For many centuries he wore out the saints; he is still opposing himself to the free worship of God; still declaring that it is his fixed principle not to tolerate freedom of conscience toward God where he has the power to put down every religion that opposes itself unto him. And still the

saints are waiting; judgment has not yet been given to them; and the time has not yet come for them to possess the kingdom.

The stone has not yet smitten the image. The kingdoms of this world still occupy their places; they are not yet broken and driven away as the chaff; but they are fast filling up the cups of their iniquity. Pride and the love of worldly power fill their hearts. Their greatest ambition seems to be the making of abundant provision for shedding human blood. A slight pretext is sufficient for them to engage in the most unjust and destructive enterprises, if an extension of territory or an increase of power is to be the result; yes, the most mischievous schemes are often carried out to serve the interest of a party. Where is the exception to these declarations? Alas for the world! Peace has flown away; equity and the love of their fellow-men are not found among the great of the earth. And among the professed people of God, with very small exceptions, formality has usurped the place of the power of godliness, and the fear of God is taught by the precept of men. Surely, God will yet visit for these things.



CHAPTER IX.

HEIRS OF THE KINGDOM.

“And 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.” Dan. 2: 44.

HERE is presented a strong contrast between this kingdom and its predecessors. The Babylonian empire was mighty and magnificent. Its capital has never been equalled by any city on the earth. But it became exceedingly wicked, and the same Being who gave this dominion to Nebuchadnezzar, declared that it should be utterly destroyed. Belshazzar and his thousand lords, and his hosts of mighty ones, laughed to scorn the efforts of their invaders; they mocked and insulted the true and living God. But the sure word of prophecy was spoken against Babylon, and that word has never failed—it cannot fail. To show how wonderfully the prophecies of God are fulfilled, we will give quotations from two prophets in regard to the destruction of Babylon.

Isaiah spoke of this in the year 712 B. C. This was just about one hundred years before Nebuchadnezzar overthrew Jerusalem, when Babylon was the rising power of the earth. It was one hundred and seventy years before its conquest by Cyrus. Thus said the prophet:—

“And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees’ excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation; neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there. But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there. And the wild beasts of the island shall cry in their desolate houses, and dragons in their pleasant palaces; and her time is near to come, and her days shall not be prolonged.” Isa. 13: 19-22.

EVANGELISTIC LECTURES

Foreword

These sermons were delivered in an evangelistic campaign conducted in Des Moines, Iowa, during September, October, November and December of 1946. The first sermon was given on Sunday night, September 8.

The sermons were mechanically recorded at the meetings, and are reproduced in this volume exactly as spoken to the audience with scarcely any editing. No attempt has been made to place them in precise literary form. One of the objectives of this book was to reproduce the full length sermon in the free evangelistic style with its directness and appeal.

The typewritten material for the printer has of necessity been hastily prepared, and it is inevitable that some errors in construction would creep in. The doctrines presented, however, stand as being in strict accordance with the Scriptures of Truth. In some instances, certain texts, as quoted from memory by the speaker, may not be exactly word for word as recorded in the Bible, or with the same punctuation, but there is no deviation from the declaration or apparent meaning of the Scriptures.

A brief word on the plan followed in these evangelistic meetings will be in order. During the first two weeks, sermons were delivered on Sunday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday nights. Beginning with the third week a central Bible class was conducted at the meeting place with the interested people each Thursday night. From the third week to the tenth week inclusive, sermons were presented on Sunday, Tuesday and Friday nights, and on Saturday afternoons at three o'clock beginning with the fifth Saturday. From the eleventh week to the fifteenth week inclusive, the Bible class was conducted on Tuesday nights, and sermons were presented on Sunday and Friday nights and Saturday afternoons.

Above each sermon title we have indicated the number of each sermon in the series. Beneath the sermon title is a notation designating at what point in the series it was presented. This will enable any worker to discover the plan followed in the order of subjects.

Special Bible lessons were mimeographed on punched note sheets. These were given to all who attended the weekly Bible class. They were made with blank lines after certain statements of Bible doctrine, on which the people recorded the respective Scripture references as the Bible lessons were presented. The first Bible lesson was mechanically recorded as it was given to the class, and is reproduced in this volume. It will convey to workers, some concrete idea as to how the Bible class was conducted.

In connection with these sermons, twenty-two appropriate after meeting talks were presented. These were recorded mechanically and may be published in a separate volume, and made available, if there is sufficient demand for them. A postal card has been inserted in each sermon volume, which the purchaser may use to register his desire for the additional material.

We send these forth with the earnest prayer that God will use these sermons, to establish many interested souls in the present truth, and, that many of the heralds of the third angel's message will find herein help, inspiration and guidance in presenting God's message for these closing days.

Yours in Him,
J. L. SHULER.

1. Peace or Pieces?

As we watch the swift moving events of our day, certain great questions arise in our minds. What does this new Atomic Age hold in store for man? Will the atomic bomb blast civilization into oblivion? What about the riddle of Russia? Will Russia absorb and rule all Europe? Can Stalin succeed where Hitler failed? World Peace! World security! How will it ever be achieved? What lies ahead for our world? What kind of a world tomorrow?

EVANGELISTIC LECTURES

I don't know what is coming. You don't know what is coming. But there is a God in heaven Who does know. He knows the end from the very beginning, and from ancient times the things which are not yet done. And it has pleased that great God of heaven Who knows the future, to reveal in this Bible some of the events of the future, Which we need to know. It is to some of these items that we direct your attention tonight.

In 2 Peter 1:19 the apostle Peter says, "We have a more sure word of prophecy whereunto you do well that you take heed as unto a light that shines in a dark place." I have placed this text on a piece of muslin, that you may see for yourself what the Word of God says. Notice how it reads: "We have a more sure word of prophecy whereunto you do well that you take heed as unto a light that shines in a dark place." Just as the headlights of your automobile show the road ahead, the prophecies of the Bible show what is coming before it happens.

The course of this world's history for the past 2,500 years has been exactly in accordance with a prophetic outline found in the second chapter of the book of Daniel. In Daniel 2:28 I read, "There is a God in heaven that reveals secrets, and makes known to the King Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days." By means of a wonderful dream God revealed to Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, what would happen in the latter days.

Now I have something very remarkable to bring to you. I want You to notice the striking device that God used to portray the future history of nations. (At this juncture a large wooden figure of a man was unveiled on the stage, beside the speaker's desk.) I want You to notice that what you see here on the stage is just What I am going to read from God's holy Word. I am turning now to Daniel 2:31-35.

"Thou, O King, saw, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible. This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, his legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay. Thou saw till a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. 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: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth."

A gigantic statue of a man made of different metal segments was shown to Nebuchadnezzar in his dream. This man's head was of fine gold, his breast and arms of silver, his thighs of brass, his legs of iron, his feet part of iron and Part of clay. Beginning with the most precious metal, gold, there was a uniform depreciation to finally terminate with the most base of all, clay. There you have, if you please, evolution in the reverse. A stone cut from the mountain without hands, smote this man upon his feet and dashed him to pieces. The wind from that concussion blew the fragments into oblivion. Then the stone expanded and expanded and expanded until it filled the entire world.

What a mysterious dream! What can it mean? As soon as Daniel told the king his dream, he proceeded to explain the meaning of the gold, the silver, the brass, the iron, the clay and the stone. Now follow me and you will see.

I am turning now to Daniel 2:38, reading the last sentence in the verse. "Thou art this head of gold." The pronoun "thou" refers to Nebuchadnezzar that mighty king of ancient Babylon. To Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, the prophet says, "Thou art this head of gold." O how plain that is! It shows us that this head of gold represented or symbolized the empire of Babylon over which Nebuchadnezzar was then ruling.

Now notice, he goes on to explain the meaning of the breast and arms of silver. I am reading now from Daniel 2:39, the first part of the verse. "And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee." Daniel makes it plain that this breast and arms of silver represented a second world empire that would follow Babylon upon the stage of world dominion. History tells us that this second world empire was Medo-Persia. So the breast and arms of silver symbolized Persia.

Next he explains the third part of the man. I am reading now Daniel 2:39, the last part of the verse. "Another third kingdom of brass shall bear rule over all the earth." How plain! He tells us in so many words that this third part of the man is a third world empire that will succeed or follow the second one. History shows that the third world empire that followed Persia was the empire of Greece.

Then notice how he explains the meaning of the legs of iron. - I am reading Daniel 2:40. "The fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron." How plain! It shows that these legs of iron symbolized the fourth world empire that would follow the third. History shows that the fourth world empire that followed Greece was the great empire of Rome.

Mark this. Every school boy in Des Moines can testify to the accuracy of this prophecy in the Bible. Every school boy in Des Moines can tell you that Persia followed Babylon, that, Greece followed Persia, and that Rome followed Greece. There it is, as plain as two and two make four. The head of gold, Babylon. The breast and arms of silver, Persia. The sides of brass, Greece. The legs of iron, Rome. The four metals: the gold, the silver, the brass, and the iron symbolized four world empires that were to arise one after another along the pathway of history, as the scroll of the future would be unrolled in the days to come from Daniel's time.

What about the feet and toes? What about this mixture of iron and clay? In the feet and the toes? The Word of God tells. I read Daniel 2:41. "Whereas thou saw the feet and toes, part of potters' clay and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided." Daniel tells us in so many words that the mixture of iron and clay represented the breaking up of the fourth world empire into smaller kingdoms.

Other prophecies of the Bible even foretold the exact number of those divisions. Daniel 7:24 indicates that this fourth empire was to be divided into ten parts. Did this come true? It certainly did. During the fourth and fifth centuries of the Christian era, ten distinct independent nations established themselves within the boundaries of Western Rome.

I have a chart here which gives a list of these ten kingdoms of Western Rome. These ten kingdoms were as follows: the Anglo-Saxons, the Burgundians, the Franks, the Alemanni, the Visigoths, the Suevi, the Lombards, the Heruli, the Ostrogoths, and the Vandals. Seven of those nations are found on the map of Europe today. The Anglo-Saxons are what we now call the English; the Franks are the French people of France; the Alemanni constitute Germany; the Burgundians are that little nation of

EVANGELISTIC LECTURES

Switzerland; the Visigoths constitute Spain; the Suevi are that little country of Portugal and the Lombards are of Italy. These seven nations of England, France, Germany, Spain, Switzerland, Portugal and Italy find their place in this prophecy of Daniel 2 as the toes of this composite metal man.

Now follow me closely. Here's where the prophecy touches our day. Here is where it touches 1946, if you please. When we deal with England, Germany, France, Spain, Portugal, Italy and Switzerland, we are dealing with Western Europe of 1946. Here is the verse that defeated Hitler. Did you know that there was a verse in the Bible that actually defeated Hitler? I am going to read that verse in just a moment.

Many people are worried about Russia. They think Russia is going to absorb and rule all Europe. Here is a verse that forever precludes Russia from gaining permanent domination over all Europe. I can tell you on the basis of this Holy Word, that if Russia grows to be ten times as strong as she is now, she'll never be able to absorb and permanently hold all Europe under her sway. Here it is. I hope you have your notebook to record all these Scriptural references.

I read Daniel 2:43. "Whereas thou saw the iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men; but they shall not cleave" (referring to these divided nations of Western Europe) "they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay." The prophecy shows that these divided nations of England, France, Germany, Spain, Switzerland, Portugal, and Italy will never be welded together into a world empire, as they once were under the Caesars of Rome. You know, I know, everybody knows that you cannot weld iron and clay together. Iron will not cohere with clay. These nations of western Europe cannot be welded into one world empire as they were back in the days of the Caesars when Rome ruled the world.

Notice those seven famous words of prophecy. Here they are: "They shall not cleave one to another." There are the seven words that defeated Napoleon Bonaparte. In the 19th century Napoleon swept over nation after nation of Europe. It looked as though Napoleon would rule all of Europe. It looked as though no nation or combination of nations could stand against his onslaught. In 1811 Napoleon said, "In five years I shall be the master of the world." But God had said that what Napoleon was trying to do, to make Europe into a world empire, could not be done, even as iron will not cohere with clay. "They shall not cleave one to another."

So his dreams of world empire vanished in smoke on the field of Waterloo with Napoleon fleeing for his life. He bowed his head in defeat and said, "God Almighty is too much for me." Yes, God Almighty was too much for Napoleon. More than twenty-three hundred years before Napoleon was ever born, this prophecy declared that those nations of western Europe could not be welded into a world empire to be ruled by one man. "They shall not cleave one to another."

Those are the seven words that deprived Germany of victory in World War I and again, in World War II. In 1914 William the II of Germany, Kaiser of Germany, started out to make himself the ruler of all Europe. It seemed for a time that no power could stand against the German army. But the Word of God was on record in Daniel 2:43 that those nations of Western Europe could not be welded into a world empire to be ruled by one man. Consequently, the Kaiser's dream of a world empire turned into a nightmare with him fleeing into Holland and spending the rest of his days in exile sawing wood at Doorn, Holland.

In 1939 Mr. Hitler started out to make himself the ruler of all Europe. When Hitler struck at Poland in 1938 he knew England was not prepared for war. He didn't think she would come to the defence of Poland. But Mr. Hitler forgot a number of things. He forgot that the "English Bulldog" will fight whether he is ready or not. He forgot that America lies over the Atlantic Ocean, and that millions of brave Americans would rise as one man to defend the fairest flag ever flown in the breeze--the Stars and Stripes forever. He forgot God. The Word of God had declared that these nations of Western Europe could not be welded permanently into a world empire by any man.

My friends, as Hitler advanced, occupying vast portions of Europe, the Word of God was at stake. The Bible was on record that those divided nations could not be fused into a world empire to be ruled by one man no matter what his name, Hitler or anybody else. Thus it was that Mr. Hitler's dream of world empire turned into a nightmare of suicide amid ashes and ruins of his own capital city, Berlin.

Notice this carefully, don't miss it. The outcome of World War I and the outcome of World War II confirm this Book as the Word of God. This prophecy of Daniel 2:43, "They shall not cleave one to another," stands true amid all the over turnings and upheavals among the nations of Western Europe for the past fourteen centuries. Time and again the mightiest men who ever trod the soil of Western Europe have tried to weld those nations into one great world empire as it was in the days of the Caesars. But everyone has failed. All the armies they could muster have not been able to break the force of these seven words of God's Holy Writ. "They shall not cleave one to another."

Listen to me. One verse of God's Bible is stronger than all the armies in the world. Jesus Christ says, "The Scripture cannot be broken!" "Heaven and earth," says He, "shall pass away, but my Word shall not pass away."

I wonder if there is an infidel in this audience tonight. Please be -especially free to invite all infidels and sceptics to these American Bible Institute meetings. Many will find faith in God in these lectures. If there is an infidel here tonight, I have a question for you, brother. Here it is. Think it through. How could any man of himself in the days of ancient Babylon look ahead for 2,500 years in advance as Daniel did, and accurately foretell that beginning with Babylon there would be only four world empires, and that the fourth would be divided into segments, and remain divided in spite of all man's attempts to reunite them. Come on, infidel, what do you say?

I'll tell you what you'll have to say. You will say, "Mr. Shuler, the fact is, that there isn't any man of himself who could look ahead 2,500 years." That is right. Man cannot look ahead even through tomorrow. This good Book says, "Boast not thyself against tomorrow, for thou knows not what a day may bring forth." You'll have to say, Mr. Infidel, that no man of himself could look ahead and prophesy accurately for 2,500 years in advance. Doesn't the fact, then, that Daniel did accurately foretell the future 2,500 years in advance, prove that this prophecy is inspired by that great God Who alone knows the future? This Book foretells things. You can't do that. I can't do that. The fact that his Book foretells things before they happen proves that this book was

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inspired by that great God Who alone knows the future. Infidelity is silenced; the Bible is vindicated by the unerring fulfilment of its predictions.

The most thrilling and breath-taking part of the dream of the future was when this stone smote the image on his feet and dashed it to pieces and the wind blew the fragments into oblivion. This represents what will happen in the great battle of Armageddon. This is the most interesting item in all the prophecy. It is the most important item for you to understand. In fact it is one of the biggest prophetic subjects in all the Bible. It is such a big subject that I am devoting my entire lecture next Sunday night here at the KRNT Radio theatre to "The Impending, World-ending Battle of Armageddon as Prophesied in the Bible." I will show from the Bible next Sunday night, when it will come, where it will be fought, who will win, and who is the one man who will rule the entire world after that battle. You must plan to be present to hear that subject.

Tonight I promised to tell you what lies ahead for our world. What kind of a world tomorrow? What will be the final outcome of these unsettled conditions that we see today? Well, here it is in Daniel 2:44. "In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and 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."

On the authority of this blessed Word I can tell you that the final outcome of this world situation will be the return of the Lord Jesus Christ to this earth to reconstruct this world into a new, perfect world where there will be no more sorrow, no more sickness, no more trouble, no more wars and no more death. In Revelation 21:1 the prophet says, "I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away." In Revelation 21:4 he declares that God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain.

This is the answer to the question, "How and when will lasting peace be established?" It will be in the kingdom of God. Here's the answer to the question. Will the atomic bomb blow the world to pieces? The answer is, "No." This world will not be blown to pieces by atomic bombs. This world in due time is to be transformed under the creative hand of the Lord Jesus Christ into a new earth.

Wouldn't you like to know how this sin-sick, tear-smitten, war-dazed world will be made into a sinless, happy paradise? Yes. Don't fail then to be at the Hoyt Sherman Place on Tuesday night and you will hear. Ever since Jesus Christ lived among men 1900 years ago, millions of people have been praying, "Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth; as it is in heaven!" This prayer has never been answered yet. The will of God is not being done in this earth today as it is done by the angels in heaven. But that prayer will be answered. Wouldn't you like to know how and when the will of God will be done on this earth, as it is in heaven? Be at the Hoyt Sherman Place Tuesday night when I speak on "Heaven" and you will get the answer from the Word of God. You will see also the mystery of this stone that demolished the image and then expanded and expanded and expanded until it filled the entire world.

I can deal with only a few highlights of the prophecy in this lecture. This is why you want to be sure to mark that stub in the program folder so that we may mail you a free printed copy of this lecture that gives everything I say and much more that I cannot say for lack of time.

Do you know that everything in this prophecy has been fulfilled except the last item, the smiting of the man to pieces? Yes, that is exactly the way it is. I want you to notice where we are in the stream of time.

I have a long chart here that contains an outline of this prophecy of Daniel 2. The head of gold was Babylon, ruling the world from BC 606 to BC 538. In 538 BC Cyrus overthrew Babylon. Then Persia began to rule the world. The breast and arms of silver was Persia ruling the world from BC 538 to 331 BC. In 331 BC Alexander overthrew the Persian empire in the battle of Arbela. Then Greece ruled the world. These sides of brass represented Greece ruling the world from 331 BC to 168 BC. In BC 168 Rome took over Greece. Then Rome ruled the world from 168 years before the birth of Christ until 476 years after Christ when the Roman empire in the west fell.

Rome ruled the world when Jesus was born. If you have ever heard the Christmas story you have heard this verse, "It came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed." Caesar Augustus, a Roman Emperor, ruled the world when Jesus was born. Notice that the course of history was in the legs of iron when Jesus was born, nineteen centuries ago. Then between A. D. 351 and A. D. 483 the Roman Empire in the west was divided into ten kingdoms, as indicated by the feet and the toes being part of clay and part of iron. England, France, Germany, Spain, Portugal, Italy and Switzerland are the remnants of these divisions in our day.

Now, what next? Where are we today? Let us look at God's time-table. We are not in the head of gold. Babylon passed away as a world empire in B. C. 538. We are not in the breast and arms of silver. Persia passed away as a world empire in 331 B. C. Where are we today? Not in the days of Greece. Greece as a world empire passed away in B. C. 168 when Rome took over Greece. Where are we today? Not in the days when Rome ruled the world. The Roman empire fell in the West in 476 A. D. Where are we today? We are in the very last division of the composite metal man. The course of history is almost run. We are on the last lap of the journey. The next act, according to the prophecy, is the return of Jesus as "King of Kings and Lord of Lords."

"Down in the feet of iron and of clay,
Weak and divided soon to pass away,
What will the next great glorious drama be?
Christ and His coming, and eternity."

Friends, I wonder if I have really made this prophecy plain. I've tried my best to make it clear. I believe everyone here is ready to signify by the uplifted hand that I have made the prophecy plain and that according to my explanation we must be on the verge of the last mighty act. How many believe that I have made this prophecy plain and according to my explanation we must be

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on the verge of that last mighty act? Will you please signify it by lifting your hand just now? Thank you. It looks as though I see every hand. I'm glad that you recognize the truthfulness and the import of this prophecy.

Friends, this brings everyone, hearers and preacher, face to face with the most vital issue of all our lives. Are we ready to enter Christ's everlasting kingdom? Are we prepared to meet Jesus Christ the coming King? There isn't anything in our lives more important than for us to make sure of an eternal happy home in Christ's kingdom.

A home in His kingdom is actually worth more than all the gold, the silver, the diamonds, the stocks, the bonds, the farms, and the houses in the world. "What will it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" If you should fail to prepare for a home in Christ's kingdom, it would be better for you to have never been born. However, every soul may have an eternal happy home in Christ's kingdom if he wants it. "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shall be saved." All you need to do is to surrender your heart and life to the blessed Jesus and let Him live in you a life of obedience day by day.

I think tonight of one of those thieves who was crucified when Jesus was nailed to the cross for our sins. This man lived all his life in sin. He was now face to face with death. He knew he wasn't ready to die. In his dying hour he turned to Jesus and said, "Lord, remember me when Thou comes in Thy kingdom." O, how graciously Jesus responded to his request for salvation, and gave him the immediate assurance that he would be with Him in paradise.

Friend of mine, Jesus is ready to do the same thing for you if you will but look to Him. "Look unto Me and be you saved, all you ends of the earth." Don't you want Jesus to remember you when He comes in His kingdom? I'm sure you do. I've never met anybody in all my travels who didn't want Jesus to remember him with an eternal happy home in His kingdom. I believe everyone here tonight desires to raise his hand as a silent prayer to Jesus Christ. "Lord, remember me when Thou comes in Thy kingdom." How many of you with me, want to send up a silent prayer tonight to Jesus, "Lord remember me when Thou comes in Thy kingdom?" Would you lift the hand just now as a silent prayer to Jesus? Thank you. Let us look to Him now.

(Praying.) O Lord Jesus, we thank Thee that Thou art our Saviour. O we thank Thee for Thy great love in giving Thyself upon the cross for our sins. And now, Jesus, we have raised our hands to Thee as a silent prayer. Jesus, Thou hast heard the prayer. Thou hast seen every hand that has been uplifted here tonight. And O, blessed Christ, precious Saviour, undertake for every man and woman, boy and girl in this great audience. O, Lord, we thank Thee that Thou hast heard our prayer and that Thou wilt remember us with an eternal happy home when Thou comes in Thy kingdom, and we will give Thee all the praise in the name of Jesus, Amen.

2. What and Where Is Heaven?

(An outline setting forth the leading items, which are brought forth from the Scriptures in this lecture, was placed in the hands of each hearer, before the lecture began. Some of these propositions on the outline had blank lines after them, on which the hearers were requested to fill in certain Bible references. These propositions from the outline and the Bible references involved, appear in the transcript of this lecture.)

A mail carrier was making his way from house to house. Suddenly a voice called out, "Got anything for me today?" Looking up he saw it was the man who lived in the second house ahead. He replied, "Yes, I have. I have a letter for you that is postmarked Honolulu." "Fine," said the man, "that must be from my wealthy brother who lives in Honolulu." And sure enough when he opened the letter it was from his wealthy brother, inviting him to come and spend the rest of his life on his lovely estate near Honolulu.

In this letter he told about the lovely mansion that he had built for him next to his own palatial home. He told of the lovely flower **gardens laid out all** around the home. He described the wonderful fruit trees laden with the most luscious fruits. Then he added, "My plan is, that if you are willing to accept my offer, I'll come with my plane to bring you and your family to this lovely home, and I will share all of my fortune with you."

Do you think he was interested in such an offer? He certainly was. He accepted it, double quick. O, how he looked for that day when that plane would arrive to take him and his family to that lovely mansion. I can hear some of you say, "O! I wish I could be that lucky." Listen, this blessed Bible, the Word of God, puts into the hands of everyone in this auditorium an offer that is far better than this. Here it is, John 14:1-3. And listen, this is an offer from your brother. You have a wealthy brother in heaven. His name is Jesus. He is your elder Brother. He is the friend that sticks closer than a brother.

Shortly before He left this world He told His disciples that He would come again to receive His people unto Himself and to take them to glorious mansions in heaven. Notice, as I read, John 14:1-3.

"Let not your heart be troubled: you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there you may be also."

Notice, Jesus says, "I go to prepare a place for you." Have you ever wondered what that place is that Jesus has prepared for His own? Wouldn't you like to know what that place is like and where it is located? And how you may be sure of having a home in that fair and happy land? Your Bible tells,

Hebrews 11:16 shows that this place that Jesus Christ has prepared is the New Jerusalem, the city of God, in the heaven of heavens. Jesus said in John 14:3, "I go to prepare a place." Then Hebrews 11:16 tells us, He has prepared a city for His people. In

gence of superior order, and as such commands the respect and reverence of all who acknowledge it.

Prophecy, then, should be especially studied as that portion of God's word well calculated to light up the future before us, when it would otherwise be dark and gloomy. It is well represented as a "lamp to our feet and a light to our path." Ps. 119:105. As a lamp carried in the hand lights up the path of the traveler by night, revealing every snare and pitfall in the way, so the prophecies may be made the revealer of future events, which, if unperceived till we come upon them, would cause us to stumble in the way of life. They are truly "a light that shineth in a dark place."

"The two great ends of prophecy are, to excite expectation before the event, and then to confirm the truth by a striking and unequivocal fulfillment; and it is sufficient answer to the allegation of the obscurity of the prophecies of Scriptures, that they have abundantly accomplished those objects, among the most intelligent and investigating, as well as among the simple and unlearned in all ages."—*Watson's Dictionary, art. Prophecy.*

"Indeed, God would do nothing (especially respecting Israel) without revealing his secret purpose to his servants the prophets; who, being thus informed of what was about to come to pass, must declare it to the people, that they might take warning and act accordingly. . . . The grand outlines of the plan of divine Providence, and the events of history, to this day, and to the end of the world, were made known to the prophets of Israel and Judah."—*Dr. A. Clarke, on Amos 3:4-8.*

"Predictive prophecy is at once a part and an evidence of revelation. . . . As an evidence, fulfilled prophecy is as satisfactory as anything can be; for who can know the future except the Ruler who disposes future events?"—*Smith's Dictionary of the Bible, art. Use of Prophecy.*

"The objection which has been raised to Scripture prophecy, from its supposed obscurity, has no solid foundation. . . . It is a language which is definite and not equivocal in its meaning, and as easily mastered as the language of poetry, by attentive persons."—*Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge, art. Prophecy.*

THE METALLIC IMAGE.

"This is the dream; and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king." Dan. 2:36.

The vision of the great image as recorded in the second chapter of Daniel, gives a prophetic outline of

the rise and fall of the four principal monarchies of earth; namely, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Grecia, and Rome. The prophet in interpreting the dream expressly declared that Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom was symbolized by the head of gold, and that three other kingdoms should follow in their order, as symbolized by the breast and arms of silver, the belly and thighs of brass, and the legs of iron. But the feet and toes of the image were to be an admixture of iron and clay, showing a divided state of the last empire.

It has been well said by Mr. Horne, in the compendium of his "Introduction to the Study of the Scriptures," p. 147, that "A prophecy is demonstrated to be fulfilled when we can prove from unimpeachable authority that the event has actually taken place, precisely according to the manner in which it was foretold." History is agreed that the four kingdoms mentioned did arise, and in the order indicated by the prophecy. Commentators have gathered these evidences, and embellished their productions with statements in harmony with what history has given, as witness the following testimonies:—

THE HEAD OF GOLD.

"The Chaldean monarchy, over which Nebuchadnezzar was the only king of great renown, was represented in the vision by the head of gold."—*Scott, Dan. 2:38.*

"Daniel explains this golden head of the Babylonian empire (in which the Assyrian was now absorbed)."—*Cottage Bible, notes on Dan. 2:31-49.*

"The meaning is, that the Babylonian empire, as it existed under him, in its relation to the kingdoms which should succeed, was like the head of gold seen in the image as compared with the inferior metals."—*Albert Barnes, note on verse 38.*

THE BREAST AND ARMS OF SILVER.

"The Medo-Persian empire, which properly began under Darius the Mede, allowing him to be the same with Cyaxares, son of Astyages, and uncle to Cyrus the Great, son of Cambyses. He first fought under his uncle Cyaxares; defeated Neriglissar, king of the Assyrians, and Cræsus, king of the Lydians; and by the capture of Babylon, B. C. 538, terminated the Chaldean empire. On the death

of his uncle Cyaxares, B. C. 536, he became sole governor of the Medes and Persians, and thus established a potent empire on the ruins of that of the Chaldeans." — *Clarke, on Dan. 2.*

"The breast and the two arms of silver of the image represented that monarchy which succeeded to the Chaldean, and this was the kingdom of the Medes and Persians." — *Scott, on Dan. 2 : 39.*

"The breast and arms of silver are said to indicate a second empire, still rich and splendid, but inferior to the former, which can mean no other than the Persian or Medo-Persian empire, of which Cyrus was properly the founder." — *Cottage Bible, notes on Dan. 2 : 31-49.*

"The empire of the Medes and Persians, whose union was denoted by the breast and two arms of silver, was established on the ruins of that of the Chaldeans on the capture of Babylon by Cyrus, B. C. 538." — *Bagster.*

"The kingdom here referred to was undoubtedly the Medo-Persian, established by Cyrus." — *Barnes's Notes on Dan. 2 : 39.*

SIDES OF BRASS.

"The Macedonian, or Greek empire, founded by Alexander the Great. He subdued Greece, penetrated into Asia, took Tyre, reduced Egypt, overthrew Darius Codomannus at Arbela, Oct. 2, A. M. 3673, B. C. 331, and thus terminated the Persian monarchy. He crossed the Caucasus, and subdued Hyrcania, and penetrated India as far as the Ganges; and having conquered all the countries that lay between the Adriatic Sea and this river, the Ganges, he died A. M. 3681, B. C. 323, and after his death, his empire became divided among his generals, Cassander, Lysimachus, Ptolemy, and Seleucus." — *Clarke, on Dan. 2.*

"There can be no reasonable doubt that by this third kingdom is denoted the empire founded by Alexander the Great — the Macedonian empire." — *Barnes.*

"The third kingdom, represented by the belly and thighs of the image formed of brass, must be that of the Macedonians, or Grecians, which succeeded to the Persian monarchy." — *Scott, on Dan. 2 : 39.*

"The third empire is described by a belly (or trunk) and thighs of brass, which very appositely represent the Macedonian empire, founded by Alexander the Great; the Greeks being commonly called brazen-coated, from wearing brazen armor." — *Cottage Bible, notes on Dan. 2 : 31-49.*

THE IRON AND CLAY OF THE IMAGE.

"These verses evidently describe the Roman empire as succeeding to that of the Macedonians." — *Scott, on Dan. 2 : 40-43.*

"The fourth, or Roman empire, was represented by the legs of iron and the feet of iron mixed with clay." — *Cottage Bible.*

"The Roman empire, which conquered nearly the whole world." — *Bagster.*

"The common opinion has been, that the reference is to the Roman empire." — *Barnes.*

"This image represented the four kingdoms that should successively bear rule in the earth, and influence the affairs of the Jewish Church; by *one* image, because *all of one and the same spirit and genius*, and all more or less against the Church. It was the same power, only lodged in four several nations, the two former lying east of Judea, the two latter, west." — *Comprehensive Commentary, on Dan. 2 : 31-45.*

"The images of gold, or silver, or brass, that might serve to represent the nations or their kings, were successively broken by the iron monarchy of Rome." — *Gibbon's Rome, chap. 38, par. 43.*

THE FOUR GREAT BEASTS.

"These great beasts, which are four, are four kings, which shall arise out of the earth." Dan. 7 : 17.

In repeating the prophetic history of the four great monarchies with which God's ancient people were connected, under the symbol of beasts, it is evident that the design was to reveal characteristics which could not well be symbolized by the metals employed in the image. It was necessary to show these additional features in order definitely to locate the nations symbolized by the former prophecy. It may be asked, Why not have the first symbols of such a character as to show all the features necessary, and save repetition of the subject? The answer is easy. God would impress upon the Babylonian king the power of his truth. The king being a worshiper of images, nothing would so quickly and completely arrest his attention as the view of an image.

So far as that design went, the image fully met it, and the king's attention was called to the God of Daniel. But in order that future generations might have correct data from which to apply the prophecies having a fulfillment in their time, God gave line upon line, and precept upon precept, that unerring judgment might be exercised by the careful student of prophecy, while making an application of its symbols.

23. World Powers in Prophecy

“IN the annals of human history, the growth of nations, the rise and fall of empires, appear as dependent on the will and prowess of man. The shaping of events seems, to a great degree, to be determined by his power, ambition, or caprice. But in the word of God the curtain is drawn aside, and we behold, behind, above, and ‘through all the play and counter play of human interest and power and passions, the agencies of the All-merciful One, silently, patiently working out the counsels of His own will.” - Ed 173.

SELECTED REFERENCES

PK 491-502; Ed 177-182; [6] Pages 102-112. [3] Pages 19-25.

Memorize. Daniel 7:27.

A. THE FAILURE OF FALSE RELIGIONS.

Daniel 2:1-13.

“The magicians practiced magic, using the term in its bad sense; that is they employed all the superstitious rites and ceremonies of fortune tellers, and casters of nativities and the like. Astrologers were men who pretended to foretell events by the study of the stars. The science or the superstition, of astrology was extensively cultivated by the Eastern nations of antiquity. Sorcerers were such as pretended to hold communication with the dead. In this sense, we believe, the word “sorcerer” is always used in the Scriptures. The Chaldeans here mentioned were a sect of philosophers similar to the magicians and astrologers, who made natural science and divinations their study. All these sects or professions abounded in Babylon.”-U. Smith, in “Daniel and the Revelation,” pages 29, 30.

“There was therefore nothing unjust in Nebuchadnezzar’s demand that they should make known his dream. When they declared [verse 11] that none but the gods whose dwelling was not with flesh could make known the king’s matter.... he saw that he and all his people were being made the victims of deception.” - Id., pages 31, 32.

B. A PRAYER-BAND VICTORY.

Daniel 2:14,30.

“God would give the heathen systems of the Chaldeans the first chance. He would let them try and ignominiously fail, and confess their utter incompetency, even under the penalty of death, that they might be the better prepared to acknowledge His intervention when He should finally manifest His power in behalf of His captive servants, and for the honor of His name.”-Id., pages 32, 33.

“Daniel at once went to his three companions, and asked them to unite with him in desiring mercy of the God of heaven concerning this secret. He could have prayed alone, and doubtless would have been heard. But then, as now, in the union of God’s people there is prevailing power. The promise of the accomplishment of that which is asked, is to the two or three who shall agree concerning it. (Matt. 18:19, 20.)” - Id., page 33.

“Daniel immediately offered up praise to God for His gracious dealing with them; and while his prayer is not preserved, his responsive thanksgiving is fully recorded. . . .

“Although the matter was revealed to Daniel, he did not take honor to himself as though it were by his prayers alone that the answer had been obtained, but he immediately associated his companions with him, and acknowledged it to be as much an answer to their prayers as it was to his own. It was, said he, ‘what we desired of Thee,’ and Thou has made it ‘known to us.’” - Id., pages 33, 35.

Daniel at the very first improved the opportunity to make known the true God-true to his call to witness.

C. THE DREAM ITSELF REVEALED.

Daniel 2:31,35.

“How admirably adapted was this representation to convey a great and needful truth to the mind of Nebuchadnezzar.... How could this be more impressively done than by an image whose head was of gold? Below this head was a body composed of inferior metals descending in value until they reached their basest

form in the feet and toes of iron mingled with miry clay. The whole was then dashed to pieces, and made like the empty chaff. It was finally blown away where no place could be found for it, after which something durable and of heavenly worth occupied its place.”-Id., pages 38, 39.

“In one night God revealed the history of over twenty five hundred years, and what the human historian requires volumes to explain is given in fifteen verses.”-S. N. Haskell, in “The Story of Daniel the Prophet,” page 33.

D. THE INTERPRETATION.

Daniel 2:36-45.

1. The head of gold (verses 36,38). BABYLON, 612 BC to the overthrow of Assyria, to 538 BC.

“It was the golden kingdom of a golden age. Babylon, its metropolis, towered to a height never reached by any of its successors. Situated in the garden of the East; laid out in a perfect square said to be sixty miles in circumference, fifteen miles on each side. Surrounded by a wall estimated to have been two hundred to three hundred feet high and eighty-seven feet thick, with a moat, or ditch, around this of equal cubic capacity with the wall itself. Laid out in luxuriant pleasure grounds and gardens, interspersed with magnificent dwellings-this city, with its sixty miles of moat, its sixty miles of outer wall, its thirty miles of river wall through its center, its gates of solid brass, its hanging gardens rising terrace above terrace till they equaled in height the walls themselves, its temple of Belus. Three miles in circumference, its two royal palaces, one three and a half and the other eight miles in circumference. With its subterranean tunnel under the river Euphrates connecting these two palaces, its perfect arrangement for convenience, ornament, and defense, and its unlimited resources-this city, containing in itself many things which were themselves wonders of the world, was itself another and still mightier wonder.” - Id., pages 42, 43.

“In their feeling of security lay the source of their danger. Cyrus resolved to accomplish by stratagem what he could not effect by force. Learning of the approach of an annual festival in which the whole city would be given up to mirth and revelry, he fixed upon that day as the time to carry his purpose into execution. There was no entrance for him into that city unless he could find it where the river Euphrates entered and emerged, as it passed under the walls. He resolved to make the channel of the river his highway into the stronghold of his enemy.... When the water was turned into the lake, the river soon became shallow enough to ford, and the soldiers followed its channel into the heart of the city of Babylon.” - Id., pages 45, 47.

“Many a tongue would have spread wild alarm through the city had the dark forms of armed foes been seen stealthily treading their way to the citadel of their supposed security....

“The soldiers of Cyrus first made known their presence in the city by falling upon the royal guards in the vestibule of the palace of the king. Belshazzar soon became aware of the cause of the disturbance, and died fighting for his life. This feast of Belshazzar is described in the fifth chapter of Daniel, and the scene closes with the simple record, ‘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.’” - Id., page 48.

2. Breast and arms of silver (verse 39). MEDO-PERSIA, 538-331 BC. Battle of Arbela.

“The succeeding kingdom, Medo-Persia, answered to the breast and arms of silver of the great image. It was to be inferior to the preceding kingdom. In what respect inferior? Not in power, for it conquered Babylon.... But it was inferior in wealth, luxury, and magnificence.

“Viewed from a Scriptural standpoint, the principal event under the Babylonian Empire was the captivity of the children of Israel; under the Medo-Persian kingdom it was the restoration of Israel to their own land. At the taking of Babylon, Cyrus, as an act of courtesy, assigned the first place in the kingdom to his uncle, Darius [the Mede], in 538 BC. But two years afterward Darius died, leaving Cyrus sole monarch of the empire.” - Id., page 51.

3. Belly and thighs of brass (verse 39). GRECIA, 331-168 BC. Battle of Pydna.

“In the ever-changing political kaleidoscope, Grecia came into the field of vision, to be for a time the all-absorbing object of attention, as the third of what are called the universal empires of the earth.

“After the battle [of Arbela] which decided the fate of the empire, Darius [Codomannus] endeavored to rally the shattered remnants of his army, and make a stand for his kingdom and his rights. But . . . Alexander pursued him on the wings of the wind. . . .

“When Alexander arrived, he beheld only the lifeless form of the Persian king. . . . Now, brutally slain by the hand of traitors, he lay a bloody corpse in a rude cart. The sight of the melancholy spectacle

drew tears from the eyes of even Alexander, familiar though he was with all the horrible vicissitudes and bloody scenes of war. . . .

“When Darius died, Alexander saw the field cleared of his last formidable foe. Thenceforward he could spend his time in his own manner.... He encouraged such excessive drinking among his followers that on one occasion twenty of them died as the result of their carousal. At length, having sat through one long drinking spree, he was invited to another.... He was seized with a violent fever, of which he died eleven days later, June 13, 323 BC. While yet he stood only at the threshold of mature life, in the thirty-second year of his age.”--Id., pages 52-54.

4. Legs of iron (verse 40). ROME, 168 BC. to 476 AD., Dethronement of Romulus Augustulus.

Gibbon calls it “the iron monarchy of Rome,” and says: “The empire of the Romans filled the world. And when that empire fell into the hands of a single person, the world became a safe and dreary prison for his enemies. To resist was fatal; and it was impossible to fly. “-”History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire,” chap. 38, general observations; chap. 3, par. 37.

5. Feet and toes; clay and iron (verses 40,42). TEN KINGDOMS.

“These ten kingdoms came into existence in the territory of the Roman Empire between the years 351 and 476 A. D. They were the result of the barbarian invasions of those times. The kingdoms were as follows: The Alemanni (Germany), the Franks (France), the Burgundians (Switzerland), the Suevi (Portugal), the Vandals (who have been destroyed), the Anglo-Saxons (England), the Visigoths (Spain), the Ostrogoths (who have been destroyed), the Heruli (who also have been destroyed), and the Lombards (Italy).”-C. B. Haynes, in “Our Lord’s Return,” page 22.

6. “Iron is not mixed with clay” (verse 43).

Attempts to unite the nations of Europe by conquest: “In the eighth century, Charlemagne made an attempt to do what God had said should not be done. He tried to bring the kingdoms of Europe under his dominion and unite them in a great Christian empire. But, just as God foretold, he failed. During the sixteenth century a similar attempt was made by Charles V, but he failed. During the latter part of the seventeenth and the first part of the eighteenth centuries Louis XIV tried to bring nearly all Europe under his dominion. But God had said more than twenty centuries before that, ‘They shall not cleave one to another,’ and Louis XIV failed. . . .

“Perhaps the greatest, and what appeared for a time to be the most successful, attempt to bring all the divided parts of the ancient Roman Empire under one rule, was made during the first part of the nineteenth century by Napoleon Bonaparte. But all the wisdom of this brilliant military genius, all his shrewdness and ingenuity, all his great knowledge of military tactics, and all the strength of his mighty legions, was not sufficient to break the power of seven short words of Scripture.” - Id., pages 23, 24.

7. “Mingle . . . the seed of men” (verse 43).

Attempts to unite the nations of Europe by marriage: The intricate relationships existing between the reigning houses of Europe, at the beginning of the World War in 1914, are briefly as follows: “The Empress Dowager Dagmar of Russia and Queen Mother Alexandra of England were sisters. . . . The kings of Norway and Denmark were brothers. . . . The king of England and the rulers of Russia and Greece were first cousins of the kings of Norway and Denmark, and also first cousins of each other, all five being grandsons of Christian IX of Denmark. The oldest son of the late Queen Victoria of England became Edward VII of England. The oldest daughter of Queen Victoria, Princess Victoria, married Emperor Frederick of Germany, and became the mother of the Emperor William of Germany. Thus the king of England and the emperor of Germany were first cousins, both being grandchildren of Queen Victoria. . . . The queen of Greece and the emperor of Germany were first cousins of the king of England.” - Id., pages 25-27. The czarina of Russia, the queen of Norway, and the queen of Greece were all first cousins, being grandchildren of Queen Victoria, while the queen of Norway and the king of England were brother and sister.

8. “The stone” (verse 44, 45). KINGDOM OF GOD, eternity.

“Inasmuch as every specification of Daniel’s prophecy, except the last, has already been fulfilled, and the record stands as the history of the world. The assurance is made doubly sure that the last specification will be fulfilled, and that the God of heaven will soon set up His kingdom. The prayer which

has been repeated through the centuries, ‘Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven,’ is about to be answered. The message to every soul is, ‘Get right with God,’ ‘prepare to meet thy God.’ “-”Armageddon and the Kingdom of Peace,” page 73.

KEY TEXTS

Daniel 2:21,22,35,41,44,45

THOUGHT QUESTIONS

1. What was the condition of Babylon at the time of the captivity of Judah?
2. How had Daniel and his companions been prepared for this the supreme moment of their lives?
3. In what ways was God’s hand seen in the immediate events of Daniel 2?
4. What seems to you to have been the chief cause of the fall of Babylon?
5. What divisions were represented by the iron and clay? Can there ever be a united Europe?

TEST QUESTIONS

Answer With Ample Bible Proof

1. What were the chief characteristics of each world empire, as indicated by the image?
2. What were the approximate dates of the rise and fall of each of the world powers?
3. What were the nations represented by the toes? Give their ancient and modern names.
4. How will Europe finally come to its end?
5. What are the characteristics represented as being those of the final world power?

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5. What specific injunctions are given to the readers of this prophecy to understand its meaning?
“Blessed is he that reads, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein.” Revelation 1:3.
6. What example of study did the prophets themselves set?
“Of which salvation the Prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you.” 1 Peter 1: 10. (See also verse 11.)
Daniel, in captivity in Babylon, seeking to understand God’s -purpose for Israel, betook himself to the study of the prophet Jeremiah and “understood by books” that the period of desolation of Jerusalem was almost expired. (Daniel 9:2)
7. Is human wisdom adequate for an understanding of prophecy?
“But the natural man received not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.” 1 Corinthians 2: 14.
Just as divine aid is necessary to unveil the future (Daniel 2: 20, 22, 23), so spiritual understanding is required for the true interpretation of that which has been revealed. (Daniel 5: 12, 14.)
8. Were the prophecies necessarily to be fully understood from the time they were given?
a. Often they were not understood at all when first given. “And I heard, but I understood not.” Daniel 12: 8.
b. As the time of 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 fulfillment understanding is complete. “But 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. “And now I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is 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.
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?
“But 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.)
11. In what should the people of God in every generation be established?
“Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though you know them, and be established in the Present truth.” 2 Peter 1: 12.

God’s Blue-Print of History

1. THROUGH whom was the first detailed panoramic prophecy of world history given?
“And 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 call?
“Then the king commanded to call the magicians, and the astrologers, and the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans, for to show the king his dreams.” Daniel 2: 2.
3. What confession were they compelled to make?
“And 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.” Daniel 2: 11.,
4. By whom were the dream and its interpretation made known to the king?
“Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a night vision.” Daniel 2: 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

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shall be in the latter days.” Daniel 2: 28.

6. What did the king see in his dream?

A great image comprised of diverse metals. Read Daniel 2:31-35.

7. Who was represented by the head of gold?

“Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven has given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. Thou art this head of gold.” Daniel 2:37, 38. (See also Isaiah 14: 4, 6.)

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; 111, 1-7), 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 of his kingdom, what rude shock did he receive?

“And 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?

“And 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’?

“And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, said the Lord.” Jeremiah 25: 12.

George Rawlinson states that the Babylonian empire was founded by Nabopolassar in 625 BC. Its total duration, therefore, was eighty-eight years.

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 Plaister 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?

“And this is the writing that was written, MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN. This is the interpretation of the thing: MENE; God has 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.” Daniel 5: 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.” Daniel 5: 30, 31.

It was in 538 BC, in the reign of Nebuchadnezzar’s grandson and sixty-eight years after the utterance of Jeremiah’s 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?

“This image’s breast and his arms of silver.” Daniel 2: 32.

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. More significant still, silver was the standard of exchange in the days of this empire, just 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?

“And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee.” Daniel 2:39.

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

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

“And another third kingdom of brass shall bear rule over all the earth.” Daniel 2: 39.

We are not left to search the pages of secular history in order to discover this third world power, for again Inspiration provides us with the necessary clue. In the eighth chapter of Daniel the conflict between the second and third empires (which resulted in the downfall of the former in the decisive battle of

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Arbela, 331 BC) is dealt with at considerable length, and the ram and the he-goat are specifically designated by the angel in his interpretation as the kings of Medo-Persia and of Greece. Greece is thus identified as the third empire and corresponds to the brazen portion of the image.

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 head-dresses 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 subdued all things: and as iron that breaks all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise.” Daniel 2: 40.

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 very 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, blood-thirstiness, and brutality, which were all abundantly manifest in the Roman campaigns. “The arms of the republic, sometimes vanquished in battle, always victorious in war, advanced with rapid steps to the Euphrates, the Danube, the Rhine, and the ocean. And the images of gold, or silver, or brass, that might serve to represent the nations and their kings, were successively broken by the iron monarchy of Rome.” - Edward Gibbon in “The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire,” Volume III, page 634.

Gas masks and other defense measures have been devised because nations have discovered new methods of destroying each other.

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?

“And whereas thou saw the feet and toes, part of potters’ 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 just ten divisions corresponding significantly to the ten toes, namely the Alemanni, 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.” Daniel 2: 42.

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.” Daniel 2: 43.

Charles V of Spain in the sixteenth century, Louis XIV of France in the seventeenth century, Napoleon in the nineteenth century, and Wilhelm II of Germany in the early twentieth century all sought to dominate Europe. But all failed signally to achieve their object. “History records many attempts to impose domination on Europe, but all those attempts have sooner or later terminated in disaster for those who made them.” - Lord Halifax.

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

“They shall mingle themselves with the seed of men.” Daniel 2: 43.

The reference here is evidently to alliances effected by intermarriage between the descendants of the various European sovereigns. But these matrimonial alliances proved as transient as those secured by

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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 unsuccessfully endeavored to curb the menace of aggressive nationalism?

By international leagues. Speaking in Italy, President Wilson declared in words strikingly reminiscent of the word of prophecy: "We shall have to find a new cement to hold the nations together." The cement he suggested was the League of Nations, and he confidently believed that the time had come when the peoples of the world would come together and form a universal brotherhood of nations. The second World War has shown that he was wrong.

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." Daniel 2: 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 has made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter." Daniel 2: 45.

9. Where else is the expression "without hands" used, and what does it signify?

Divine intervention. "For 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. "For 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. "But 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 corner Stone, a sure foundation: he that believes shall not make haste." Isaiah 28: 16.

c. Stone of judgment. "And He shall be for a sanctuary; but for a Stone of stumbling and for a Rock of offence 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?

"And 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?

A very little acquaintance with Bible prophecy is sufficient to show, without doubt, 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. "I 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?

"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

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kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.” Daniel 2: 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.” Daniel 2: 35.

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

“The dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure.” Daniel 2: 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.

The Bible speaks, when we follow God’s command, “Preach the Word.”

PART 19-WORLD DESTINY

Anti Christ 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.)

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, MedoPersia, 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.” Daniel 7: 7, 24.

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.” Daniel 7:8. “Another shall arise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first.” Daniel 7:24.

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 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.” Daniel 7:20.

Its rise could not have been better described. From being merely one of the outposts of early Christianity, so exalted did the “little” horn become, that the greatest of earthly kings have stooped to kiss the toe of its supreme pontiff. “In a few centuries the pope had become in theory, and to a certain extent in practice, the high priest, censor, judge, and divine monarch of Christendom.” -H. G. Wells in “Outline of History,” page 526.

5. Against whom would this new and diverse power oppose itself?

“I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots.” Daniel 7:8. “Before whom three fell.” Daniel 7:20. “He shall subdue three kings.” Daniel 7: 24.

The facts of history again testify to the accuracy of the prophecy. The first barbarian king of Rome, Odoacer of the Heruli, antagonized the Catholics by his acceptance of the heretic Arian faith and his attempt to interfere with a papal election. The pope invoked the aid of Zeno, the Eastern emperor, who

Babylon, the meaning of the great metallic image that the king saw in his trouble some and forgotten dream.

26. When God Unites the Nations

IT WAS some six centuries before Christ, more than 2,500 years ago. A noted monarch retired to his regal couch for a night's rest from the busy cares of world dominion. Would the mighty empire that he had built stand the test of time, or would it break and crumble into pieces as Egypt and Assyria had done? Such were the thoughts coursing through his mind as he fell asleep.

A MONARCH DREAMS

Then he dreamed. So startling and significant did his night vision seem that "his spirit was troubled, and his sleep brake from him." Daniel 2:1. Strangely, he could not recall the details of the dream.

Deeply disturbed, he called together the leading wise men of his court. "Bring back my dream and give to me its meaning, and you shall live in honor. Fail, and you shall die; you shall be cut in pieces." Such was the import of his words to men who professed ability to interpret dreams.

Caught unprepared by this stern test of their false pretensions, the wise men cried, "There is not a man upon the earth that can show the king's matter. . . . And 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." Daniel 2:10, 11. Sensing the shame of their science falsely so called, Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, decreed death for these deceptive mediums of mystery and knowledge.

THE HAND OF GOD INTERVENES

Among the learned men of Babylon were some newly come Daniel and three other young Jews. Some few years before the dream episode Nebuchadnezzar had taken the city of Jerusalem, made the land subject, and carried away choice Jewish captives to Babylon. Among them were Daniel and his fellows. At this time they had finished the king's court school, and were henceforth to be reckoned among the wise men.

Daniel sought and received consent to speak with the king, who granted him time to see what he and his companions could do about the mysterious dream. That night the young men prayed. "Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a night vision." Verse 19.

Through proper arrangement Daniel was brought again into the presence of the earthly ruler of the world. Before Daniel could say a word the anxious king asked, "Art you able to make known unto me the dream which I have seen, and the interpretation thereof?" Verse 26.

The next two verses state, "Daniel answered in the presence of the king, and said, The secret which the king bath demanded cannot the wise men, the astrologers, the magicians, the soothsayers, show unto the king; but there is a God in heaven that reveals secrets."

Down the long, long corridor of time come ringing and echoing these words of faith, "There is a God in heaven." To the king upon his throne, to the beggar in the street, and to each and every one of us this God would reveal Himself.

Before telling the king the content of his dream Daniel pointed out two things. First he said, "As for me, this secret is not revealed to me for any wisdom that I have more than any living." Verse 30. He took no credit to himself. Yet he added, "But for their sakes that shall make known the interpretation to the king." Thus did Daniel courteously remind the king that, though his decree had sentenced Jewish captives to death along with other men, God's hand was intervening. God gave the king a dream. He gave His servants the interpretation. They gave it to the king. Their lives were saved. God's eye is on His people.

"For their sakes" He stepped in.
"Truth forever on the scaffold,
Wrong forever on the throne-
Yet that scaffold sways the future,
And, behind the dim unknown,

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Stands God within the shadows,
Keeping watch above His own.”

GOD SETS UP AND REMOVES KINGS

In his prayer Daniel said, “Blessed be the name of God: . . . he changes the times and the seasons: he removes kings, and sets up kings.” Verses 20, 21.

“The power exercised by every ruler on earth is Heaven-imparted; and upon his use of the powers thus bestowed, his success depends. To each the word of the divine Watcher is, ‘I girded you, though you has not known me.’ Isaiah 45:5. . . . And ‘Break off thy sins by righteousness, and your iniquities by showing mercy to the poor; if it may be a lengthening of thy tranquillity.’ Daniel 4:27.” - Prophets and Kings, p. 502.

Said the Holy Watcher from heaven to Nebuchadnezzar: “That the living may know that the most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomsoever he will, and sets up over it the basest of men.” Daniel 4:17.

In the annals of human history, the growth of nations, the rise and fall of empires, appear as if dependent on the will and prowess of man. . . . But in the word of God the curtain is drawn aside, and we behold, above, behind, and through all the play and counter play of human interest and power and passions, the agencies of the All-merciful One, silently, patiently working out the counsels of His own will.”-Ibid., pp. 499, 500.

Daniel made it clear that Nebuchadnezzar’s dream had to do with the future—the very future with which the king’s thoughts had been playing when he lay down to rest on his golden bed and dreamed. Said Daniel, “There is a God in heaven that reveals secrets, and makes known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days.... As for you, O king, thy thoughts came into thy mind upon thy bed, what should come to pass hereafter: and he that reveals secrets makes known to you what shall come to pass . . . that you might know the thoughts of thy heart.” Daniel 2:28-30.

GOD ROLLS BACK THE CURTAIN OF THE FUTURE (Amos 3:7)

Daniel now turns to the king’s dream. “Thou, O king, saw, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before you; and the form thereof was terrible. This image’s head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, his legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay. Thou saw till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. 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: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.” Verses 31-35.

The king listened. To himself he said, “That indeed is the very subject of my dream.” He leaned forward with breathless interest, that he might now discover the meaning of the dream.

These were the first words he heard, “This is the dream; and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king. Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given you a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. . . . Thou art this head of gold.” Verses 36-38.

How delightful must these words have been to the troubled king! Like pleasant music they fell upon his ears and tended to set at ease the tension of his restless heart. Was he not the God recognized ruler of Babylon, the monarchy of the world? Had not the prophet of God just so said? What now of the future?

BABYLON TO PASS AWAY

These and a multitude of thoughts swarmed within his mind as Daniel calmly and courteously spoke without interruption. Said he, “And after you shall arise another kingdom inferior to you.” Verse 39.

What? Was his mighty golden empire to fall to an inferior power, as silver is inferior to gold? Upon the walls of his house there had been inscribed: “For the astonishment of men I have built this house. These portals for the astonishment of multitudes of people with beauty I adorned.” “Thus I completely made strong the defenses of Babylon.” “May it last forever.” Large numbers of bricks dug from Babylonian ruins bear the name and title of Nebuchadnezzar.

Babylon was the first of what history knows as the four great monarchies. Her glorious capital city was laid out in a perfect square. It is believed to have been ten miles in circumference, with walls more than

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three hundred feet high and wide enough on top for five chariots to race abreast.

“Gleaming in the sun, its lofty palaces and temple towers stabbed the sky above the towering walls and thrilled the approaching traveler while he was yet miles away.”

Through the city flowed the river Euphrates, flanked by great inner walls and giant gates. The streets of the city were broad and straight, crossing one another at right angles. The city was laid out in luxuriant pleasure grounds and dotted with magnificent dwellings, royal palaces, and glorious temples. Here were the famous Hanging Gardens, one of the seven wonders of the ancient world.

But Babylon, the “head of gold,” was to pass away. Yes, “Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees’ excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah.” Isaiah 13:19. She was to remain but heaps of ruins, covered with the drifting sands of the centuries, a home only for owls, doleful creatures, and beasts of the wild. A place of uninhabited desolation, where even the roving Arab would disdain to pitch his tent or the shepherd to make fold there. Babylon’s time “is near to come, and her days shall not be prolonged.” Verse 22. (See also Jeremiah 51:6, 7)

So “Darius the Median took the kingdom.” Daniel 5:31. Cyrus the Persian led the successful attack in taking Babylon 538 years before Christ, about sixty-five years after Daniel’s prophecy. Medo-Persia, the breast and arms of silver, ruled. God had said to Nebuchadnezzar, “After you shall arise another kingdom.” Medo-Persia was that kingdom (Isaiah 13:17).

MEDO-PERSIA AND GREECE TO RISE AND FALL

This silver kingdom of Medo-Persia was in supremacy for some two hundred years. But it was also to give way to yet “another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth.” Daniel 2:39. This third universal kingdom was that of Greece. How well do we all remember the maps of these nations as we studied them in high school. A full reading of the eighth chapter of Daniel will reveal that Greece was to follow Medo-Persia. Alexander the Great reached the deciding point over the Medo-Persians at the famous Battle of Arbela, 331 BC, or 207 years after Babylon’s fall.

In five short years Alexander, through swift movement and audacious attack day or night, swept to victory at the age of twenty-five years. Seven years later he was dead. At the age of thirty-two, like a meteor in the night, his light suddenly went out. So swiftly does earthly glory fade! The decisive Battle of Pydna, 168 BC, is often given as a definite point in Greece’s decline. The brass kingdom was through.

ROME TO RULE

Daniel continues his brief and graphic picture of the future, while Nebuchadnezzar listens in amazement to this thumbnail sketch of world history.

“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.

Iron Rome was to rule. “The iron monarchy of Rome” came to break in pieces, bruise, and subdue for nearly six hundred years. Jesus was born in this era and was crucified under Rome’s authority.

Hippolytus, who lived from about AD 170 to AD 236, wrote, “Rejoice blessed Daniel! You has not been in error. . . . Already the iron rules.” He spoke of Rome. The Catholic Encyclopedia says, “Hippolytus was the most important theologian and the most prolific religious writer of the Roman Church in the pre Constantine era.”

Gibbon says, “The images of gold, or silver, or brass, that might serve to represent the nations and their kings, were successively broken by the iron monarchy of Rome.”

ROME WAS TO BE DIVIDED

With simple boldness Daniel presented to the king the rise and fall and division of great empires yet unborn, as though he were giving a demonstration of addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division on a blackboard. The king listened in astonishment.

Four of the five sections of the great historical image have passed away in accordance with Daniel’s prophecy. We are now living in the feet of iron mixed with clay.

“And whereas you saw the feet and toes, part of potters’ clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as you saw the iron mixed with

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miry clay. 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.” Daniel 2:41, 42.

Rome was to be divided. Here is something new. Another world kingdom was not to follow. Division was to come. Rome’s mighty empire began to decay. Luxury, poverty, vice, and weakness, like white ants, burrowed from within. The Germanic tribes invaded from without, and the Roman kingdom was divided as the prophecy foretold.

Ridpath says, “At last the seals were loosed, and the barbaric tornado was poured out of the North. Through the Alpine passes came the rushing cohort of warriors, each with the rage of Scythia in his stomach and the icicles of the Baltic in his beard. The great hulk of Rome tottered, fell, and lay dead on the earth, like the stump of Dagon.” - History of the World, vol. 3, pp. 28, 29.

The ten main divisions, corresponding to the ten toes, are given as the Alamanni (Germans), the Franks (French), the Burgundians (Swiss), the Suevi (Portuguese), the Saxons (English), the Visigoths (Spanish), the Lombards (Italians), the Heruli, the Vandals and the Ostrogoths. These tribes made victorious invasion as early as AD 351. History gives AD 476 as the date of Rome’s fall, when Emperor Augustulus (Little Augustus) was deposed and the barbarian kingdoms ruled.

The modern nations of Europe developed from these barbarian tribes of the old Roman Empire. Some were to be strong and some weak. Thus it has been and is.

CAN THE NATIONS BE UNITED BY MAN?

Daniel now presents to Nebuchadnezzar the long and tragic efforts of men to unite Europe and bring order to the world. Continuing the figure of the feet and toes of clay and iron, he says, “And whereas you 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.” Daniel 2:43.

Thus does the Bible declare with the utmost simplicity and clarity that the nations of our time cannot be permanently united by human effort.

Six notable characters have stepped upon the stage of history and sought to demonstrate that the kingdoms of Europe could be successfully ruled by one throne or under one federation. In 1939 the sixth tried it.

The first and one of the most notable was Charles the Great, or Charlemagne. He began to rule at the age of twenty-nine. Fourteen years before his death while Charlemagne was kneeling in worship at Rome on Christmas Day, AD 800, the pope placed upon his head the crown of the Holy Roman Empire.

Two strong factors were in his favor: First, the church desired the unity of Europe and it approved of him as emperor. Second, an enemy religious group, the Mohammedans, were ever menacing Europe from beyond the Pyrenees in Spain. Charlemagne’s illustrious grandfather, Charles Martel, had defeated them at the Battle of Tours sixty-eight years before.

But Charlemagne died, weary from nearly half a century of fighting all over Europe. He could not make the clay and iron fuse together.

Charles V, emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, and Louis XIV, the vain Frenchman, we shall pass by as two more failures.

Then comes that master man of destiny—an Italian by blood, a Corsican by birth, a Frenchman by nationality—Napoleon Bonaparte!

Born in 1769, he grew to a stature of only five feet two inches. Thin-faced, sallow-complexioned, and round-shouldered, he yet developed one of the most remarkably rapid, clear-thinking, and tireless brains ever to function in a human cranium. His personality was utterly overmastering, his mind gazing out through eyes that crushed the strongest.

At the age of twenty-six, in 1796, two days before his marriage to Josephine, he was appointed head of one third of the armies of France. Two days after his marriage he departed for the war front. Passionate love messages went back to Josephine from every station as he set forth to “tear the heart out of glory.” And he did.

Three years later, 1799, he overturned the government of France and seized control. Then he set out to unite Europe—to give it one ruler, one code, one court of appeal, one coinage.” This is a story of sixteen years of unparalleled military action by a man who loved power as a musician loves his violin, and whose capacity for work seemed to know no limit.

For purposes of political unity he divorced Josephine to marry Marie Louise, of Austria. He

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established the Napoleonic order in Europe, placing his kin in leadership and arranging marriages to cement the states together, a method the Bible prophesied would be used. "They shall mingle themselves with the seed of men." Daniel 2:43.

But after his disastrous Russian campaign in 1812, his European federation soon fell like a house of flimsy cards. At Waterloo, June 18, 1815, just as the sun went down, the sun of his career set. He was through. "God Almighty has been too much for me," he said.

The Kaiser of Germany found the same thing to be true in World War I.

Adolph Hitler almost wrecked the world in his effort to unite Europe and set up a German rule to last for 1,000 years.

After World War I the League of Nations sought some sort of "cleaving together" of the nations, but with dismal failure.

After World War II came the United Nations and new talk of a United States of Europe. The ugly specter of Communism arose to challenge the best efforts of great men to unite anything.

No present ruler, no set of rulers, no league of nations of any kind, no federation of religions, can ever unite Europe and the world permanently. "They shall not cleave one to another."

WHEN GOD UNITES THE NATIONS

At this point in the narrative King Nebuchadnezzar must have been puzzled indeed. Daniel's dark forecast rang the death knell of Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome. Then it predicted the new situation—a division of Rome's kingdom and the utter inability of men to form any successful union of the nations. Glowing dreams would end in shattered hopes. Would the future of modern man be one of never-ending disunity?

Daniel gave the answer to the king's thoughts: "And in the days of these kings [the kingdoms of divided Europe] shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed. And the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever. Forasmuch as you 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: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure." Daniel 2:44, 45.

SIX SIGNIFICANT STATEMENTS

Six vital truths stand out in this basic prophecy of the Bible:

1. There is a God in heaven.
2. He has servants on earth.
3. His hand is in earthly affairs.
4. He predicted the history of the world from Babylon, through Medo-Persia and Greece to Rome and her breaking into ten main divisions.
5. He forecast man's failure, in every case, to truly unite the nations of the world again. The kingdom of God will not come through the gateway of politics or of religion and politics.
6. God's kingdom is to be set up after the final breakdown of man's plans.

"The dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure." Today we live in the feet and toes of human history. Christ will come and take the initial steps for a reign of peace on earth

Through the centuries since the fall of Rome, ambitious rulers have tried, at the expense of millions of human lives to become world conquerors

MARTIN LUTHER'S TEACHING

"The first kingdom is the Assyrian or Babylonian kingdom; the second, the Medo-Persian; the third, the great kingdom of Alexander and the Greeks; and the fourth, the Roman Empire. In this the whole world agrees, and history supports it fully in detail.

"But the prophet has the most to say about the Roman empire, . . . the legs, the feet, and the toes. The Roman empire will be divided. Spain, France, England, and others emerged from it, some of them weak, others strong, and although it will be divided there will still be some strength, as symbolized by the

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iron in it.... This empire shall last until the end; no one will destroy it but Jesus Himself, when His kingdom comes." - Translated from Luther, Schriften, vol. 6, cols. 898-900.

TWO GREAT QUESTIONS

The first important question for me is, How can I find entrance into that kingdom of God? The apostle Paul wrote, Know you not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God?" 1 Corinthians 6:9. And we are "all unrighteous, "for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." "There is none righteous, no, not one." Romans 3:23, 10.

To Nicodemus, moral, reputable, an accepted ruler of the synagogue, Jesus said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." John 3:3. It is therefore by way of the new birth, spiritual regeneration, that I must enter into the kingdom of God.

The kingdom of God must come into me before I shall be prepared to go into it. For God has two kingdoms: the spiritual kingdom of grace and the literal kingdom of glory. The kingdom of grace is within me (Luke 17:20, 21). It brings righteousness and peace and joy (Romans 14:17). It is present (Colossians 1:13). The kingdom of glory is future. Christ will "sit upon the throne of his glory" (Matthew 25:31) and reign forever. Then the kingdoms of the world will become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ (Revelation 11:15).

The second and most pressing personal question is, "What shall I do to be born into this kingdom?"

The answer is, "I must go down to Calvary, and see there the love of God in giving His Son to die for my sins, for my transgressions of a holy law that could not be changed." If my heart does not resist this love, it will be broken in sincere repentance, and love to God and His law will be born. There is no other place to go-nowhere but Calvary.

THE GATEWAY OF THE KINGDOM

The gateway to the kingdom of God is the cross of Christ. Nicodemus found it when he watched Christ die for his sins. So may I find the entrance also.

The gateway of the cross swings both ways. It opens a way into my heart, and the kingdom of His grace comes in. One day it will swing the other way, and I shall enter into that eternal kingdom of glory and bliss forevermore.

"A land upon whose blissful shore
There rests no shadow, falls no stain;
There those who meet shall part no more,
And those long parted meet again."

"Perhaps you are saying within your heart, I admit that I am not what might be called a real Christian, but I believe I have as good a chance for heaven as some people I know who profess to belong to Christ."

"Let me give you an illustration that I hope will make this matter of the need of accepting Christ still clearer. In Rome, Italy, some years ago, there entered the office of the American embassy a man who appeared to be in great distress. When he finally secured an audience with the ambassador, he stated his case, a very serious one, and then implored the ambassador for help.

"The ambassador immediately asked the man, 'Are you a citizen of the United States?' The man replied, 'I lived in the United States for twenty-five years. I have reared my family there. I have always paid my taxes, and contributed to all worthy enterprises.' 'But,' interrupted the ambassador, 'are you a citizen of the United States?'

"He answered slowly, 'No, I have never taken out citizenship papers, but I believe I have done my duty toward the Government just as fully as those who have taken out their citizenship papers.' The ambassador replied, 'I am sorry for you, but I cannot help you because you are not a citizen of my country.'

"Some years later a man entered the same embassy, and talked to the same ambassador. The man was trembling with fear and emotion, for his case was desperate. He spoke in broken English, but he stated his case to the ambassador with sufficient clearness to make him understand his situation.

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“The ambassador directed the same question to this man that he had asked the other man some years before: ‘Are you a citizen of the United States?’

“In a faltering manner he explained to the ambassador that some years before he had taken out his first papers, and just before he sailed for Italy, he had received his last papers, and so he was a full-fledged citizen of the United States.

“The ambassador exclaimed, ‘You are a citizen of my country. I extend to you the full power of the United States for your protection.’ . . .

“No foreigner can become a citizen of a country without making a positive, definite decision to take out his citizenship papers. Everyone is a foreigner by nature with respect to the kingdom of heaven. But we may become ‘fellow citizens with the saints,’ as Paul expresses it in Ephesians 2:19.

“So may I ask you the question, ‘Have you taken out your citizenship papers which entitle you to a place in the kingdom of heaven?’

“It is not a question of how near you think you come to doing as well as your neighbors who are Christians, but have you taken out your citizenship papers? Is Christ the King of your heart now?

“You say, ‘I do not know how to take out citizenship papers for heaven.’ If you are willing to acknowledge Christ as your personal Savior, to follow Him all the way, He will accept you as a citizen of His kingdom, and you will become right now a citizen of the kingdom of grace.

“You cannot do His will without His help, so it is useless to talk about being saved at last unless He has entered your heart and taken up His abode there. Our part of the transaction is to be willing to do God’s will. Christ’s part is to furnish the power to do the thing you will do.”-CHARLES T. EVERSON, JESUS, pp. 27-30. The palsied, bedridden man of Luke 5:18 was told by Christ to rise up and walk. How could he walk? Had he not tried many times? Yet at Christ’s command he willed to walk, and he walked. Christ gave him the power.

Let not one person make delay, but decide in Christ’s favor at His cross; then take up your cross and follow Him.

“I will follow Thee, my Savior,
Where so ever my lot may be.
Where Thou goes I will follow;
Yes, my Lord, I’ll follow Thee.”
-JAMES LAWSON

27. The Church That Ruled the World

GOD knows the future, “declaring the end from the beginning.” Isaiah 46:10. And “he reveals his secret unto his servants the prophets.” Amos 3:7.

A few days before His death Jesus urged the importance of reading and understanding the prophecy of Daniel. Said He, ‘When you therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (who reads, let him understand:) then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains.” Matthew 24:15, 16.

Daniel was but a youth when God gave him the vision of the future as symbolized by the great image of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream in Daniel 2. In the seventh chapter Daniel was given another most important vision. He was now an old man. Babylon had also grown gray and weak, and was soon to be conquered by the Medo-Persians.

THE FOUR WINDS OF THE GREAT SEA

Daniel spoke and said, I saw in my vision by night, and, behold “the four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea.” Daniel 7:2. In symbolic Bible language the four winds signify strife. Here is an example: “Upon Elam will I bring the four winds.... For I will cause Elam to be dismayed before their enemies.” Jeremiah 49:36, 37.

The sea, or waters, indicate multitudes of people, for we read, “The waters which you saw ... are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.” Revelation 17:15. The prophecies of both Daniel 2 and Daniel 7 are in their last phases. Thus, with great urgency Heaven’s angel reminds us that time for this world is almost run out.

God's Answers For Today

All men desire peace, and most of them share the conviction that war would mean irreparable ruin, yet somehow they seem to be at the mercy of forces over which they have no control. The trouble is that they want peace on their own particular terms, and the very gravity of the world situation tends to make them more insistent in their demands.

We turn from the gloomy anticipations of men to God's Word. "The way of an is not in himself: it is not in man that walks to direct his steps." Jeremiah 10:23. From this one statement alone it is dear that unless men look to God for guidance and help, civilization as we now know it will fail. It cannot do otherwise if men fail to walk in God's way and to seek wisdom from Him. Now as never before is being fulfilled the ancient declaration: "The wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid." Isaiah 29:14.

Such is the topsy-turvy world we live in that godly wisdom is regarded as foolishness. The very thing that could bring healing to humanity's putrefying sores is generally regarded as unworkable and undesirable. More and more are men inclined to "call evil good, and good evil." They "put darkness for light, and light for darkness." Isaiah 5:20. Jesus Christ alone has the solution to earth's troubles, but the general picture is one of increasing reluctance to come to Him. Christ's sorrowful complaint still is: "You will not come to Me, that You might have life." John 5:40. Therefore He thus describes the picture of this old world's last days: "Men swooning with panic and foreboding of what is to befall the universe." Luke 21:26 (Moffatt).

Of course, the optimistic and heroic-planners are hard at work. The basic trouble, however, is not with the plans but with men and women. For plans depend on men rather than men on plans. An engineer's plans may be flawless, but if his bridge is built of rotten timber instead of sturdy steel, the bridge will collapse. Men are like that rotten timber. The best of plans is doomed to fail unless the human material is perfected.

Now only God can change the human heart. Only He can transform the rotten timber to stainless steel. We cannot perfect ourselves no matter how diligently we try. "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may You also do good that are accustomed to do evil." Jeremiah 13:23. Actually the global picture does not suggest any widespread attempt on man's part at moral improvement. Hence we come again to the Bible's portrayal of the last days, which visualizes a condition where - evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived." 2 Timothy 3:13. "In the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, without natural affection, trace breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, traitors, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God." 2 Timothy 3:14.

Finally we have the Lord's declaration: "As the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away. So shall also the coming of the Son of man be." Matthew 24:37-39. That antediluvian civilization of Noah's day failed to survive because of their refusal to turn to God. In like manner, says Jesus, will our last day civilization fail to survive. The Lord Himself draws the striking parallel.

Happily, however, God's picture is not one of unmitigated gloom. His prophetic Word envisions the most glorious prospects for those who, like Noah and his family, turn with all their hearts to the Lord. Through all the troubles of the last days, we are assured that "the Lord will be the hope of His people." Joel 3:16.

Will the Nations Ever Unite?

GOD'S answer to this question was given 2,500 years ago through Daniel the prophet. Speaking of the nations of today, Daniel was inspired to declare: "They shall not cleave one to another!" Daniel 2:43. Against this prophetic word of the Lord, kings, presidents, dictators, and political leaders have striven in vain. Such men as Charlemagne, Charles V of Spain, Louis XIV-the "Grand Monarque" of France, and Napoleon Bonaparte, all sought to restore the European unity that was Rome's. In defining the aim of his Imperial policy, Napoleon said: "I must have a European code, a European Court of Cassation, a common coinage, common weights and measures, and common laws. I have to make of all the peoples of Europe one single people, and of Paris the capital of the world." (Quoted in From Napoleon to Stalin, page 27) This great general's plans failed. Bible prophecy had thus decreed it.

God's Answers For Today

Perhaps the Bible's most striking prophecy is that recorded in Daniel chapter two, for it covers in its broad sweep the whole of political history to the end of time. King Nebuchadnezzar (605-562 BC), Babylon's greatest monarch, had a dream. In his dream he saw a great image whose head was of gold, his breast of silver, his loins of brass, his legs of iron, and his feet of iron and clay mixed. (Daniel 2:31-33.) Daniel the prophet, after much prayer, explained the meaning of the dream to the king. (Daniel 2:36-40.) He told the king that it was a revelation from God, who was thus revealing what shall be in the latter days! Daniel 2:28.

The golden head was a symbol of the Babylonian empire, which dominated the world at that time. Nebuchadnezzar fondly hoped that his kingdom would continue forever as the world's dominant power, but Daniel said this was not to be.

The breast and arms of silver represented the second world empire, that of MedoPersia. Under Cyrus, the great city of Babylon fell in 538 BC, and Babylonian power completely collapsed, never to rise again. As silver is inferior to gold, so was the magnificence of Persia inferior to that of her predecessor. Her military power, however, was stronger.

But, said Daniel, the world would not forever be dominated by Persia. The image's loins of brass symbolized a third world power. This power was Greece. Led by Alexander the Great the Greek army overthrew Darius and his Persians at the battle of Arbela in 331 BC; Greece had a meteoric rise to power; but like the powers before her, Greece was to be superseded.

The image's legs of iron were symbolic of the fourth world empire-the iron monarchy of Rome. Power passed from Greece to Rome at the battle of Pydna in Macedonia, 168 BC. Said Daniel: "The fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaks in pieces and subdues all things." Verse 40. History proved it to be even so. For centuries, no power could resist Rome. It broke in pieces the Greek empire, and well nigh destroyed the Jewish nation (AD 70).

After Rome, the next phase, according to the prophet was not the rise of a fifth world monarchy, which would be the normal thing to expect, but division. This was symbolized by the image's feet and toes, part of potter's clay, and part of iron." Verse 41. Rome's power was sapped by moral decline, and under the impact of the barbarian invasions of the fourth and fifth centuries, the mighty empire faded out. In her place rose ten independent nations, portrayed also by the ten horns of the fourth beast in Daniel 7:7, 24. These were the Ostrogoths, Visigoths, Franks, Alamanni, Lombards, Heruli, Burgundians, Suevi, Vandals, and Anglo Saxons.

This condition of disunity was represented by the iron and clay of the image's feet, and just as these two materials will not cohere, so the disunited nations shall not cleave one to another." Verse 43. Thus did God, through His prophet, foresee it and describe it, and the prophetic word has never been broken. As the Oxford historian, A. J. P. Taylor, remarks: "How has the continent of Europe escaped political unification? Everything in Europe seems to call for it; everything, that is, except the temperament and traditions of its peoples." (From Napoleon to Stalin, page 24) Whatever the reason, Bible prophecy foresaw that unity would never again be achieved by man. "For a thousand years men have dreamed of European union; yet for a thousand years this most uniform of continents has defied political unification. The most recent attempt at it [Hitler's] we have just lived through and successfully opposed."-Ibid., page 24.

Any future attempts will just as surely fail, until that mighty event takes place which concludes the remarkable prediction of Daniel chapter two. This event is of global importance. It will be by far the most stupendous happening of the ages, completely dwarfing all else which world history records. But we will consider this a little later.

In view of such prophecies as we have here briefly surveyed, no doubts regarding the Bible's divine origin can be reasonably retained. In his response to it all King Nebuchadnezzar was constrained to say: "Of a truth it is, that your God is a God of gods, and a Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets." Daniel 2:47. Wise are we if we place our full trust and confidence in Him.

Does God Control the Nations?

THIS divine "revealer of secrets" is in full control over the nations of this world. In days like these, no fact is more reassuring than that the great God of heaven is overruling in human affairs. At no time has God withdrawn His influence from men. None, not even the darkest heathen or the most hardened atheist, is immune from God's sovereign power.

16. The Anarchy of Nations

While Daniel in his description of the lower limbs of the great image refers only to the "legs" and "feet," what further detail does he mention in his interpretation?

"And whereas thou saw the feet and toes, part of potter's clay, and part of iron." "The toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay." Daniel 2:41, 42.

The fact that Daniel, in his interpretation, mentions the "feet" and the "toes" separately, and that two whole verses are occupied with a description of the latter, is indicative of the fact that the toe-kingdoms were to have an existence distinct from the unified Roman Empire which had dominated the civilized world for more than half a millennium. At the same time, as the toes were composed of precisely the same material as the feet, there was to be no such sharp -line of demarcation as there was between the head and breast, the breast and belly, and the belly and legs. In other words the old empire was to merge into and live on in the separated toe-kingdoms.

This is precisely what happened when the old Roman Empire of the West was dissolved and the barbarian kingdoms arose in its place in the fifth century of the Christian era.

As mentioned in the previous study, the barbarians first entered the empire as refugees, seeking the protection of the Romans against the advancing waves of Huns in Central Europe. They became guests of the Romans, accepting territory and titles from their hosts, and came to regard themselves as part of the existing order. Even when succeeding waves of invaders brought to an end the crumbling empire of the West, the barbarians incorporated the Roman heritage into their developing civilization. While, therefore, the ruling power was changed, and the barbarian proportion of the population was greatly increased, the essential features of the Roman order and civilization continued almost in their entirety. In many cases, the uncultured barbarian kings appointed Roman officials to undertake the work of administration. These men naturally continued the Roman forms of government and perpetuated the Latin tongue.

Roman literature and learning were similarly preserved by the monastic establishments of the West, and as education was entirely in the hands of the monks and nuns, the barbarian society was gradually leavened with it.

The ecclesiastical system of Christian Rome, too, built up during the last days of the empire, survived its fall, and eventually gathered all the barbarian nations into its fold.

Thus Rome is not, as Childe Harolde suggests, "The lone mother of dead empires." She still lives in her children.

Did Daniel derive any special significance from the number of toes?

While in the prophecy of the great image no special attention is drawn to the number of toes, in the seventh chapter of Daniel, where the four empires appear again under the symbolism of four beasts, the fourth is mentioned as having "ten horns." Daniel 7:7. We may, therefore, conclude that, although no attention is drawn to the number here, the ten toes do correspond to the ten horns, and that they are intended to represent ten distinct kingdoms occupying the original territory of Western Rome.

The suggestion has been put forward that as the ten toes are divided into two groups of five, the legs represent the Eastern and Western divisions of the empire respectively, and that half of the disintegrated fragments should be looked for in each of these sections. This, however, is quite unjustifiable as the legs of the image were divided from the beginning of their separation from the trunk, whereas the division of the empire did not occur until the last days of its history.

Moreover, the metals of the image represent primarily the territory peculiar to each power and not the territory of previous powers which it absorbed. Thus the silver represents Medo-Persia which absorbed the golden empire of Babylon. The brass represents the Grecian kingdom which absorbed both Medo-Persia and Babylon. The iron kingdom represents the Roman empire outside of the three previous empires—that is, Western Rome. Consequently the toe-kingdoms, which have no admixture of gold, silver, or brass, are all to be looked for in Western Europe.

Of the many barbarian tribes occupying Central Europe east of the Rhine and north of the Danube, the Alemanni and the Franks were closest to the Roman frontiers and constituted the first waves of the invading hordes.

The Alemanni (1) were actually the "first who removed the veil that covered the feeble majesty of Italy." They swarmed over the Rhaetian Alps into what are now Alsace and Lorraine and Switzerland, the last mentioned eventually becoming the heart of their tribal domain.

The Franks (2) originally occupied north-western Germany, and when they first crossed the Roman frontiers they settled in Belgium and north-eastern Gaul. Under Clovis, however, they became very powerful, spreading over the whole of France and giving their name to that country.

To the east of the Alemanni and Franks, on the banks of the Oder, lived two related peoples called the Suevi and the Vandals, while along the Elbe was the territory of a kindred tribe, the Burgundians. In the early fourth century these reached the Roman frontiers and began their penetration.

The Burgundians (3) at first settled in Savoy and Northern Italy, then extended their territory from the Rhone to the Loire and south to Vienne, but eventually were pushed back into the Rhone Valley by the expanding Franks.

The Vandals (4), after being defeated by the Franks, turned south and crossed the Pyrenees into Spain. Soon after this they were invited into Africa by the Roman governor Bonifacius, on whom they turned and established there the great Vandal kingdom.

The Suevi (5) might be regarded as camp followers of the more powerful Vandals. They accompanied the Vandals into Spain, and settled along the western coast in the territory which is now Portugal. Further to the east of the barbarian tribes already mentioned, perhaps even in the Scandinavian peninsula, was the home of the Goths. When they began to move, they first migrated southward in two great groups known as the Visigoths (West Goths) and Ostrogoths (East Goths). Eventually they were diverted westward by the arrival of the Hun hordes from Central Asia.

The Visigoths (6) arrived in Western Europe first, crossed northern Italy, and settled in south-western Gaul. There they stayed until they were driven south across the Apennines by Frankish pressure into the vacated Vandal territories in Spain.

When the Ostrogoths (7) entered the Roman Empire, they came down on to the east coast of the Adriatic, and for a time were content to occupy what is now Yugoslavia.

Meantime two other peoples, the Lombards and Heruli, of Vandal connections, were caught by Hun and Gothic pressure and also began to move into the crumbling Western empire.

The Lombards (8) consolidated in what is now Northern Italy and Austria, and gave their name to Lombardy.

The Heruli (9) moved into Italy to occupy the whole Italian peninsula and were actually instrumental in deposing the last Roman emperor of the West. Odoacer, their leader, became the first barbarian king of Italy.

Finally, the Anglo-Saxons (10) who originated on the Baltic shores of Denmark and northern Germany, became detached from the trans-continental migrations and, crossing the North Sea, settled in the British islands as far west and north as Wales and the Scottish border, where they laid the foundations of the English nation.

Truly it has been said: "It is in Rome that all the states of the earlier European world lose themselves; it is out of Rome that all the states of the later European world take their beginning."-C. Delisle Burns in "Comparative Politics," page 327.

What dangerous dis-equilibrium did the prophet declare would persist among the fragments of the broken empire?

"The kingdom shall be partly strong and partly brittle (margin)... They shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay." Daniel 2:42, 43.

The fragmentary kingdoms derived from the old empire were to differ in size and strength, and in consequence there would be a constant temptation on the part of the larger, stronger ones to absorb the smaller and weaker ones, with occasionally some especially powerful monarch seeking to unite the broken fragments into one whole. In the incessant conflicts, the number of the divisions would doubtless change from time to time, but, declared the prophet, the empire would never again be united under one rule. "They shall not cleave one to another."

True to the prophecy, when the barbarian kingdoms emerged, they were diverse in territorial extent and military power. Gibbon refers to "the powerful monarchies of the Franks and the Visigoths, and the dependent kingdoms of the Sueves and Burgundians," and no sooner were they established than they began to struggle for supremacy or survival.

Toward the close of the eighth century, Charles the Great, King of the Franks, had brought under his dominion the whole of France and considerable portions of Germany, Italy and Spain. Friendly relations developed between Charles and Pope Leo III, and on Christmas day AD. 800, Charles was crowned in Rome "devout Augustus" and "Emperor of the Romans," and the so-called Holy Roman Empire was

founded.

Actually the whole plan was a subtle attempt on the part of the Papacy to set up its own universal spiritual kingdom. But prophecy had declared that no union of the toe-kingdoms would endure, and true to the inspired Word, the Carolingian Empire quickly melted away, and the Papacy's dream of a Holy Roman Empire vanished with it. As the prophet had declared a millennium and a half before, they could "not cleave one to another."

Between the fifteenth and eighteenth centuries, the consolidation of the racial groups in Europe into exclusive national states, with their own languages, traditions, and laws, gave rise to another movement toward assimilation, though from very different motives. Each state now felt that its security and independence depended upon its being superior to all others; so there began an era of national expansion, each nation seeking to absorb its weaker neighbors, or to form alliances which would keep the balance of power in its own favor.

In the first half of the sixteenth century, Charles V of Spain made a bid for the domination of Europe and at the end of his life had united Germany, Austria, the Netherlands, Spain, Naples, Sicily, and Sardinia under his imperial rule. But the growing spirit of nationalism soon got to work and the union did not long survive his retirement and death.

Louis XIV of France, in the seventeenth century, fought nine nations and annexed great territories, but succeeded only in turning practically the whole of Europe against him and losing nearly all he had gained.

In the nineteenth century, Napoleon set out on a career of conquest which brought him almost to the position of dictator of Europe. He even went so far as to strike medals picturing himself as Caesar, crowned with the ancient laurel garland of victory. But at Waterloo, the great French emperor awakened to the sad realization that his dream was not to be.

It was the revival of the ideal of an all-powerful Roman Empire in the mind of Emperor Wilhelm II and his advisers, in the early twentieth century, which led them to match the strength of German aims against European nationalism.

"From childhood," declared the Kaiser, "I have been under the influence of five men, Alexander, Julius Caesar, Theodoric II, Frederick the Great, and Napoleon. Each of these dreamed a dream of world empire-they failed. I am dreaming a dream of German world empire-and my mailed fist shall succeed."

At last the day for which he looked came, and with all his accumulated resources he struck. But his calculations did not work out. The colossal upheaval of 1914-1918, with its sacrifice of ten millions of the world's youth, not to mention the millions more who were maimed for life. The orphans, war victims, and refugees, and the wastage of more than £30,000,000,000 in four short years, only served to reveal yet once more the truth of the divine forecast, "They shall not cleave."

But while World War I demonstrated the intensity of the antipathies among the toe-kingdoms, it neither sublimated them in a new world power nor did it dissipate them.

Steadily building up the power of Fascist Italy, Mussolini made no secret of his determination to build a new Roman Empire.

The German nation, though crushed by its defeat in World War I remained essentially military-minded, and within a quarter of a century of the defeat of Kaiser Wilhelm II's aspirations, Hitler set in motion new Germanic hordes, resolved that the Third Reich would accomplish what the second could not.

But after five and a half nightmare years in which forty millions died by bitter, torture, famine, and disease, and a continent was reduced to a shambles, the Word was again miraculously vindicated.

The prophecy which could not fail has not failed. And if any other dictator makes bold in the future to try again, he will discover, as every other would-be conqueror has discovered, that the "sovereign" states of Europe will never again be merged in a united European state. The map of Europe will continue to resemble a patchwork quilt. There will always be the "strong" powers and the "brittle," the large and the small, the economically rich and the poor. "They shall not cleave one to another!"

Did the prophet suggest that any means other than military conquest would be used to reintegrate the nations of Europe?

"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." Daniel 2:43.

Beside the attempts to restore the unity of Europe by force of arms, the prophet declared that there would also be a "mingling" of the diverse peoples of Europe through "the seed of men," but such efforts toward European reintegration would be equally unavailing. The nations still would "not cleave."

The first and obvious reference of this mingling of the "seed of men" is to the alliances effected by intermarriage between the descendants of the various European rulers. This, of course, was no new method. From earliest times neighboring peoples have sought peaceful relations by such means, but never has it attained so prominent a place in political diplomacy as in European history.

The policy was initiated at the very beginning of the history of the toe-kingdoms by Theodoric the Ostrogoth who married Audefieda, daughter of Childeric, king of the Salian Franks, and in turn married two of his daughters to Sigismund, king of the Burgundians and Alaric II, king of the Visigoths. His sister, Amalafriada, was also married to Thrasamund, king of the Vandals.

"This family compact," writes Hodgkin, "binding together all the kingdoms of the West in a great confederacy, filling all the new barbarian thrones with the sons, the grandsons, or nephews of Theodoric, was a matrimonial state-system surpassing anything that Hapsburg or Bourbon ever succeeded in accomplishing." - "Italy and Her Invaders," Vol. 3, page 355.

But he has to add: "When it came to the tug-of-war between one barbarian chief and another, this family compact, like so many others in later days, snapped with the strain."

Through the centuries the method of alliance by intermarriage was continued, but although two or more nations were sometimes brought together for a few years, the spirit of nationalism always proved too great, and before long the states were independent of each other again. Immediately before World War I the sovereigns of Europe were almost all connected by marriage. But even these ties of blood failed to prevent the outbreak of that terrible cataclysm. Since then so many European thrones have been emptied by revolution that such "mingling" is no longer practicable.

There is, however, another way in which the nations of Europe have sought peaceably to "mingle" in order to restore amity in Europe. This comprises the series of attempts, also going far back in the history of the divided empire, to establish a federation of independent nations in the West as an alternative to military domination. As early as the beginning of the fourteenth century the French writer, Pierre Dubois, proposed the formation of a league of states under the suzerainty of Philip of France with super national authority for the settlement of differences between individual nations, and with the power of economic boycott to enforce its decisions.

About the same time, Dante, in Italy, broached a similar scheme in his *De Monarchia*, advocating a central organization and a system of international law for a united Europe. The hostility of the developing nations of the time, however, precluded even the discussion of such propositions.

A more grandiose proposal was launched toward the end of the sixteenth century by the Duc de Sully, a minister of Henry IV of France, who set forth his "Grand Desigri" for an international league of fifteen nations, headed by France. To secure the settlement of all differences by arbitration, and to maintain an armed force for the coercion of delinquent powers. Twelve European sovereigns, including Elizabeth of England, signified their willingness to consider such a scheme, but before anything definite could be done, Henry was murdered and the plan fell through.

In 1712, the Abbe de St. Pierre, secretary to the French diplomat who arranged the Treaty of Utrecht, suggested a scheme similar to the Grand Design for European federation of twenty-four states under a president picturesquely called the "Prince of Peace," but got no further than any earlier proposal.

Before the eighteenth century was out no fewer than twenty-five more schemes for preserving the peace of Europe had been published. Nor was there any slackening in the nineteenth century, one of the planners, Sineriz, a Spaniard (1839), prophetically adding a new reason for European federation, namely that a united Europe would be necessary if the continent was to hold its own against a united America!

Chief of the European planners in the nineteenth century was the idealist Czar Alexander I of Russia, who induced every sovereign of Europe except the Pope, the prince-regent of England, and the sultan of Turkey, to unite in a Holy Alliance for the perpetual preservation of the peace of Europe. But after thirty-three years of rather strained co-operation, the Concert of Europe was dissolved in the revolutions of 1848.

A new attempt at co-operation, also originating with the Czar of Russia, was made at the close of the nineteenth century, and at the Hague conferences in 1899 and 1907 twenty-six and forty four states respectively were brought together. A number of lesser disputes were settled, but the major antagonisms proved irreconcilable, and eventually blazed forth in the cataclysm of 1914-1918.

With the close of World War I it was realized by the leading statesmen that unless something effective was speedily devised in the way of co-operation between the nations, civilization must inevitably annihilate itself. Speaking in Italy, President Wilson declared in words strikingly reminiscent of the Word of prophecy, "We shall have to find a new cement to hold the nations together." The cement he suggested

was the League of Nations, but, like all the earlier cements which had been tried, it crumbled in the fierce flames of war, and the great structure it held together collapsed.

But the end of the struggle for European unity is still not yet, for to-day new and urgent attempts are being made to organize a "United States of Europe" capable of maintaining its independence and territorial integrity in the face of the growing power of the Soviet system.

Now on the strength of Daniel's prophecy these attempts might be dismissed as doomed to failure like every earlier plan. Such a judgment, however, needs some qualification. Actually, a very important prophecy in the seventeenth chapter of the Revelation reveals that for a brief period just before the end a loose federation of a very special character is destined to arise in Europe with profound consequences to the world and the people of God. We shall discuss this in the appropriate place, but here it can be emphasized that, though such a federation may become a transient reality, it will never bring about the organic union of the several European states. There were ten barbarian kingdoms in the West when Rome broke up and there will be ten sovereign nations in the territory of the old Roman Empire when God finally intervenes.

"They shall not cleave" was the divine forecast. "They have not cleaved," is the verdict of history; and we may be confident that they will not ever cleave until God Himself takes a hand to Cause "Wars to Cease to the end of the earth."

14. The Brazen Kingdom

Under what symbol was the third kingdom represented in the great image which Nebuchadnezzar saw?

"Another third kingdom of brass, shall bear rule over all the earth!" Daniel 2:39.

We are not left to search the pages of secular history in order to discover the identity of this third world power, for just as MedoPersia was designated by Daniel as the destroyer of Babylon, Inspiration again provides us with the necessary clue.

In the eighth chapter of this prophecy, where we have a more detailed account of the conflict between the second and third empires, the rivals are specifically named as "the kings of Media and Persia" and "the king of Greece" respectively. (Daniel 8:20,21.) Again in the tenth chapter the prophet declares: "The prince of Greece shall come." Verse 20. And still again in the eleventh chapter it is stated that the kings of Persia would "stir up all against the realm of Greece."

Verse 2. Greece is thus conclusively identified as the third empire, corresponding to the brazen portion of the image.

Whence did the Greeks originate?

"The sons of Japheth; Gomer, and Magog, and Madai, and Javan." Genesis 10: 2.

The word "Grecia" in the book of Daniel is, in the original, Yavan, which is precisely the same word as Javan. The people of the third empire were the descendants of Javan, the son of Japheth. It is indeed significant that in this genealogical list, Javan is mentioned immediately after Madai, who was the progenitor of the Medes and their close relatives the Persians. Little did Moses, when he penned it, realize that the descendants of Madai and Javan were to constitute two great empires which would successively control the greater part of the civilized world.

When the Greeks first emerged into historical times they comprised a large number of independent city states scattered over the Greek mainland, the islands of the Aegean Sea, and the coasts of Asia Minor, with little bond between them save kinship of race, and devotion to certain religious centers such as that of Apollo at Delphi, and Demeter at Thermopylae.

It was the attempt on the part of the Persians to extend their vast Asiatic empire into Europe which forged these highly democratic communities into a powerful nation, and the two men responsible for raising the Greek kingdom to a world empire were Philip II of Macedon, and his son, Alexander the Great.

Philip ascended the throne of the petty state of Macedonia at the age of twenty-four (399 BC.) and at once applied himself to building up a powerful military force to save his country from extinction. He invented the solid Macedonian phalanx of spear men armed with heavy pikes eighteen feet long, and protected on either flank with a flexible cavalry force. With this remodeled army of 10,000 footmen and 600 horsemen he made Macedonia the most powerful state in Greece. He then abandoned Aegae, the ancestral fortress of the Macedonian kings, and established a new capital at Pella.

Invited by the Thessalians to intervene in the civil strife in the Greek peninsula, he responded with alacrity and was soon head of the Hellenic Confederacy. At once he broached his plans for war against Persia to liberate the Greek cities in Asia. All was ready for the campaign when Philip was assassinated, and his son, Alexander, at the age of twenty, ascended the throne. (336 BC.)

Having made himself master of the peninsula, Alexander turned his attention to his father's great purpose, the destruction of Persia and the conquest of Asia.

To learn whether he had the favor of the gods he went to Delphi. Arriving on a forbidden day he was told by the priestess that she could not prophesy. Seizing her, Alexander began to drag her toward the temple. "My son," she cried out, "you are irresistible!" "That is all the oracle I need," he answered and departed.

Nevertheless the task was a gigantic one and the odds were almost all against him. The Persians could muster thirty times the forces of Alexander. The treasuries of Susa and Persepolis were bursting with gold and silver, whereas the coffers of Pella had been practically exhausted by Alexander in securing himself on the throne. Furthermore, the Persian fleet controlled the whole seaboard of Asia Minor, Syria, and Egypt. Persia's one fatal weakness was its monarch, Darius Codomannus, who, despite his vast resources, was no match for the master mind of Alexander and the morale of the Greeks.

In 334 BC. Alexander threw his army of 30,000 foot soldiers and 5,000 horsemen across the Hellespont at Abydos and hastened to meet the Persians. The two armies met at Granicus (334 BC.), where

the Persian army of 40,000 strong wilted before the Macedonian Phalanx, though Alexander himself was only saved from death in the thick of the fight by the intervention of his foster-brother, Clitus.

Hellespontine Phrygia, Lydia, Sardis, Lycia, and the Ionian cities at once submitted, and Western Asia Minor was at his feet. The next spring he pressed on through Phrygia to Cappadocia and the Cilician Gates. At Issus (333 BC.), another vast Persian army, this time commanded by Darius himself, met him, but again the Macedonian tactics won.

From the safety of the Euphrates, whence Darius had fled, leaving his mother, wife, and children behind in his haste, the Persian king now sued for peace, but Alexander replied: "I am lord of all Asia, and therefore do thou come to me.... But if thou disputes the kingdom then wait and fight for it again, and do not flee; for I will march against thee wherever thou may be!"

Realizing the danger of penetrating farther into Asia while Syria and Egypt were still in Persian hands, Alexander did not at once pursue Darius, but turned south to secure his communications. (332 BC.) Most of the Phoenician cities submitted. Tyre, which made a determined stand, was taken by assault. Arriving in Egypt, he received its submission without a battle. Cyrene quickly followed suit. (331 BC.)

Alexander remained in Egypt only long enough to appoint Greek governors of Egypt, Libya, and Arabia, to choose the site for the new city of Alexandria, to replace Tyre as the trading center of the Eastern Mediterranean, and visit the temple of Zeus Ammon in the Siwa oasis deep in the Sahara.. (331 BC.) He then returned to Syria and assembled an army of 40,000 infantry and 7,000 horse to deal finally with Darius. On the plains of Arbela (331 BC.) his army met 1,000,000 Persian foot soldiers with 40,000 horsemen. Though hopelessly outnumbered, Alexander for the third time carried the day, and Darius again fled eastward.

Alexander followed Darius to Babylon. Susa, Persepolis, and Ecbatana without coming up with him. Retreating still eastward, however, the ill-fated king was treacherously made prisoner by Bessus, satrap of Bactria. When he refused to mount a horse and continue his flight, he was stabbed and left dying on the ground. When Alexander came up and found the corpse he respectfully covered with his own cloak the last king of the second empire.

How extensive were the domains of the third empire to be?

"Which shall bear rule over all the earth." Daniel 2:39.

Having sent the body of the Persian king back to his ladies at Persepolis for burial, Alexander marched on eastward (330 BC.). In 326 BC., three years after the death of Darius and seven years after crossing the Hellespont, Alexander invaded India through the Khyber Pass, and overran the Indus Valley. He would have crossed the Punjab desert into the valley of the Ganges, but the Macedonians, decimated in numbers and worn out by the long years of campaigning, refused to go farther. Reluctantly Alexander agreed to go back (325 BC.), reaching Babylon once more ten years after setting foot in Asia. (323 BC.) There he received the homage of the world.

"They came," says Thomas Arnold, "from all the extremities of the earth, to propitiate his anger, to celebrate his greatness, or to solicit his protection."-Thomas Arnold in "History of Rome," Vol. 2, chapter 30, paragraph 1.

"I am persuaded," declared Arrian, "there was no nation, city, nor people then in being whither his name did not reach."-Arrian in "History of Alexander's Expedition," Rookes' Translation, Vol. 2, page 185.

"Whatever origin he might boast of, or claim to himself," Arrian adds, "there seems to me to have been some divine hand presiding both over his birth and actions, inasmuch that no mortal upon earth either excelled or equaled him."-Ibid, page 185.

Appian of Alexandria declared that "the empire of Alexander was splendid in its magnitude, in its armies, in the success and rapidity of his conquest, and it wanted little of being boundless and unexampled." -Preface to "The Roman History," Horace White's translation, Vol. 1, page 5.

In what ways was brass an appropriate symbol for the Greek empire?

As silver was used for personal adornment by the Persians so brass was characteristic of the Greek soldiers, though with the latter the metal served a more utilitarian purpose. Brazen armor was used by the Greeks from very early times. Even in Homeric poetry we find the expression, "the brass-mailed Greeks."

Brass was used by the Greeks not only for body armor, but also on their head-dresses and sandals. It was likewise used for shields, swords, battle-axes, and for the tips of spears and arrows, as well as on chariots, and to decorate and strengthen the prows of their ships.

So characteristic was brass of the Greeks that we find the expressions, "to be struck with brass"

used to describe wounds inflicted by the sword. The spear is called a "point of brass" and "smiting with a brazen edge" is a term used for wielding a battle axe. "Skilled in brass" meant "skilled in arms" and to be "brazen" meant metaphorically to be hard, strong, or stout. "Brazen-voiced" indicated clear, ringing tones, "brazen teeth" perfection of strength, and heroes were credited with "hearts of brass."

In the seventh edition of Liddel and Scott's Greek Lexicon there are 164 words containing the root *chalc* (brass), while there are only eighty-four compounds containing the word "silver" and seventy-one from "iron," clearly showing the supremacy of this metal in the third empire.

How strikingly does God's view contrast with man's estimate of the great age of Greece?

Historians frequently refer to the age of Greece as a golden age and expatiate upon the legacy of science and art which it passed on to succeeding generations. God, however, denominates it an age of brass, of tawdry glory with little real merit, and passes it over with the briefest reference. Paul designates this supreme period of the human intellect as the "times of this ignorance." By inspiration he warned of its "science falsely so-called" (1 Timothy 6: 20) and its "philosophy and vain deceit" (Col. 2: 8) which led the Greeks to characterize the Gospel of salvation as "foolishness" and its preachers as "babblers."

How long did the third empire endure and by what was it superseded?

"After thee shall, arise ... the fourth kingdom." Daniel 2:39, 40.

When Alexander received the respects and tribute of ambassadors from the ends of the earth at Babylon there was one people not represented. No one came from the city of Rome on the banks of the Tiber. Was it that they felt themselves too insignificant to be noticed, or was it that, even at this early date, they were too proud to bow before the Great King? If Alexander had been able to carry out his plan for a great Western expedition, he certainly would have come upon the Romans and they would have had to submit or be crushed.

"It is hardly open to question," says Bevan, in his History of Greece, "that he would have annexed Sicily and Great Hellas, conquered Carthage, and overrun the Italian peninsula."

But once again Providence decreed that this was not to be. Following a carousal in Babylon to celebrate the departure of Admiral Nearchus to make a circuit of the southern sea via the Persian Gulf, the Indian Ocean, the Red Sea, the Nile Canal, the Nile, and the Mediterranean, Alexander fell into a high fever. For six days the fever raged and the sailing of the expedition was deferred. His closest companions spent a whole night of intercession in the temple of Serapis but to no avail, and on the evening of June 13, 323 BC., he died.

Truly says Bevan:

"The untimely deaths of sovereigns at particular junctures have often exercised an appreciable influence on the course of events; but no such accident has diverted the paths of history so manifestly and utterly as the death of Alexander."-"History of Greece," page 422.

His plans for the consolidation of his Asiatic empire were frustrated by the partition of the subjugated territories among his generals, and his scheme for the conquest of the West was never carried out. And so, unmolested, Rome grew from a village to a city and from a city to a kingdom. It laid low the rival power of Carthage, and then it turned upon and broke the third empire. The steps by which Rome strode to world power will be described in the greater detail later. Here it must suffice for us to quote the opening paragraphs of Polybius' famous history of those times:

"Who among us is so worthless or spiritless as not to wish to know by what means, and under what kind of politics, the Romans in less than fifty-three years succeeded in subjecting nearly the whole inhabited world to their sole government-a thing unexampled in history."-I, 1, 4, 5.

17. The Coming Kingdom

As Nebuchadnezzar beheld the great image in his dream what mysterious new object appeared?

"Thou saw till that a stone was cut out without hands." Daniel 2: 34.

As the king continued to look the great image up and down, his gaze was distracted by a movement in the rock face behind. A stone became mysteriously detached from the cliff "without hands" and began to roll down the slope toward the image.

The expression "without hands," or something similar, occurs in several places in the Scriptures and invariably indicates the personal intervention of God. Thus in the Lamentations, it is said concerning the overthrow of Sodom by God that she "was overthrown as in a moment, and no hands were laid upon her." Lamentations 4:6. (R.V.)

All interpretations, therefore, which suggest that the stone is some earthly power such as the Jewish nation (as claimed by Augustine), or Britain (as claimed by British-Israelites), are inadmissible. The expression used by Daniel clearly indicates the supernatural and otherworldly, rather than earthly, origin of the stone.

Is this symbolic "stone" referred to elsewhere in Scripture? Whom does it represent?

"Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a Stone, a tried stone.... a sure foundation: he that believes shall not make haste." Isaiah 28:16. "The Stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner." Psalm 118:22. (See also Genesis 49:24; Zechariah 3:8,9)

Defending himself before the rulers of the Jews, Peter clearly identified this Stone with Christ. "Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel," he cried, "that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by Him does this man stand here before you whole. This is the Stone which was set at naught of you builders, which is become the head of the corner." Acts 4: 10-12. (See also 1 Peter 2: 6-8.)

Paul likewise confirms this identification: "Now therefore you are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone!" Ephesians 2:19,20. (See also Romans 9:33; 10:11.)

In consequence, every interpreter of prophecy who has kept close to the Scriptures has followed the inspired interpretation of the apostles. As Emanuel Lacunza asserts: "All interpreters of Scripture so far as I have had it in my power to examine, tell us that the Stone of which this prophecy speaks is evidently the Messiah, Jesus Christ Himself, the Son of God and the Son of the Virgin!"

What befell the great image when the Stone came into contact with it? How did Daniel interpret the falling of the Stone?

"Which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and break them in pieces!" Daniel 2:34. "The kingdom . . . shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms!" Verse 44.

When Jesus came the first time He was "set at naught" by the Jews (Acts 4: 11) and was "rejected" of men. (Isaiah 53: 3.) Far from overthrowing the kingdoms of this world, He refused to take sides with the fierce patriots who were burning for an opportunity to throw off the Roman yoke. Not only did He strike no blow against Rome, but He Himself was stricken by Rome. The Stone therefore did not fall at Christ's first advent.

Some have suggested that the work of the Stone began at Pentecost, but this interpretation is equally inadmissible. The propagation of the Gospel in the Christian era bears no more resemblance to the falling of the Stone than the ministry of Jesus on earth. The Gospel message is essentially redemptive. The work of the Stone is destructive Jesus compared the Gospel not to a falling stone but to leaven working gently, gradually, silently in the lump of dough. The expression "break in pieces," which literally means "utterly crush," suggests a sudden shattering blow which will instantly and completely disintegrate the kingdoms of men to make room for the kingdom of God. This, therefore, must be a still future event.

Did Jesus give the disciples any assurance at His ascension that He would return to consummate His work in the earth?

"This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as you have seen Him go into heaven." Acts 1:11.

The last question of the disciples to Jesus before His ascension was, "Lord, wilt Thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" Acts 1: 6. In reply Jesus told them that the time when God would complete His purposes for the earth was not to be made known to them then. However, immediately after Jesus had been taken up, they were assured by two angels who remained to comfort them that Jesus would certainly come again in person to dispose finally of sin and inaugurate His glorious and eternal kingdom.

This angelic assurance doubtless caused the disciples to remember earlier occasions when Jesus had associated the establishment of His kingdom with His Second Advent.

When telling His disciples of the signs which would give warning of His imminent return, Jesus had concluded by saying: "When you see these things come to pass [the signs of His coming], know you that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand." Luke 21:31.

Describing the separation of the righteous and the wicked at His coming He said: "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.

The Second Advent thus became the "blessed hope" and the dominant note of their evangelism. So Paul exhorted the young man Timothy: "I 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.

How different will the Second Coming of Christ be from His first advent?

"Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence: a fire shall devour before Him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about Him." Psalm 50: 3.

The Second Coming of Jesus will be no obscure event in history, as was His first coming to the manger of Bethlehem. Then He came in humility and weakness. When He returns He will come with the glory and majesty and power which befits the only-begotten Son of God, the Creator and King of the universe. The first time He came as a harmless Lamb. The second time He will appear as a destroying Lion. (See Isaiah 42: 13, 14; Joel 2: 2; Malachi 4: 1; 2 Thessalonians 1: 7, 8)

What will become of the kingdoms of men at the return of Christ?

"The Lord ... shall strike through kings in the day of His wrath." Psalm 110: 5: "I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms, and I will destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the heathen." Haggai 2:22. (See also Psalm 2: 8, 9) "There hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, even to the years of many generations." Joel 2:2.

Scarcely can the human mind form any conception of this stupendous event when it breaks in upon our world. The turmoil and commotion accompanying the overturning of previous empires are indicated in the image merely by the merging of one metal into another. But the last upheaval smashes the image to fragments. So is the future overthrow of earthly kingdoms contrasted with the greatest political upheavals of this world order.

Will any earthly kingdom survive the crash?

"The kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms." Daniel 2:44.

Not one of the existing kingdoms can have any part in the kingdom of Christ. All must go to make room for the world-embracing dominion of God. As Jesus said to Pilate when He stood before him in the judgment hall: "My kingdom is not of this world [literally, not out of this order] : . . . My kingdom is not from hence." John 18: 36.

To what are the disintegrated kingdoms of this world after the falling of the Stone compared? By what agency are they dispersed?

"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.

In the eyes of men the kingdoms of this world are powerful and stable, but before the irresistible winds of divine judgment they will be as "chaff which the wind drives away." Psalm 1:4 (See also Isaiah 17:12,11) In that terrible day the earth will be swept clean by the winds of God.

The symbol of the wind would be perfectly understandable to Nebuchadnezzar for the name of Enlil, the chief god of the Babylonian pantheon, meant literally, "Lord of the wind . . . Lord of the storm," or "Storm of terrible strength." Merodach inherited these characteristics from Enlil and in his struggle

against Tiamet, the evil one, he made use of a "hurricane, an evil wind, a tempest, a four-fold wind, a sevenfold wind, a whirlwind." According to Esarhaddon, Merodach assisted him in the siege of the city of Ubbumi with the blast of "the north wind." He likewise helped Nebuchadnezzar with "four winds" to uncover the site of the temple of Shamash at Larsa so that he could rebuild it.

The king would, therefore, appreciate the power of the god whose "wind" would carry away all the kingdoms of men to make room for his own "great mountain" kingdom.

While the kingdoms of men will be scattered like chaff, whom will the angels gather?

"And He shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." Matthew 24:31.

While the Stone brings destruction to the kingdoms of men, it will bring deliverance to "the elect," the "saints of the most High," living and dead. For the appearance of Christ in the clouds of heaven will be the signal for the resurrection of the righteous dead of all ages, and for their gathering together with the living remnant who have been preserved unscathed through the fearful destruction. (See also 1 Thessalonians 4: 16, 17)

Following the dissolution of the image, what transformation did Nebuchadnezzar observe in the Stone? How did Daniel interpret its growth?

"And the Stone that smote the image became a great mountain." Daniel 2:35. "In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom." Daniel 2:44.

The likening of the divine kingdom to a "great mountain" would have a special significance for Nebuchadnezzar. The city of Babylon was built upon the alluvial clay soil brought down by the great rivers of the plain, and was surrounded by vast stretches of swamp land and shifting sand dunes. By contrast, the mountains in the distant north were monuments of permanence and strength, and often Nebuchadnezzar wished they had been nearer that he might have used stone from them in the building of his capital. As they were not, he had to content himself with building the city "mountains high," and his palace "like a mountain" in the midst of it. For the great northern citadel, he did actually undertake the transport of massive stones, "the produce of the great mountains," and "like the mountains" he raised its "summit."

When therefore Nebuchadnezzar was told by the prophet that the Stone was to become a great mountain, he would immediately recognize that it was to be the mightiest and most enduring of kingdoms.

"The great mountain" would also have a religious implication, for Enlil, the chief of the gods in the old mythology of Assyria, and Babylonia, was referred to as "The Great Mountain, Enlil, the Lord of the lands, dwelling in the House of the Great Mountain of the Lands." And when Merodach superseded Enlil in the time of Khammurabi, he was given the same title. A Babylonian tablet dating from the seventeenth year of Nebuchadnezzar is signed by two priests of the "Great Mountain." Other priests are similarly described.

So not only would Nebuchadnezzar understand the "great mountain" to be the mightiest of kingdoms, but he would realize also that it would be, in very truth, the "kingdom of the great God!"

How extensive will the Stone kingdom be?

"And filled the whole earth." Daniel 2:35.

No competing dominion will be left upon the face of the earth. Christ's kingdom will, therefore, have no rival. It will be universal. "He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth." Psalm 72: 8. (See also Zechariah 14: 9)

Of what dominion will the kingdom of Christ be a continuation?

"Unto Thee shall it come, even the first dominion." Micah 4: 8.

It will connect with the kingdom of Israel where it was broken off in the days of Zedekiah. (Ezekiel 21: 27.) Christ, as the Seed of David (Matthew 1: 1), will take up the kingdom and crown laid down by Judah's last king, and in Him will thus be fulfilled all the promises of the perpetuity of the old kingdom and the seed of David.

Will the Stone kingdom be subject to overthrow like the kingdoms of the world?

"And the kingdom shall not be left to other people." Daniel 2:44.

Human monarchs have reigned for a longer or shorter period, and then have passed off the scene and their place has been taken by others. But Christ will never be superseded. He is the "King eternal."

How enduring will His kingdom be?

"The God of heaven shall set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed. . . . It shall stand for ever." Daniel 2: 44.

The kingdom will be as eternal as its King. It will continue without diminution of its power and glory for ever. "Thy kingdom," declares the psalmist, "is an everlasting kingdom, and Thy dominion endures throughout all generations!" Psalm 145:13. "Of His kingdom," was the promise of the angel to Mary at the incarnation, "there shall be no end." Luke 1: 33. (See also Isaiah 9: 7; Hebrews 1: 8)

Having completed the interpretation of the wonderful vision to King Nebuchadnezzar, how did Daniel stress its certainty?

"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: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure." Daniel 2:45.

The prophecies of the Word, like the promises of the Word, are "yea," and "amen," in Christ Jesus. (2 Corinthians 1:20) They "must needs come to pass," for "the Scripture cannot be broken." John 10: 35. In the previous pages we have shown how every detail of the image vision down to the feet and toes of iron and clay has been fulfilled with minute exactness. The remaining event, therefore, the coming of the divine kingdom, is equally certain and sure.

What effect had the dream and its interpretation upon King Nebuchadnezzar?

"Then the king Nebuchadnezzar fell upon his face, and worshipped Daniel, and commanded that they should offer an oblation and sweet odors unto him." Daniel 2: 46.

Overcome by the marvelous revelation which he had received, Nebuchadnezzar prostrated himself at the feet of Daniel, the messenger of the great Revealer of secrets.

What confession did Nebuchadnezzar make?

"The king answered unto Daniel, and said, Of a truth it is, that your God is a God of gods, and a Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, seeing thou couldst reveal this secret." Daniel 2:47.

Nebuchadnezzar was prepared to give Jehovah a place among the gods he worshipped, to designate Him "God of gods" as he did Merodach, to acclaim His wisdom, and to bestow honors upon His servants. But unfortunately, he did not allow the revelations of Jehovah to influence his life. If he had done so, he would have saved himself the humiliating experience related in the third and fourth chapters of the book of Daniel.

Therein is a lesson for all. Prophecy is not unfolded merely to be informative. It is intended to lead to transformation of the life into harmony with the will of God. If it does not do this, then the knowledge it imparts is valueless.

What urgent decision, therefore, must all make in the light of the great image vision?

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

The vision of the great image leaves us with but two alternatives. We may choose to retain our "citizenship" (Phil. 3:20, R.V.) with the kingdoms of men and remain a part of the image, in which case we shall share its fate; or with broken and contrite hearts we may cast ourselves at the feet of the divine King, link up with Christ before the crash, and so participate in the kingdom into which it is to grow. How urgent then is the appeal of the apostle Peter: "Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure."

8. The Image with the Head of Gold

What was king Nebuchadnezzar shown in his wonderful dream?

"Thou, O king, saw, and behold a great image." Daniel 2: 3 1.

In these words the prophet Daniel recalled to the heathen king, Nebuchadnezzar, the dream which had so fascinated him, yet which he found himself unable to bring back to mind. In so doing he opened up the first great panoramic prophecy of world history, for under the symbolism of this great image there was to be revealed to the gaze of the astonished king a view of the destiny of the empire which he had built up, and the course of all succeeding empires right on to the establishment of the kingdom of God on earth. Surely, to adapt a famous Churchillian phrase, never was so much for so many comprehended in so few words!

It may seem strange at first that a heathen king should be chosen for such an epochal revelation, yet the choice was not without reason or without precedent. When the children of Israel were in captivity in Egypt, God gave warning of approaching famine in a dream to Pharaoh and gave the interpretation to his servant Joseph. (Genesis 41: 1, 5, 25.) Now Israel is again in captivity, and God desires to reveal to His faithful people the course of Gentile supremacy, that they may be assured of His overruling in the affairs of the nations and of the certain re-establishment of His kingdom. What then could be more appropriate than that the first Gentile world-ruler should be 'shown the latter end of his earthly line'?

No symbol could have been more familiar to the king than an image, for his temples and palaces were replete with monster statues of gods, men, and beasts. An image would immediately arrest and hold his attention.

In what form was the great image that the king saw?

It was the image of a man.

That the dream-image should be in the form of a man was particularly appropriate as it was to represent the kingdoms of men as distinct from the kingdom of God, the rule of man in contrast to the rule of God. It symbolized nations and kingdoms which would be built up by human strength, the product of human intellect and human passions. And the period of history it was to cover was "the times of the Gentiles" (Luke 21: 24) or "man's day." 1 Corinthians 4: 3 (margin).

What two characteristics at once impressed the king?

"This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible." Daniel 2: 31.

The image's brightness was "excellent," for in the eyes of men the empires which they built up would be objects of admiration and glory. In a later vision these same empires are seen from God's viewpoint as wild and ravaging beasts. (Daniel 7)

Secondly, the form of the image was "terrible." Its colossal stature, powerful limbs, and threatening features marked it as an object of awe and fear. In this respect, also, it fitly represented the military monarchies of the future, whose foundations would be laid upon the ruins of conquered nations and the bodies of their dead.

Of what diverse materials was the image fashioned?

"This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of Silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, his legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay." Daniel 2:32,33.

While the image was one continuous figure revealing the essential unity of spirit in all earthly empires, it was composite in character to illustrate the changes of human government.

These four metals represented four successive world powers which should arise, the transference of rule from one to the other corresponding to the overturning referred to by the prophet Ezekiel. (Ezekiel 21: 27.) These successive powers would be as diverse from one another as gold, silver, brass, and iron, yet all would come "from the earth"; all were to be essentially human governments.

The descending value of the metals in the image indicated that, in spite of outward glory and achievement, there would be a steady degeneration in these kingdoms of men until at last God would sweep them all away. It portrays the "decline and fall" not of one but of all human empires.

Beginning his interpretation of the symbolism of the image, of what did Daniel remind

Nebuchadnezzar?

"Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. And where so ever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath He given into your hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all." Daniel 2:37, 38.

In his inscriptions Nebuchadnezzar attributes his elevation to "his god" Merodach. Daniel corrects this erroneous idea by telling him that he had received it by the favor of the "God of heaven." Not merely had he received a kingdom from God, he had been given the kingdom or exclusive dominion as it is more correctly translated in the Revised Version.

From what ancient beginnings had the kingdom of Babylon developed?

"Cush begat Nimrod: . . . and the beginning of his kingdom was Babel (margin 'Babylon'), and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar." Genesis 10: 8-10.

Back in the dawn of history there sprang up along the banks of the Tigris and Euphrates, and their tributaries, a series of city states, sometimes independent, sometimes dominated by one or other of the greater kings. Those enumerated here were important cities in the different regions of the valley as far back as archeology can take us. Erech or Uruk was in Southern Babylonia, some fifty miles up the Euphrates from Ur, Abraham's birthplace, and shares with Tell-el-Obeid, which lay between them, the oldest civilized remains which have been found in the whole valley. Babel or Bab-ilu was 200 miles farther up the river, and Akkad or Agade was still farther to the north, probably very near the confluence of the two rivers. Calneh has not been identified with certitude, but may have been still farther to the north.

The Sumerian kingdom seems to have been the first considerable grouping of city states, based upon Kish, and Ur, and Uruk. Thereafter followed the Akkadian kingdom, founded by Sargon of Akkad or Agade, and a further Sumerian period in which Ur again attained great splendour. A confused epoch then ensued due to invasions from the north and west. This was brought to an end by the establishment of the first Babylonian Empire about the time that Abraham was settling in Canaan. After a century or so, the old Babylonian Empire declined and the Assyrian Empire, based upon Asshur and later Nineveh, arose. Assyria broke up with the fall of Nineveh in 612 BC., Babylon regained its independence under Nabopolassar, and the Neo-Babylonian Empire, with which we are particularly concerned, came into being, reaching its zenith under King Nebuchadnezzar.

What relation had Nebuchadnezzar's great empire to the dream image which he saw?

"Thou art this head of gold." Daniel 2:38.

While the whole Neo-Babylonian dynasty was included in the golden head, to no Babylonian monarch could it have more correctly been said, "Thou art this head of gold," for his father Nabopolassar did no more than lay the foundations of Babylon's greatness, and none of the kings who followed him were of his calibre. It was he who made Babylon great and after his passing, it quickly crumbled.

Babylon was literally a golden city. Herodotus, 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. The hall of E-sag-ila, the great temple of Merodach, was overlaid with shining gold, lapis lazuli, and alabaster. The chapel of Merodach, lined by a former king with silver, was overlaid by Nebuchadnezzar "with fine gold." The image of the god was of solid gold. It was seated upon a golden throne with a golden base. and in front of it stood a large golden table. The Chaldeans told Herodotus that there were 800 talents' weight of the precious metal in these objects. In a small upper temple was another table of gold and outside the temple was a golden altar. (See Herodotus 1, 181, 183; 111, 1-7)

Pliny mentions the vestments of the priests of Babylon as intermixed with gold, and in one of the Babylonian tablets recently unearthed which associates different metals with the various gods of Babylonia. It is a significant fact that Merodach the patron god of Babylon, was the "golden" god.

Gold not only typified the literal splendors of Babylonia, but as the chief of metals, it appropriately symbolized the greatness of Babylon in other ways. The empire was a monument to the political genius of its founder. Nebuchadnezzar consolidated his conquests and left his successors a great and prosperous empire. Berosus asserts that "he possessed Egypt, Syria, Phoenicia, and Arabia," as well as the whole Mesopotamian valley "and by his deeds he excelled all that ever reigned before him over the Chaldeans and the Babylonians!"-"Apud Joseph Contra Apion," 1, 19.

The most precious of metals further, represented the most perfect centralization of human power ever attained, for the word of Nebuchadnezzar was the only law for the whole empire. (Daniel 5: 19)

The Babylonian Empire furthermore represented a golden age of intellectual attainments. Chaldea was synonymous with all that was profound in science and sublime in human wisdom. Centuries later "wise men" came from the land of the Chaldeans to render their homage to the infant Christ. (Matthew 2: 1.)

What rude shock came to Nebuchadnezzar as Daniel continued his interpretation of the image?

"And after thee shall arise another kingdom." Daniel 2:39.

Nebuchadnezzar must have glowed with pride as he was told that the empire he had built up corresponded in the image to the head of gold. The shock must therefore have been all the greater when he learned that after him there should arise "another kingdom."

Perhaps it was to drive from his mind the humiliating knowledge that his kingdom would fall and to delude himself that it would continue for ever, that we find Nebuchadnezzar a little later erecting an image upon the plains of Dura entirely of gold, and commanding all the rulers of the people to resort thither to worship before it. (Daniel 3) This hope was, however, destined to be vain. The divine decree had gone forth and no earthly power could reverse it.

15. The Iron Monarchy

By what was the third world empire of Greece to be succeeded?

"The fourth kingdom." Daniel 2:40.

The Oriental nations had been completely outclassed by the Western Greeks, and the successors of Alexander crushed out the last traces of resistance in the Middle East. There was, therefore, no likelihood of any new power arising in the East. The only possibility was the rise of some new power farther to the West, and it was from this quarter that the fourth empire made its appearance.

Just before he died, Alexander had planned an expedition westward to extend his conquests along the Mediterranean seaboard. If he had been able to carry out this plan he would have discovered a city some four centuries old, built upon seven hills on the banks of the Tiber in Italy, and populated by a fierce and warlike people. They had already reduced to subjection a number of the surrounding tribes and cities, and were steadily extending their conquests through the Italian peninsula.

Had Alexander been able to cross swords with them in his day the career of the Roman arms might have been forever checked. Rome might have become but a province of the Greek Empire, and the whole course of history might have been changed. But this was not to be. Alexander died before he could carry out his intentions, and after his death his generals were each so fully occupied in obtaining as large a share as possible of the empire for themselves, that they had neither time nor inclination to turn their thoughts to Italy. So Rome was able to develop unimpeded until it was in a position to match its strength against the world.

By the beginning of the second century BC., the Romans had overthrown the great rival power of Carthage on the North African coast and in two Macedonian wars had made themselves the dominating power in all the Greek peninsula except Macedonia itself, which was left as a bulwark against the barbarian tribes of the Balkans.

The failure of Philip V of Macedon to drive the Romans from Greek soil resulted in an invitation to Antiochus the Great, who ruled Asia Minor, Syria, and Babylonia, to attempt the task. But by 189 BC. Antiochus had not only been expelled from Greece, but had been decisively defeated at Magnesia in Asia Minor (190 BC.) and thrown back beyond the Taurus mountains into Syria. In consequence, all Antiochus' possessions in Asia Minor passed into the hands of the Romans, as well as the native kingdoms of Galatia and Cappadocia.

In the third Macedonian war (171-168 BC.) Macedonia was overrun, and, following the decisive battle of Pydna (168 BC.), both Macedonia and Greece were incorporated into the Roman provincial system.

During the next century Rome used the conflicts between the Seleucids of Syria and the Ptolemies of Egypt to break the power of Syria and turn Egypt into a Roman protectorate. Finally the charms of the famous Egyptian queen Cleopatra involved Egypt in a struggle between the rival Roman triumvirs, Antony and Octavius. When, therefore, at the battle of Actium (31 BC.), Octavius completely routed the combined forces of Antony and Cleopatra, he not only secured undisputed claim to Rome, but at the same time established his right to Egypt, the last independent fragment of the Greek Empire.

It is significant that, on returning to Rome, Octavius was welcomed with frenzied enthusiasm and granted the titles of "Augustus" and "Emperor," thus in actual fact inaugurating the Roman Empire.

A striking confirmation of Imperial Rome's place as the fourth world empire is to be found in the famous Canon of Ptolemy, the ancient astronomer and historian of the second century AD. His remarkable king list, associated with valuable astronomical data, commences with the era of Nabonassar in 747 BC., follows the Babylonian line to Nabonidus, father of Belshazzar, then takes up the Persian line as far as Darius III, the last independent king of that empire. It then lists the Greek kings from Alexander the Great, tracing the longest lived line after the division—that is the Ptolemies of Egypt—down to the beautiful Cleopatra. The next name is Augustus the Roman emperor. Ptolemy's Canon therefore, prepared without any reference to biblical prophecy, is thus a wonderful testimony to its delineation of the four successive world empires.

As the metals of the image merge from one to another in one continuous figure, so the Canon consists of one continuous list of twenty-four rulers of four successive empires, dovetailed into each other exactly where world power changed hands.

To what part of the image did the fourth monarchy correspond?

"Its legs of iron." Daniel 2:33.

The representation of Rome by the legs of the image is worthy of special note for the Roman army was essentially an infantry force. The legion of Republican days which carried the Roman conquests to the ends of the earth comprised 3,000 heavy infantry, 1,200 lighter armed foot soldiers, and only 300 horsemen. In the days of the Empire, Augustus used a legion of 6,000 foot soldiers with only 120 horsemen to serve as dispatch riders and the like. Practically the whole cavalry in his army were voluntarily recruited non-citizen auxiliary cohorts of 500 to 1,000 strong.

What metal was used to symbolize the Roman Empire?

"His legs of iron." Daniel 2:33

Curiously enough among the terms of peace forced upon the Romans by Porsena, king of the Etruscans, in one of their earliest wars for possession of Italy, was the requirement that no iron should be used except for agricultural purposes! What a condition to impose upon the power that was one day to become the "iron monarchy"!

Iron was indeed as characteristic of Rome as the other metals had been of the earlier empires, for the rise of the Roman arms was contemporaneous with the displacement of brazen implements and weapons in favor of iron ones.

"At the period of the Gallic war', says Dr. L. Schmidt in his History of Rome, "the ancient brass armor was exchanged by Camillus (381 BC.) for iron armor, a polished iron helmet being a better protection against the huge swords of the barbarians... Camillus is also said to have surrounded the shields of the soldiers with iron rims. ... At the same time the ancient weapon of the front lines was exchanged for a peculiar kind of spear (pilum) seven feet long, by which a blow might be warded off, and which might also be used as a weapon to attack the enemy." - Page 200.

How did Daniel interpret the significance of the "iron legs"?

"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." Daniel 2:40.

Unlike the Greeks, the Romans were interested neither in art nor language. War was their sole employment. They traced their descent from Mars, the god of war, and the fierce she-wolf nurse of Romulus was a fit emblem of their national character.

"From the moment of her foundation," says Dr. L. Schmidt, "Rome had to maintain her existence by force of arms. Like a young giantess, she crushed, one after another, every one of her neighbors that came in contact with her, until toward the fifth century after her birth, she had subdued all the tribes of Italy, and acquired the sovereignty of the whole peninsula. What, in her youth, the giantess had been obliged to do in self-defense, and what had been a struggle for her own existence, became in the end her favorite pursuit. One war ever gave rise to fresh wars; she hastened from victory to victory, from conquest to conquest, till about the beginning of the Christian era she dictated her law to nearly the whole of the known world."-"History of Rome," page 1.

The phrase "break in pieces and bruise," seems not only to connote power of conquest but also rapacity, blood-thirstiness, and brutality; and these attributes were abundantly manifest in the Roman campaigns.

The full force of the iron monarchy was felt by the Jewish nation and the early Christian church. Christ suffered the extreme Roman penalty of crucifixion. Jerusalem was razed to the ground, its inhabitants almost annihilated, and the remnant scattered to the ends of the earth. Rome did its best to bruise and break the Christian church. Most of the apostles suffered martyrdom at its hands, as well as multitudes of the early believers. But the task was too great even for Rome. She might contend successfully against all temporal power, but when she set herself against spiritual forces she was impotent.

What new element introduces itself into the feet and toes of the great image?

"His feet part of iron and part of clay." Daniel 2:33.

The first three world empires of the great image are each symbolized by a single homogeneous metal, indicating that they would preserve their original form and character throughout their period of supremacy. The fourth empire is also at first represented by a single metal, iron, which continues down to the ankles of the image. But when we reach the feet a striking change takes place. The homogeneity of the iron is marred by the introduction of a new element.

How does Daniel explain this heterogeneity?

"The kingdom shall be divided." Daniel 2:41.

For three hundred years following the accession of the "Emperor" Octavius, the Roman Empire continued in unity and unrivalled strength, and then just as prophecy had declared "division" began to manifest itself. The emperor Diocletian in AD. 189, convinced that it was impossible for one man to control efficiently the vast system of imperial machinery, adopted the unprecedented course of distributing his supreme authority.

In the second year of his reign he appointed Maximian to associate with him as Augustus, and six years later he proclaimed Constantius and Galerius as Caesars subordinate to the two Augusti, but rising in turn to first rank, so as to supply an uninterrupted succession of emperors.

The empire was thus divided into four parts between the Augusti and the Caesars. The most honorable sections, the East and Italy, being under the control of the Augusti, and the more laborious sections, the Danube and the Rhine, being entrusted to the care of the Caesars. Diocletian himself took control of the East with his capital at Nicomedia, adopting the title "Dominus" to indicate his lordship over all.

It is remarkable that Gibbon, describing this period, unconsciously uses the very language of the prophet when he writes:

"Ostentation was the first principle of the new system instituted by Diocletian. The second was division. He divided the empire, the provinces, and every branch of the civil as well as the military administration. He multiplied the wheels of the machinery of government, and rendered its operations less rapid, but more secure ... Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," Vol. 1, 18, page 457.

The political division of the empire soon brought about the complete separation of Eastern and Western Rome. Thereafter while Eastern Rome held together as a unit for another thousand years as the Byzantine Empire, other divisive influences continued to work in Western Rome, ultimately effecting the fragmentation of the empire into the ten completely separated "toes" of the image.

Among these further divisive influences were: 1. Division in the army. Constantine introduced a distinction in the army between the court troops or Palatines, who were Romans, and the troops of the frontier, or Borderers, who were largely mercenaries interested only in the pay they received. As the former were stationed in the tranquil provinces and were progressively weakened by baths, theatres, and lack of training and discipline, the employment of barbarians to do the fighting for Rome became more and more universal.

Jerome recognized these indications as most surely pointing to the break-up of the empire. "For as in the beginning," he says, "nothing was stronger and harder than the Roman Empire, so in the end of things nothing is weaker; since both in civil wars and against foreign nations we need the help of barbarian tribes."

2. Division in the population of the empire. Not only did the armies of Rome become heterogeneous companies of foreign races, but thousands of aliens were settled in Roman territory to "appease" tribes which were menacing the border provinces. Thus the Burgundians were allowed to settle in the upper reaches of the Rhine, the Visigoths were permitted to occupy Aquitaine, and the Franks were given territory in France and Belgium in return for military aid against the Germans.

Sulpicus Severus, writing in AD. 401 on this prophecy of the second chapter of Daniel, refers to these alien pockets when he writes: "Finally, that the clay and iron, substances that never unite together, are mingled, denotes intermixtures of human race, mutually differing from each other.... We see that barbarian nations ... are mingled with our armies, cities, and provinces, and live among us; and yet do not adopt our customs."

Thus weakened by strife between rival rulers, rendered practically defenseless by the corruption of its military system. And harboring within its territories hordes of foreign races in constant ferment against their protectors, the empire became totally incapable of breasting the great barbarian advance once it got on the move, and incipient division culminated in actual dismemberment. Western Rome ceased any longer to be a unit, and in its place there grew up a number of independent barbarian kingdoms. History had reached the "toes" of the great image.

16. The Anarchy of Nations

While Daniel in his description of the lower limbs of the great image refers only to the "legs" and "feet," what further detail does he mention in his interpretation?

"And whereas thou saw the feet and toes, part of potter's clay, and part of iron." "The toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay." Daniel 2:41, 42.

The fact that Daniel, in his interpretation, mentions the "feet" and the "toes" separately, and that two whole verses are occupied with a description of the latter, is indicative of the fact that the toe-kingdoms were to have an existence distinct from the unified Roman Empire which had dominated the civilized world for more than half a millennium. At the same time, as the toes were composed of precisely the same material as the feet, there was to be no such sharp -line of demarcation as there was between the head and breast, the breast and belly, and the belly and legs. In other words the old empire was to merge into and live on in the separated toe-kingdoms.

This is precisely what happened when the old Roman Empire of the West was dissolved and the barbarian kingdoms arose in its place in the fifth century of the Christian era.

As mentioned in the previous study, the barbarians first entered the empire as refugees, seeking the protection of the Romans against the advancing waves of Huns in Central Europe. They became guests of the Romans, accepting territory and titles from their hosts, and came to regard themselves as part of the existing order. Even when succeeding waves of invaders brought to an end the crumbling empire of the West, the barbarians incorporated the Roman heritage into their developing civilization. While, therefore, the ruling power was changed, and the barbarian proportion of the population was greatly increased, the essential features of the Roman order and civilization continued almost in their entirety. In many cases, the uncultured barbarian kings appointed Roman officials to undertake the work of administration. These men naturally continued the Roman forms of government and perpetuated the Latin tongue.

Roman literature and learning were similarly preserved by the monastic establishments of the West, and as education was entirely in the hands of the monks and nuns, the barbarian society was gradually leavened with it.

The ecclesiastical system of Christian Rome, too, built up during the last days of the empire, survived its fall, and eventually gathered all the barbarian nations into its fold.

Thus Rome is not, as Childe Harolde suggests, "The lone mother of dead empires." She still lives in her children.

Did Daniel derive any special significance from the number of toes?

While in the prophecy of the great image no special attention is drawn to the number of toes, in the seventh chapter of Daniel, where the four empires appear again under the symbolism of four beasts, the fourth is mentioned as having "ten horns." Daniel 7:7. We may, therefore, conclude that, although no attention is drawn to the number here, the ten toes do correspond to the ten horns, and that they are intended to represent ten distinct kingdoms occupying the original territory of Western Rome.

The suggestion has been put forward that as the ten toes are divided into two groups of five, the legs represent the Eastern and Western divisions of the empire respectively, and that half of the disintegrated fragments should be looked for in each of these sections. This, however, is quite unjustifiable as the legs of the image were divided from the beginning of their separation from the trunk, whereas the division of the empire did not occur until the last days of its history.

Moreover, the metals of the image represent primarily the territory peculiar to each power and not the territory of previous powers which it absorbed. Thus the silver represents Medo-Persia which absorbed the golden empire of Babylon. The brass represents the Grecian kingdom which absorbed both Medo-Persia and Babylon. The iron kingdom represents the Roman empire outside of the three previous empires—that is, Western Rome. Consequently the toe-kingdoms, which have no admixture of gold, silver, or brass, are all to be looked for in Western Europe.

Of the many barbarian tribes occupying Central Europe east of the Rhine and north of the Danube, the Alemanni and the Franks were closest to the Roman frontiers and constituted the first waves of the invading hordes.

The Alemanni (1) were actually the "first who removed the veil that covered the feeble majesty of Italy." They swarmed over the Rhaetian Alps into what are now Alsace and Lorraine and Switzerland, the last mentioned eventually becoming the heart of their tribal domain.

12. The Rise of the Second Empire

What intimation did Nebuchadnezzar receive in his vision of the great image that the Babylonian Empire would pass away?

"And after thee shall arise another kingdom." Daniel 2:39.

The change in the metallic structure of the image indicated not just another king, but the rise of a new power which would conquer and supersede the Babylonian world empire.

From whence were the conquerors of Babylon to come? Who were specifically named as leaders of the invading forces?

"For, lo, I will raise and cause to come up against Babylon an assembly of great nations from the north country: and they shall set themselves in array against her!" Jeremiah 50:9. (See also verses 3, 41-44)

"Behold I will stir up the Medes against them!" Isaiah 13:17. (See also Jeremiah 51: 11-14, 28.)

To the north of Babylonia there were a great number of tribes of Aryan stock, of which the Amidae or Madai (Medes) were the oldest and most important, stemming back to Madai, the son of Japheth. (Genesis 10:2; 1 Chronicles 1:5) Originally they occupied southern Russia, but around 2000 BC. they began to move southward into north-western Persia at about the same time that the Persians, a closely related people, began to descend from the north-east.

Probably as a result of Assyrian aggression, the Median tribes became united in the sixth century BC., and in 612 BC. Cyaxares the Mede, in alliance with the Babylonians, destroyed Nineveh, and brought to an end the Assyrian Empire.

It is a strange fact that though the Medes were the more powerful of the allied forces which overthrew Assyria, Cyaxares did not press southward to occupy the Assyrian domains. Whatever the reason be, he confined himself to occupying the Cimmerian and Scythian lands of the north, leaving Babylon to become the first world power of symbolic prophecy. Medo-Persia's time had not yet come.

By what prophet was the great king who founded the Medo-Persian Empire named?

By Isaiah. "Thus says the Lord to His anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have bidden, to subdue nations before him." Isaiah 45: 1. (See also verses 2-4 and Isaiah 44:28)

Cyaxares, king of Media and destroyer of Nineveh, was succeeded by Astyages, an indolent, voluptuous monarch who quickly lost his hold on the people and on the army. This provided an opportunity for Cyrus, son of Teispes, of the Persian line of Achaemenes, at this time a minor king of the province of Anshan, to foment a revolt and march on Ecbatana, the capital. After Cyrus had gained three victories, the army of Astyages went over to him and delivered up the capital and their king. Thus, in 549 BC. Cyrus, the obscure king of Anshan, became king of the Medes. Three years later, at the age of forty-three, he was recognized as king of Persia, and the Median kingdom became the kingdom of the Medes and Persians.

The Babylonians noted the rise of Cyrus in their annals, but clearly had no idea that he was to inaugurate a new epoch, in the history of the world. Only the prophet of God by inspiration had foretold his high destiny, which he now began to translate into history.

Having finally united the Medo-Persian kingdom, Cyrus marched and counter-marched west, north, and east to consolidate the territory overrun by Cyaxares, and in a few years he ruled from the River Halys in Asia Minor, where his boundary touched that of Lydia, to the mountains east of Elam, and from Ararat in the north to Southern Babylonia and the Persian Gulf in the south.

This left him with only two rivals, Croesus in Lydia and Nabonidus in Babylon. In 546 BC. Cyrus attacked and overthrew Croesus, and Lydia was added to the Medo-Persian Empire.

The next five or six years Cyrus spent in the east subduing Bactria and what is now known as Afghanistan. He then returned (539 BC.) to deal with the only remaining independent state, Babylon, with its tributary states of Syria and Egypt. How this fell has already been related.

How did Daniel designate the conquerors of Babylon?

"Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians." Daniel 5:28. (See also Daniel 6:8, 12, 15)

Although Cyrus had united the Medes and Persians eight years before and was himself a Persian, precedence was still given to the Medes by reason of their being the older race. A century later, however, the order of the races is reversed, and we begin to read of Persia and Media in the book of Esther (1:3,14, 18,19). And in the Behistun inscription of Darius I. The latter king proudly claims on his great rock

monument in Western Persia, "I am Darius, a Persian, son of a Persian, an Aryan, of Aryan race."

The fact, however, that the book of Daniel uses the form, "Medes and Persians," is one more evidence of the early date of the book, and contradicts the assertions of the critics that it was written at a much later time.

How extensive did Cyrus declare his dominions to be? How did he recognize God's control over the nations?

"Thus says Cyrus, king of Persia, All the kingdoms of the earth hath the Lord God of heaven given me." 2 Chronicles 36:23.

After the absorption of Asia Minor and Babylon, with which latter went Syria and Egypt, Cyrus was literally ruler of the civilized world.

Several ancient historians have corroborated the world-wide extent of the Medo-Persian conquests. Herodotus says: "Wherever Cyrus marched through the earth, it was impossible for the nations to escape him." Xenophon, another Greek historian and soldier, declares in his history of Cyrus that "he struck all with such dread and terror that none ventured to assail him. He subdued from his throne east, west, north, and south."

There is no real contradiction between Cyrus' praise in the Bible to the Hebrew God for his exaltation, and his praise of Merodach in the Babylonian tablets. Though he himself worshipped neither, but rather Ahura Mazda (wise lord), the supreme god of the Persians, it was part of his diplomacy in securing the loyalty of conquered peoples to acknowledge the gods of these nations as having received him into their favor. It would seem, however, that, as in the case of Nebuchadnezzar, his later contacts with the Jews resulted in his recognizing Jehovah as "the Lord God" above all others. (Ezra 1: 2.)

By what part of the great image is the Medo-Persian kingdom represented?

"His breast and his arms of silver!" Daniel 2: 32.

The view has been advocated by some that the silver portion of the image corresponds only to the Median Empire and that the Persian kingdom represents a third one. This contention, however, will not bear investigation. Cyrus became ruler of the combined Medo-Persian kingdom in 546 BC., eight years before he conquered Babylon and overthrew the first empire of symbolic prophecy. The Bible assumes the dual empire to be one from the beginning. Daniel couples the Medes and Persians together in interpreting the handwriting on the wall (Daniel 5: 28), and the angel Gabriel, explaining a later vision, specifically refers to the "kings of Media and Persia!" Daniel 8:20. The separation of the two is a spurious attempt to foreshorten the scope of the image, and explain away its supernatural forecast of world history.

Was silver an appropriate symbol of the Medo-Persian Empire?

Indeed it was.

Silver was as appropriate a symbol for Medo-Persia as gold was for Babylon. It was, for one thing, the principal adornment of the Persian warriors. More significant still, silver was the standard of exchange in the days of this empire, just as, until recently, gold was in universal use for modern international commerce. Their word for money, in fact, was the same as the word for silver. Their principal coins were the silver Median shekel and a silver talent, which was equivalent to sixty thousand shekels. A gold coin, called a daric after Darius, was later used and was valued at twenty silver shekels.

Herodotus tells us that the annual taxes in the days of Darius Hystaspes were remitted to the treasury in silver talents, and lists the tribute from the various provinces in this form.

In what form did Artaxerxes make his special gift to Ezra for the rebuilding of the house of the Lord in Jerusalem?

"And I, even I Artaxerxes the king, do make a decree to all the treasurers which are beyond the river, that whatsoever Ezra the priest, the scribe of the law of the God of heaven; shall require of you, it be done speedily, unto an hundred talents of silver." Ezra 7:21, 22.

Here in the Scripture is a confirmation of the place which the metal silver occupied in the fiscal system of Medo-Persia.

How did Daniel say the second empire would compare with Babylon?

"After thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee." Daniel 2: 39.

Some commentators simply take this to mean "below" or "lower down" in the image as Daniel

sought to present the mental picture of it to the king. But it would hardly seem that this exhausts the implications of the word. There is a definite contrast between the two kingdoms, the second being "inferior" in some way to the first.

To Nebuchadnezzar silver was certainly an inferior metal, for had he not replaced the silver inlay of Merodach's cell with gold? Moreover, in the triumphal inscription of Sargon II, we find a number of precious substances listed in the order: gold, silver, precious stones, brass—which corresponds exactly with the order of the metals in the image, and indicates a declining scale of values which has persisted even to our own day.

In what then was Medo-Persia inferior to Babylon? Not in extent, certainly, for its area was actually three times as large as Babylonia had ever been. Nor could it be regarded as inferior in duration, for Medo-Persia retained its dominant position for 194 years, compared with only seventy or so years of Babylonian supremacy.

It was, however, inferior in luxury and magnificence. We have seen that Nebuchadnezzar chose to use his wealth for the adornment of his palaces and temples that they might strike the beholders with the awe of his majesty. The Medo-Persian kings, on the other hand, considered it best to retain their treasures in a more fluid form, that they might be available at short notice for the financing of great military expeditions. Thus the second empire was not so ostentatiously luxurious as the first, though its actual wealth was probably very much greater.

The Medo-Persian kings were inferior also in that they did not enjoy the same absolute authority as the kings of Babylon. While the first empire was an absolute autocracy, Medo-Persia was apportioned among a number of governors or satraps, who exercised supreme authority within their respective domains, and were not interfered with by the monarch of the empire provided they remitted their taxes regularly to the treasury. In the reign of Artaxerxes there were 127 such satraps. (Esther 1:1.)

The king, too, was subject to the laws of the kingdom. While he might decree new laws, when they were passed he was bound by them. The "law of the Medes and Persians" was supreme. Thus, when Darius was inveigled into signing a religious decree forbidding the petitioning of any god or man save himself for thirty days, he was unable to waive it even to save his trusted counselor, Daniel, from the den of lions. (Daniel 6:15) One can hardly imagine Nebuchadnezzar countenancing such a restriction of his sovereign will.

Was the second empire to prove any more permanent than the golden kingdom?

"Another third kingdom of brass shall bear rule over all the earth." Daniel 2:39.

Strong and powerful as was the second empire, the divine Word had foretold its passing. It endured a little longer, it extended itself a little farther, but in due time, as prophecy had declared, its course was run. The great Cyrus, who was killed in a battle against some northern barbarian tribe (529 BC.), was followed by his son Cambyses (529-522 BC.), Smerdis, an impostor (7 months, 522 BC.) and then Darius Hystaspes (521-485 BC.).

Under Darius Hystaspes the bounds of the empire were pushed to their farthest extent, and the record of his vast achievements survives till to-day in the great rock inscription at Behistun, near Harnadan in Persia.

The one mistake which Darius made, and it was a fatal one, was in stirring up the Greek hornets' nest by seeking to extend his empire into Europe. Darius was not only stopped by the Greeks at Marathon as he had been stopped nowhere else in his campaigns, but he generated a hatred of the Persians in the Greek hearts, never to be assuaged till the Asiatic empire was no more.

A century and a half, however, passed before the end came. Xerxes I, Artaxerxes I, and eight more kings successively bore sway over the Medo-Persian Empire, most of them bearing the names of Darius, Xerxes, or Artaxerxes. The last was Darius Codomannus. And in his reign came the successive military disasters of Granicus, Issus, and Arbela in which Medo-Persia collapsed before the armies of Alexander the Great, and this "third kingdom of brass" began its "rule over all the earth!" (331 BC.).

God's Way Out

12. Genesis 10.
13. Job 26:7.
14. Job 38:32.

12. The Way of Nations Revealed

If you are facing some great problem for which you have not sufficient wisdom, see in this chapter how swiftly guidance was granted to four young men who called on God. And if the future seems obscure, see how God can lift the curtain.

THE sun had long since gone, and the busy activity of Babylon's streets had subsided. Merodach Street was quiet, and darkness had driven the traffic from the Street of the Moon God. The city was becoming as still as those huge stone bulls which loomed up in the darkness by the river gates. King Nebuchadnezzar had retired to rest in his beautiful palace by the Euphrates. But his mind was still active and his thoughts went out over the prospects for his flourishing kingdom in the years to come. What would be its future? [1]

At the age of sixteen he had seen mighty Assyria fall from her age-long power. He had been with his father Nabopolassar at that time, and had seen the proud city of Nineveh brought down. Surely the city of Babylon could not perish like that! When Nineveh fell, Saracus, the last Assyrian king (so it was said) threw himself into the red crackling flames of his burning city in despair. [2] Surely no king of Babylon would ever come to like desperation!

No! he meditated. Babylon should ever increase. The city was built to endure for millenniums. In the ages to come the ends of the earth should still journey hither to admire his great capital. From the windy uplands of Ethiopia in the south and the freezing steppes of Muscovy in the north, they should come to wonder. The straw-colored men of Sinim (China) and the skin-clothed pagans of the Tin Islands of the far west should talk of the glory of Babylon for ever.

"Just a few months ago-what a battle we fought at Carchemish!" his thoughts ran. "That was a death-blow to Egypt. I must follow that up soon. I must besiege Tyre with its ships and sailors. I must invade Egypt-all this world shall feel my might. I will be ruler over the whole earth." But what of the future? Could I but peer into its dark recesses! What of the future? And Nebuchadnezzar fell asleep.

He Dreams a Mysterious Dream

But in his sleep he had a vivid dream. [3] Perhaps this was the answer to his questionings. Yes, yes! It must be! No wonder he awoke. But the dream which was so vivid had vanished completely from his memory. What was it? What was that dream? Just as when God gave the strange dream to Pharaoh in Joseph's days, so now a great anxiety fell upon Nebuchadnezzar. He must know what that dream meant at all costs! Urgently he speeded his messengers. "Call the magicians!" he exclaimed. "They have done strange marvels in the past."

"Send for the astrologers! They say they can foretell future events by the stars. They should know."

"Tell the sorcerers-the spiritualists-to come at once. They claim that the spirits of dead friends teach them. And fetch the Chaldeans! Fetch the scientists! They profess to have gathered the wisdom of the past. They are in touch with the god Bel and the god Nebo. I must-I must know the meaning of that dream!"

"I have dreamed a dream," said Nebuchadnezzar anxiously, when the servants were assembled round the throne. "I have dreamed a dream, and my spirit is troubled-strangely troubled to know the dream."

"O king, live for ever!" said the wise men reassuringly. "Tell thy servants the dream, and we will show the interpretation."

The king's wrath flamed up at once. Probably this was the answer he expected-and it was not good enough! If these men really could interpret a dream, then they must be in touch with whatever power it was that gave strange dreams-and they ought to have power to know a forgotten dream. If they were not in touch with that power-then-and the thought made him furious-they had solemnly fooled him in the past and

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intended to fool him again. "Fool me-me-Nebuchadnezzar! Nebuchadnezzar, son of Nabopolassar! Conqueror of armies! Mightiest monarch of the world! And perhaps they laughed at me when my back was turned."

The effrontery of it! Fooled by astrologers and spiritualists, conjurers and lying scientists! He flamed out: "The thing is gone from me! If you will not make known unto me the dream itself with the interpretation thereof, you shall be cut in pieces, and your houses shall be made a dunghill."

"Let the king tell his servants the dream," replied the frightened men, "and we will show the interpretation."

Dream or Death

"I know of certainty that you would gain the time," roared the angry king. "But if you will not make known unto me the dream, there is but one decree for you. You have prepared lying words-corrapt, lying words to speak before me. Tell me the dream-then shall I know you can show the interpretation."

"But," expostulated the wise men, "there is not a man on earth that can show the king's matter. There is none other that can show it before the king except the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh."

"Out with you! Out with you! Arioch, captain of the guard. Take these men out and execute them. Kill all these 'wise' men The impostors!" Nebuchadnezzar's "Brains Trust" had failed. The wise men were led off to await execution. The guards tramped out to bring Daniel and his three companions to be executed with the others. To the four Hebrews it came as a complete surprise. Probably they knew nothing about the dream until the royal guards appeared at the door with the fearful announcement that they were to be executed.

To be killed like this! When they had hoped to witness for the true God and turn others to Him in the years to come! "What Time I Am Afraid, I Will Trust in Thee" But Daniel was calm. The promise of God was fulfilled in him: "He shall not be afraid of evil tidings: his heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord." [4]

"Why is the decree so hasty, Arioch?" he inquired of the captain of the guard. Arioch explained. "His majesty the king was furious because the wise men could not tell him his dream. He feels they have deceived him in the past."

Daniel asked for Arioch's permission, and went in to speak to the king: "If your majesty will give us a little time, I think we can show the king his dream." The king granted the petition. "Anything-if I can recall that strange dream and get to know the interpretation." Thankful to God for the respite, Daniel went to his house and told his three friends.

"Let us pray to God and ask Him to give us the secret of the forgotten dream, so that we shall not perish with the wise men." So the young men knelt in prayer. Does not God say: "Call unto Me, and I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things, which thou knows not?" [5] Yes, great and mighty things have come to pass as the result of some little prayer-meeting or national day of prayer.

God Delights to Help His Children

While Babylon was enfolded in darkness that night, God revealed the secret to Daniel in a vision. There it was-as clear as- if Daniel had dreamed it himself. "Thanks be to God; we are saved!"

Fervently and gratefully, Daniel thanked God. "He reveals the deep and secret things. He removes kings, and sets up kings. I thank Thee, and praise Thee, O Thou God of my fathers, for Thou has now made known unto us the king's matter." The chief of the executioners was gratified to receive an early call from Daniel. "Destroy not the wise men of Babylon," said the young Hebrew. "Bring me in before the king, and I will show the interpretation."

"Art thou able to make known unto me the dream?" asked Nebuchadnezzar searchingly, when Daniel was brought before him by the eager Arioch.

"The wise men, the astrologers, the magicians, and the soothsayers cannot show this secret to the king," said Daniel. "But there is a God in heaven that reveals secrets, [6] and is making known to the king what shall be in the latter days." A thrill passes through Nebuchadnezzar. His dream is a message from God, telling him just what he wanted to know as he lay on his bed on that wakeful night!

"What shall come to pass in the latter days"-a thrill passes through our own hearts, too-our hearts that beat and move in these "latter days." Is Nebuchadnezzar's dream a message from God to us as well? Confidently and solemnly Daniel continues: "O king, thy thoughts came into thy mind upon thy bed, what

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should come to pass hereafter: and He that reveals secrets makes known to thee what shall come to pass!" How earnestly the king listens! How earnestly we listen! If Daniel gives a panorama of the great events which have happened from Nebuchadnezzar's time down to our own, then-then we shall know what we have often longed to know of the future.

A Dream Sent by God

Confidently Daniel goes on: "Thou, O king, saw, and behold a great image. "This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible. This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, his legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay. Thou saw till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. 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: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth."

"This is the dream," said Daniel, with calm confidence. The king's memory awakened, quick and eager, and his heart assented: "Yes, this is the dream!"

How Simple the Explanation!

"We will tell the interpretation thereof before the king," Daniel went on.

"Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory.

"And where so ever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath He given into your hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold."

"I-my Babylon-is the head of gold," thought the king. "Good! But what shall come to pass hereafter? If the God of heaven has given the world dominion to me so that I may be victorious wherever my armies march, will Babylon's rule last for ever? What is Daniel saying now?"

"After thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee."

"What?" thinks the king. "Will my kingdom pass? Will an inferior defeat the stronger?"

"And another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth.

"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."

"But those strange feet-what can they signify?" thinks the ruler of the golden kingdom.

The voice of Daniel goes on: "And whereas thou saw the feet and toes, part of potters' clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou saw the iron mixed with miry clay.

"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. -

"And whereas thou sawest 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."

"Strange feet-mystery of iron and clay-but now that stone?" Nebuchadnezzar thinks, amazed.

"And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people and it shall stand for ever. 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: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure."

As Nebuchadnezzar thus saw unrolled before him the vivid procession of world kingdoms to the end of time-to the setting up of the Eden-kingdom again-his heart was deeply moved. He seemed to realize that he was in the very presence of the God of heaven. Forgetting his royal dignity, he fell upon his face and actually worshipped Daniel.

"Offer an oblation and sweet incense before Daniel!" he commanded.

"Of a truth," he acknowledged to Daniel when he had somewhat recovered from his emotion, "your God is a God of gods, and a Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, seeing thou could reveal this

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secret!"

"Then the king made Daniel a great man, and gave him many great gifts, and made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon, and the chief of the governors over all the wise men of Babylon."

The Detailed Interpretation of the Dream

How strangely that marvelous dream from God has been fulfilled! How easy it is to understand! "Thou art this head of gold," said God's interpreter. "Thou -Babylon" (pointed out and named in Daniel 2:37, 38). Nebuchadnezzar, hoped that his kingdom would stand for ever -as nations hope in these days. What nation could vanquish his armies? And who could break down those mighty walls and take his great city? Why, Babylon was strong enough to defy a siege of a thousand years' duration!

But Babylon's armies were beaten, and the city of Babylon was taken. Taken practically "without fighting," as Cyrus himself boasts in an inscription. The armies of the Medes and Persians surrounded the city, and secretly made plans to turn the Euphrates into another channel. This they did on the night of Belshazzar's feast. Slowly the waters sank, and then the Persian soldiers entered at the river gate at the corner of the city. They rushed along the river bed, and, finding the gates to the streets open, as they had hoped, they took possession of the city. The king was killed, and the proud empire of Babylon went down for ever.

The Medo-Persian empire then became the world's greatest power. Its territory stretched from India to Greece, and from Russia to Libya and Ethiopia. But Medo-Persia passed away, vanquished by Greece. Both these world kingdoms are pointed out by name in the Scriptures See Daniel 8:20,21. While Alexander lived it seemed as though Greece were invincible. There seemed every prospect that the great empire would endure for ever. Just as it seems with some nations of today. But when Alexander died his kingdom was divided into four parts. And, behold! a new power arose in the west, and Greece was crushed by Rome.

That Rome was the fourth world power is shown in the Scriptures also. See Luke 2:1. Rome had the power to tax "all the world." How long the power of Rome endured! Symbolized by the legs of tough, durable iron, it seemed as though its power would never be broken. Even now we have many Roman laws and customs. Its language is still used in the medical and scientific world.

But Rome fell, as Babylon, Medo-Persia, and Greece had fallen before. Angles and Saxons took Britain, Franks took Northern France. The Suevi took Portugal. The Visigoths took Spain and south-west France. The Burgundians took south-east France. The Alemanni, Lombards, and Ostrogoths took part of Germany, Switzerland, and Austria. The Heruli took Italy. The Vandals took North Africa. [7]

Thus imperial Rome's territory was divided among these ten tribes, who were in large degree founders of the present nations of Western Europe. Some weak; some strong. What an astonishing vision is this! It stretches from Babylon's time to the time of the crash of world empires in the setting up of God's kingdom. Gold, silver, brass, iron! The vision portrays four mighty world empires, then the fourth divided into a number of kingdoms.

Babylon, the golden kingdom, was followed by Medo-Persia in 538 BC. Medo-Persia ruled two centuries and then was overcome by Greece in 331 BC. Greece took the power in her turn, but came under the rule of Rome in 168 BC. Rome endured three times as long as any of the three preceding empires. But by AD 476 her kingdom had broken into fragments. The "Ten Kingdoms of Western Europe" ruled in her place. Will they ever be united as one great "world-power" again? Never!

Charlemagne tried to weld Europe into one. Napoleon wished to do so. Kaiser Wilhelm followed suit, hoping for world dominion; Adolf Hitler had far-reaching plans for the same. But never again will this take place. No, the feet have the weakness of clay as well as the strength of iron. "They shall not cleave together, even as iron is not mixed with clay," declares the voice of God.

Good News for Our Day

But "in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed." This is the best news the world has ever heard! This prophecy is sure as the rising of the sun. It will come to pass at the time appointed. When God announced that the Flood would come after one hundred and twenty years-the Flood came. When God declared seven years of plenty in Egypt, and then seven years of famine-the plenty and the famine came to pass.

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When God declared that Israel should be freed from Egypt after four centuries-they marched out at the time appointed. Not all the armies or dictators in the world could prevent it. So when God declares that in the days of these kings-our own time-earthly kingdoms will crash and crumble and be seen no more, while He will set up His glorious Eden-kingdom of everlasting health and peace, then, thank God, it will come to pass as He has appointed.

In our own time - "in the days of these kings"-Jesus, the Prince of Peace, is coming to reign over the world. And His kingdom shall stand for ever. He who welcomed the mothers and blessed their boys and girls, is calling us now. His kind and tender voice invites us, at this moment, to become His dear children. And to as many as open the heart's door to Him now, to them gives He "the right [margin] to become the sons of God. [8] Then, "when He shall appear, we shall be like Him. [9]

"And now, little children, abide in Him; that, when He shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before Him at His coming." [10]

What a blessed time of peace and progress His coming will usher in for those who trust in His name! What a sad, sad disillusionment to those who reject Him! But "yet there is room." Our heavenly Father will not refuse even the weakest or the most sinful who turn to Him in confidence. If you come to Him just now, turning your back on sin, He will in no wise cast you out. His arms of love will welcome you. Though your feet may have slipped over and over again, He will receive you and call you His own. Do not fear to trust Him.

REFERENCES:

1. Daniel 2:29.
2. Myers' General History, Page 5.
3. Daniel 2:1.
4. Psalm 56:3; Psalm 112:7.
5. Jeremiah 33:3.
6. Deuteronomy 29:29.
7. Great Empires of Prophecy, Pages 677, 678.
8. John 1:12,13.
9. 1 John 3:2.
10. 1 John 2:28.

13. The Way Out of a Fiery Furnace

If you who are reading this story are passing through some fiery trial-remember that "the form of the fourth," the sympathetic Savior, will ever be wear you as you do His will and trust in His loving-kindness.

HOW soon we forget! The dream of the great image left a great impression on Nebuchadnezzar the king. He felt he had indeed received a revelation from God. But as the years rolled on, the impression faded away. Victory after victory had flushed him with pride. Success after success had dulled his once keen perceptions of God-as success often does.

Since the year 602 BC he had ground down all resistance from Judah and its capital, Jerusalem. He had burned the city with fire, executed King Zedekiah's two sons, put out the eyes of the king, and carried him off prisoner to Babylon. [1] He would show them who was master! When the city of Lachish closed its doors against him he built furnace fires against the walls until the hard stone crumbled into powdery lime. [2]

Nebuchadnezzar's Plan to Unite the Empire

How could he weld these newly conquered cities and countries together into the great empire of Babylon? Someone had a bright idea. Why not set up a mighty image that would represent Babylon? Then educate all the people to worship this symbol of empire? That image which the king had seen in his dream-that was a remarkable symbol. Why not actually make a copy of that, with its glorious head of gold, and

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more time than our parents had, shouldn't we? We do have more time, but more time for what? We are much better off, but we certainly are no better. Far from it!

If some of you who read these lines live off the beaten path and do not have all the modern conveniences, take some comfort in the thought that you still have just as much time for life's worth-while things as the people of the city have.

Strange to say, with all our conveniences and our extra time, we do not have time for the necessary things. We are too busy to go to church, at least some of us are, or to worship in our homes. We do not have time to be neighborly. We cannot crowd in a few minutes a day for Bible study. We are too busy to take spiritual food or to thank God for His blessings, too busy to live and too busy to get ready to die.

We save time in so many ways. Trips that required days with the horse and buggy can now be made in as many hours by car. If we are in an extra rush, we can fly to our destination at the speed of hundreds of miles an hour. We get there sooner and get back, and then do not know what to do with the time we have saved.

If we used profitably all the time saved by our modern conveniences, we would be a better people. No doubt about it, we have a great deal more time, but more time for what?

Have you ever stopped to think why for nearly six thousand years men went on in the same old rut, doing things precisely as their fathers before them had done, and then suddenly in one brief century the whole life of mankind was revolutionized by the increase of knowledge and by the multitude of miraculous inventions?

In Daniel 12: 4, the Lord foretold the remarkable increase of knowledge and the speed of our time. "But 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." If we believe the Bible, surely we can come to no other conclusion but that this prophecy is fulfilled in our day. And if so, we must be living in the "time of the end." Of course, the "time of the end" does not mean the end of time, but I believe God intended for this unusual time to impress upon our hearts the fact that we are nearing the end of time, that Jesus Christ is coming back to the world to set up His kingdom.

The disciples were just as curious as you and I would be, and they asked Him when these things would be.

Jesus answered them in that wonderful twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew, in which He tells of the troubles and confusion that will precede His coming again. One of the definite things He asked them to remember was the fulfillment of the prophecies of Daniel. The second chapter of Daniel presents an outline of world history, and an understanding of its events will help us to realize where we are in the stream of time in relation to what the disciples called "the end of the world." What does it mean for you and me to face the future in these stirring times?

28. A Look Into the Future

ONE MORNING about six-thirty I was awakened from a very sound sleep by a terrific explosion, which rocked the house and shook the bed. I was sure something dreadful had happened not far away. Jumping to my feet, I looked out the window, and about two blocks away I could see a cloud of dust rising over the trees. Hurriedly dressing I made my way in the direction of the commotion. I noticed a group of people some of them in bathrobes and dressing gowns. Ambulances and fire department apparatus were arriving with screeching sirens. As I passed buildings across the street I noticed that the plate glass had been blown out. Birds that had been sleeping in trees nearby were dead on the ground. The trees were stripped of all their leaves.

There had been an explosion in a dwelling, and the house was badly wrecked. It was found later that someone with a grudge against the occupants had planted several sticks of dynamite in the basement. Fortunately no one was killed, but several who were sleeping in the place were taken to the hospital for treatment.

In this house lived a psychic reader, a fortune-teller. In the back and also at the front of the house were large signs giving Professor Blank's office hours. For a fee he was willing, yes, he professed to be

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able, to tell his clients what would happen to them tomorrow, next month, or next year. But he did not seem to know anything about the explosion that was to wreck his house.

A good many people long for a look into the future, to know what will happen to them or to others. That is why millions of dollars are spent each year by honest but inquisitive souls who are trying to find out what lies ahead. That is why fortune-tellers, soothsayers, and astrologers are busy. I really think that it is a good thing we do not know what tomorrow, next week, or the coming years will bring to us.

God knew that it would not be best for you and me to know all the experiences that will come to us. "Into each life some rain must fall," the poet tells us. Few of us get through this world without trouble and disappointment. Of course, we have found out, too, that most of our troubles were not so bad as we expected they would prove to be. If we knew all the disappointments and difficulties ahead, some of us would worry ourselves into the hospital or the undertaker's establishment. One thing we do know, for God has promised, "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that you may be able to bear it." I Corinthians 10: 13.

"The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children," we are told in Deuteronomy 29:29. The Lord has told us all we need to know about tomorrow. Through His prophets He has given us glimpses into the future. The rise and fall of nations right down to the end of time was revealed to Daniel and to other prophets. It is a most interesting story. The history of our world from the days of old Babylon down past our own day is revealed in the second and the seventh chapters of the Book of Daniel. The second chapter tells of a dream King Nebuchadnezzar had and of its meaning.

He was the proud, haughty ruler of old Babylon, and believed that the whole world was at his feet, and that he and his heirs would rule for ever.

One night he had an unusual dream; and when morning came, try as he might, he could not recall the details. It troubled him so much that he called together all his soothsayers, his fortune-tellers, his astrologers, his wise men. I imagine he may have said to them, "Men, I had an unusual dream last night. It was most impressive. It awakened me, and afterward I could not sleep. It troubles me now. I do not remember a single detail of it. It was no ordinary dream, and it must have a meaning. I want you to tell me the dream and what it means."

They had never had a command like this. It was unreasonable. They pretended to be able to foretell the future, to have unusual wisdom, and many times they had given the king counsel. Now they were confused. He wanted them to recall for him the dream he had forgotten.

These attendants of the king had been sailing under false colors, pretending to have ability to reveal secrets, to foretell the future. They passed as supermen. They often gave counsel or advice which would be right whatever the outcome. For instance, on one occasion a king inquired of them whether he should go to war with another nation. Their reply was, "A great nation will be defeated." Which ever way the tide of battle ebbed their prophecy would be safe.

Here was a test of their ability. "Show the dream, and the interpretation thereof," the king demanded. He went even further than that by saying, "If you will not make known unto me the dream, with the interpretation thereof, you shall be cut in pieces, and your houses shall be made a dunghill."

They begged and pleaded with the king to tell them the dream, assuring him that they could then tell him with certainty the meaning.

He was disgusted with them, and expressed his feeling in these words: "You have prepared lying and corrupt words to speak before me, till the time be changed: therefore tell me the dream, and I shall know that you can show me the interpretation."

In desperation they pleaded, "There is not a man upon the earth that can show the king's matter: therefore there is no king, lord, nor ruler, that asked such things at any magician, or astrologer, or Chaldean. And 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." They really spoke the truth this time. No one but God could tell what would happen in the days to come.

True as their statement was, it did not make the king feel any better. They had deceived him too many times, and he would have no more of it. The Bible record says that he was "furious," and issued a command that every wise man in Babylon should be slain. Among the king's wise men was a God-fearing young man who had been taken as a captive from Jerusalem. When the word came to this young man, Daniel, that his life was to be taken, he asked why the king had been so hasty in the matter. He requested

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that time be given them, so he and his companions might call on God to reveal this matter to them. Time was granted, and Daniel and his three young companions prayed to God, asking that the dream might be revealed to them.

God never neglects His children in time of need. He did reveal to these young men the king's dream and the meaning, or interpretation, also. Daniel did not forget to thank God for His help, as we are so prone to do. He said, "Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever: for wisdom and might are His: and He changes the times and the seasons: He removes kings, and sets up kings. He gives wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding. He reveals the deep and secret things. He knows what is in the darkness, and the light dwells with Him. I thank Thee, and praise Thee, O Thou God of my fathers."

Daniel went in confidently before Nebuchadnezzar, and when the king asked whether he could tell the dream and its meaning, the young man without any hesitation declared emphatically, "The secret which the king hath demanded cannot the wise men, the astrologers, the magicians, the soothsayers, show unto the king. But there is a God in heaven that reveals secrets, and makes known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days."

Daniel assured the king that he had no wisdom above his fellows. God had answered his prayers, and had given him the dream and its meaning. Here was an opportunity for Daniel to glorify himself.

I imagine the king was a bit nervous. He was anxious to know the dream and its meaning, so Daniel began at once. He outlined to the king a brief history of our world, the rise and fall of nations, and the conquests of one country over another. He did not stop with Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom but told of other kingdoms that would arise and of the course of empires and governments right down to the dropping of the curtain on the drama of our world. Most of this prophecy, we find, has been fulfilled, just as Daniel outlined it. The study of this Book of Daniel and also of the last book of the Bible, Revelation, has given me the fullest confidence in the Bible as God's Book, and of His direction and guidance in the affairs of men and nations.

You, too, are perhaps anxious to know what Daniel told the king. He told of his time, of our days in which we live, and of years yet to come. At the time of World War II students of prophecy, and of the second chapter of Daniel in particular, knew full well that neither Hitler nor any other individual would ever succeed in setting up a world kingdom. The Bible plainly declares that it will never be.

Try to imagine the king Nebuchadnezzar robed in all his regal splendor, with every muscle taut, his attention intently focused on the young Daniel, that he might not miss a word.

Daniel begins, "Thou, O king, saw, and behold a great image." No doubt the king's eyes opened a bit wider. Yes, that was right. He had seen an image in his dream. He was an idolater, a worshipper of the gods of the Chaldeans, and he was interested in images. Daniel went on, "This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible. This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, his legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay. Thou saw till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces." Daniel put no if or but into his declaration. He was positive about it, and he knew by the expression on the king's face that he was telling the dream correctly. No doubt the monarch stopped him a few times to exclaim, "That is exactly right, young man!"

Daniel continued to the end of the dream: "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: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth."

Nebuchadnezzar was naturally more interested in the meaning of this strange dream than in the dream itself. With what rapt attention he must have listened as young Daniel with an air of authority finished the interpretation!

In just a few sentences Daniel had outlined to the king the history of the world from the days of his kingdom down through succeeding kingdoms. Man has never been able to pack so much history into so few words. In eight Bible verses is told the whole story of our world. The touch of the divine, the finger of God, is in this record, this prophecy. We know this full well, for history tells us positively that this prophecy of Daniel's time has been fulfilled in the minutest details. Daniel said to the king, "Thou art this head of gold."

That statement pleased the king as he listened. He was a great ruler, and Babylon was a mighty empire. Practically the whole world was prostrate at his feet. It could quite fitly be called the golden

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kingdom.

If this had caused Nebuchadnezzar any elation, what was to follow would not sound quite so good to him, for it did not flatter him at all. "After thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth!" Daniel 2: 39.

It may not have occurred to the king that his kingdom might be conquered, or come to an end. But Daniel told him that other kingdoms were to come. Nebuchadnezzar was not worried too much about it right then; and even in later years, when Cyrus laid siege to the city of Babylon, the Babylonians lost no sleep, and did little worrying, for they were confident that their city was impregnable. They had gathered inside the walls of the city enough food to supply them for decades. There were also many acres inside the walls, so that they might grow sufficient food for themselves indefinitely. From their high and sturdy walls they scoffed at Cyrus, and had ample reason for their feelings of security. The Medes and Persians had no implements of warfare to tear down their walls or to take the city. God had said, however, that enemies would take the city, and had even told how it would be done. In the seventh chapter of Daniel the prophet employed beasts to represent the same succession of world empires.

A very interesting prophecy concerning the taking of Babylon by Cyrus was made by the prophet Isaiah in Isaiah 45:1. "Thus said the Lord to His anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have held, to subdue nations before him. And I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two hinged gates. And the gates shall not be shut."

The river Euphrates ran through Babylon, passing under the walls on either side of the city. A wall of unusual height and thickness surrounded the metropolis, and for safety's sake the Babylonians had made walls on both sides of the river. Massive, two-hinged gates in these river walls were opened by day, so citizens could pass freely over the bridges connecting the parts of the city on each side of the river. At night these gates were closed. Cyrus knew of a coming festival in Babylon, and since he had no machines of war powerful enough to batter down the walls, he decided to use strategy. He knew that at the time of this festival the citizens would be given over to drunkenness, carousal, and dissipation, so he planned to enter the city at the height of their revelry. A large army of men were set to digging and dredging above the city, so as to turn the Euphrates from its course. On the night of the festival the river was turned from its usual bed, and the army of Cyrus marched down the muddy channel under the walls. As their leader expected, the reveling Babylonians had failed to close the river gates; and the invading soldiers marched in and surprised the garrison, taking the city without any difficulty.

It is remarkable how God revealed to Nebuchadnezzar through Daniel that his kingdom would be overthrown, and perhaps still more remarkable, that He told Isaiah the prophet a hundred and fifty years before the event that Cyrus would take the city, entering through the two-hinged gates which would not be shut. Man guesses as to what lies ahead, but only God knows the future.

It is significant to note here that drunkenness and debauchery led to the downfall of Babylon. They went into their indulgent revels as subjects of the king of Babylon, but awoke to find themselves slaves to the king of Persia.

Daniel had more to tell the king. He declared positively that after the Medes and Persians there would be "another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth. 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. And whereas thou saw the feet and toes, part of potters' clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou saw the iron mixed with miry clay. 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." Daniel 2: 39-42.

The Medes and Persians got into difficulty with the ambitious Alexander the Great who was now at the head of the armies of Greece. In a number of encounters the forces of the two nations met. Finally on the battlefield of Arbela, with Alexander's legions outnumbered twenty to one, the Persians were defeated, and Greece became the third universal empire represented in the image by the belly and thighs of brass.

The iron monarchy of Rome next took the leading place in world affairs. For a time the kingdom did have the strength of iron as mentioned in the dream, but weakness crept in, and it was later divided into ten independent kingdoms comparing to the ten toes of the image-Ostrogoths, Alemanni, Visigoths, Franks, Vandals, Suevi, Burgundians, Heruli, Anglo-Saxons, and Lombards. These became the nations of modern Europe-England, France, Germany, and so forth.

The Lord told Daniel that in the days of these kings the God of heaven would set up a kingdom. The image was to be smitten on the feet by a stone cut out without hands. We are living in the days of the

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ten toes of the image. Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome have come and gone. Daniel said that God would set up His kingdom on this earth in the days of the ten toes. In other words, Christ is to return to this earth as He promised. No one knows the day or hour of His return, but God has given us many signs in the Bible telling when His coming is near.

It has been estimated that there were about fifty signs given in the Scriptures foretelling the coming of the Messiah as a babe in Bethlehem and the significance of His coming. But the generation in which we live has more than five times fifty signs showing the certainty, the manner, and the approximate time of His Second Coming. Several of the dozen or more great lines of prophecy have found startling fulfillment right in our own troubled times. Happy is he who heeds these reminders that God's Word is true and puts his full trust in the divine wisdom which makes its plan so clear to men.

29. More Signs

AN ATTORNEY appeared before the court and asked that a certain case be dismissed because it was impossible for his client to be present. The judge wanted to be sure that there was some good reason for dismissal, and asked the attorney whether he had just reason for making such an unusual request.

"Yes, your honor," the attorney replied. "I have several good reasons why my client cannot appear before the court. First of all, he is dead. The second reason, your honor -" Here the judge stopped him. "That is sufficient reason," he said.

In previous chapters we have given sufficient evidence that we are nearing the end of time, that Jesus is coming back to the earth again. But there are many more signs, of which we can briefly mention only a few.

One day on the Mount of Olives the disciples asked Jesus to tell them some of the signs of His coming and of the end of the world, and His response to their query is recorded in the twenty-fourth chapter of the Book of Matthew. Here is a remarkable prophecy revealing the social and political events to take place as signs that His return is near.

In verse 7 He said, "Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilence, and earthquakes, in divers places." The last century has witnessed the greatest wars of all time, two of them involving the whole world. Famines, pestilence, and earthquakes have been startlingly on the increase.

In the twenty-ninth verse He mentioned the darkening of the sun and the falling of the stars as signs of His return. We have but to consult historical records for the notable fulfillment of this prophecy.

The one outstanding Dark Day of history was May 19, 1780, and the great meteoric shower known as the falling of the stars took place on November 13, 1833. You will be interested in the contemporary account of these unusual happenings, or were they only happenings? They were foretold by Jesus, and they came as He predicted.

"Timothy Dwight, president of Yale, remembered that 'a very general opinion prevailed, that the day of judgment was at hand. The [Connecticut] House of Representatives, being unable to transact their business, adjourned,' but the Council lighted candles, preferring, as a member said, to be found at work if the judgment were approaching."-"Bible Readings" (1949), page 311.

"The remarkable Dark Day of May 19, 1780, is described by Samuel Williams of Harvard. The professor relates that the obscuration approached with the clouds from the southwest 'between the hours of ten and eleven a.m., and continued until the middle of the next night,' varying in degree and duration in different localities. In some places 'persons could not see to read common print in the open air, for several hours,' although 'this was not generally the case.' 'Candles were lighted up in the houses;-the birds having sung their evening songs, disappeared, and became silent;-the fowls retired to roost;-the cocks were crowing all around, as at break of day;-objects could not be distinguished but at a very little distance; and everything bore the appearance and gloom of night.' "-Id. page 310.

Man could find no reason for such darkness. The only reason we can think of is that Jesus said that there would be a time of darkness in the last days. The falling of the stars was as unusual and unexplainable as the Dark Day. There were no known natural causes or reasons for such a meter shower. It was a sign hung in the heavens to tell mankind that the world was nearing the close of time. Prof. Denison

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saving human souls for His eternal kingdom! Shall we not be more faithful in the part He has allowed us to play in human redemption?

The Lord takes these various gifts of heart and hand and makes them His very own. He uses them as effectually in His work as if they were the direct touch of His own heart and hand. By the power of the Holy Spirit these gifts become channels of salvation for the lost whom we may not personally see or reach.

God does not accept money as a satisfaction for transgression. All the riches of the wealthy are not sufficient to cover a single sin. We cannot earn God's favor nor bring merit to our souls through the payment of money into His treasury. Not by human works or deeds of righteousness are men saved. "You were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation [doings, or conduct of life]; . . . but with the precious blood of Christ." 1 Peter 1:18, 19.

In wondrous entreaty our heavenly Father speaks to you and to me: My child, I still have windows in heaven. They are yet in service. The bolts slide as easily as of old. The hinges have not grown rusty. I would rather fling them open and pour forth than keep them shut and hold back. I opened them for Moses, and the sea parted. I opened them for Joshua, and Jordan rolled back. I opened them for Gideon, and the enemy hosts fled. I will open them for you, if you will only let Me. On this side of the windows, heaven is the same rich storehouse as ever. The fountains and the streams are still bursting with gifts. The lack is not on My side. It is on yours. I am waiting. I am ready. Prove Me now.

God makes a supreme bid for our love and loyalty. Let each scrutinize prayerfully his accounting with the Most High, and ask himself: "Are the showers of blessing falling upon my family and upon my church? Are the windows above us open wide, or is my covetousness grieving the heavenly Giver and beating back the Holy Spirit?" To those living in the most fateful and momentous epoch of earth's history, God sends this counsel, this message. The gospel of the kingdom, now extending into all the world, calls for wholehearted service and liberality. Our individual growth in grace and participation in the final victory demands that we forfeit no heavenly gifts or privileges. Let us now accept the heavenly challenge and prove the worth of His promise: "O taste and see that the Lord is good: blessed is the man that trusts in Him." Psalm 34:8.

11. A DARING PROPHECY PROVES TRUE

WE should all be concerned about the future," remarks a well-known writer, "because we have to spend all of our lives there." Man may produce marvelous inventions. He may predict the weather, and forecast astronomical events; but the wisest cannot tell what a day will bring forth or what will occur in the unborn years or centuries ahead.

Only the Infinite can definitely foretell the future. Of all the books that flood the world, the Bible alone presents an authentic, dependable program of coming events. Here is no careless, clumsy guesswork; for the prophecies are a vital, carefully prepared part of the great Book. All are invited to study, test, and verify the divine forecasts. Says the Infinite One: "I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like Me, declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure." Isaiah 46:9, 10.

The word of God places fulfilled prophecy above all other external evidence of its inspiration. Even Christ based His claim to Messiahship upon the fulfillment of His word. "I tell you before it come," He declared, "that, when it is come to pass, you may believe that I am He." John 13:19. Again and again the prophets of old summoned unbelievers to face this crucial test. And today Holy Writ calls upon the peoples of earth to examine its predictions and be convinced of its accuracy.

"Have I not declared unto thee of old, and showed it? and you are My witnesses." "Despise not prophesying. Prove all things; hold fast that which is good." Isaiah 40, R.V.; 1 Thessalonians 5:20, 21.

In this emphatic language the Bible challenges the entire world to watch the unfolding scroll of prophecy as it merges into history. It invites the wise man to duplicate the feat and write history in advance, but no one accepts the challenge. Yet, "with the sure, luminous strokes of infinite knowledge," the Bible speaks as unhesitatingly of the future as historians do of the past.

Old Egypt Speaks

As the curtain of secular history lifted in the Near East, the valley of the Nile already possessed a highly developed civilization. Consider its wealth of agriculture, its scholars who wrote prose and poetry,

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its scientists with a considerable knowledge of medicine and chemistry, and its unsurpassed artisans and architects whose monuments have stood throughout forty centuries. What mere man would have risked his reputation to foretell the complete eclipse of Egyptian culture and greatness?

Human imagination would never have pictured so tragic a downfall; yet Inspiration declared: "I will make the land of Egypt utterly waste and desolate." Ezekiel 29:10.

The Voice of Tyre

Three millenniums ago the Mediterranean was a vast Phoenician lake dotted with white-sailed galleys and fringed with colonies established by the parent city-state. The Phoenicians were antiquity's intrepid missionaries of civilization, and Tyre was the commercial metropolis of the world.

For centuries after century the inhabitants of "the merchant city" had despised Jehovah and practiced the degrading rites of Baal and Ashtaroah worship. The divine warnings had been disregarded, until at length the God of heaven addressed to them this final message:

"Behold, I am against thee, O Tyrus, and will cause many nations to come up against thee, as the sea causes his waves to come up. And they shall destroy the walls of Tyrus, and break down her towers: 'I will also scrape her dust from her, and make her like the top of a rock. It shall be a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea. . . . And they shall know that I am the Lord.'" Ezekiel 26:3-6.

The first act in this drama of the destruction of Tyre was accomplished by King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, who during a thirteen-year siege sent the flower of his army into the bitter struggle against the staunch defenders. Vengeance was wreaked upon the once princely city, and for a period of seventy years she remained as a forgotten heap of ruins. But the dauntless spirit of the Phoenicians at length revived, and on an island a half mile from shore they rebuilt their emporium, the new Tyre.

Conquered by Alexander

Two centuries later, as Alexander the Great marched to the conquest of the world, Tyre proudly defied him. The young emperor, who could not be baffled, constructed a great mole, or causeway, and over this approach his troops fought their way to new triumphs. He destroyed the city and ordered the buildings to be razed to their foundations. By this military stroke Alexander signally fulfilled two prophecies given centuries before: "I will also scrape her dust from her, and make her like the top of a rock."

Twenty four centuries elapse, and an American traveler visiting the site of ancient Tyre finds but a squalid fishing village and a place for the spreading of nets. "Here," he writes, "was the little isle once covered by her palaces and surrounded by her fleets: but alas! Tyre has indeed become like 'the top of a rock.' The sole tokens of her more ancient splendor—columns of red and gray granite, sometimes forty or fifty heaped together, or marble pillars—lie broken and strewn in the midst of the sea; and the hovels that now nestle upon a portion of her site, present no contradiction of the dread decree, 'You shall be no more.'"

Here is a challenge. If a group of agnostics and infidels really desire to disprove the Bible, why do they not form a corporation and attempt to rebuild ancient Tyre?

The Dazzling Empire of Babylon

History, romance, and tradition have enshrined ancient Babylon with a picturesque and fascinating charm possessed by no other city of antiquity. Yet in the days of her might and magnificence, prophets of God foretold—

That she would become a tenantless and desolate metropolis, never to be inhabited. Jeremiah 50:13.

That amid the heaps of ruins and "pools of water" the superstitious Arabians would never "pitch tent there," nor the shepherds "make their fold." Isaiah 14:23; 13:20.

That its lordly palaces and temples would become dens for wild animals, caves for reptiles, and a habitation of owls and vultures. Verses 21, 22.

That Babylon would continue as "an astonishment" to the world. Jeremiah 50:13; 51:37, 41.

Time marches on; two and a half millenniums pass; and to this day travelers and archaeologists in the Euphrates Valley are awed and astonished as they behold the complete fulfillment of all these prophecies. Looking upon the ruins of Babylon, a noted explorer of dead cities observes:

"The traveler visits with no common emotion the scene of so many great and solemn events. Here Nebuchadnezzar boasted of his glories, and was punished for his pride. To those deserted halls were brought the captives of Judea. In them Daniel, undazzled by the glories around him, remained steadfast to his faith, rose to be a governor amongst his rulers, and prophesied the downfall of the kingdom. There was

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held Belshazzar's feast and was seen the writing on the wall. Between those crumbling mounds Cyrus entered the neglected gates. Those massive ruins cover the spot where Alexander died!" - Wonders of the Past, Page 135.

Archaeology, "the handmaiden of history," declares that Babylon was indeed a mighty city, even when judged by modern standards; that the hanging gardens existed in all the unmatched grandeur with which legend has invested them; that its palaces were magnificent; that Belshazzar was an altogether real and living monarch; and that amid the ruins there has been unearthed a royal hall or auditorium capable of entertaining a thousand guests at the imperial banquet.

Regarding the book of Daniel, eminent archaeologists assert that its narrative is so vivid, minute, and real that it must have been written at the time of Babylon's greatness-not two or three hundred years later. The charge that it was the product of an after generation is not new. More than seventeen hundred years ago the same accusation was made by the skeptic Porphyry, but every succeeding century has given added evidence to its unerring truthfulness; and in our day we approach the climax of fulfillment.

A Remarkable Classic and Its Author

When the author of this intensely interesting classic was a youth of some eighteen years, he was ruthlessly torn from his homeland in Judea to become an exile in Babylon. He was of noble birth and was resolute in his purpose, whatever the cost, to remain loyal to God. Nearly four years of his captivity had slipped swiftly by, when suddenly he faced a great crisis. The brain trust at the imperial court had dismally failed to reproduce the king's elusive dream, and, in his disappointed rage, Nebuchadnezzar ordered the death of the entire fraternity of wise men.

Daniel, a member of this select group, was in grave peril; but instead of going to his death as the king had decreed, we find him standing before the mightiest monarch of the age with this emphatic statement: "There is a God in heaven that reveals secrets, and makes known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days." Daniel 2:28.

With intrepid confidence the youth continued his presentation: "Thy dream, and the visions of thy head upon thy bed, are these. . . . You, O king, saw, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible. This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, his legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay. You saw till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. . . . And the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth." Verses 28-35.

Without hesitation or uncertainty the young spokesman declared this to be the forgotten dream and then proceeded with the interpretation: "You, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven has given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. . . . You art this head of gold." Verses 37, 38.

What an appropriate symbol for "the golden kingdom of a golden age." Inspiration had already described the Babylonian Empire as "the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellence." Isaiah 13:19. And how pleasing it would have been if Daniel could have assured Nebuchadnezzar that his kingdom would stand forever! But, irrespective of the possible effect upon the king, Daniel proceeded with the message from heaven:

"And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee." Daniel 2:39.

Some sixty-seven years after this prophecy was given, the Medo-Persians conquered queenly Babylon, slew Belshazzar, and possessed themselves of its treasures and territory. Under the leadership of such great emperors as Cyrus and Darius, Persia extended its authority from Ethiopia to India, a territory embracing 127 provinces. While greater in extent, Medo-Persia was "inferior" to Babylon in brilliancy and grandeur, even as silver is inferior to gold.

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

These words of Daniel indicate a yet wider expanse of empire. In fulfillment, consider the meteoric rise of Greece, and the passing of world leadership from Asia to Europe. Alexander the Great, the mightiest conqueror of antiquity, overwhelmed the Persians in three great battles, the final and decisive engagement occurring at Arbela, 331 BC. Yet Alexander died at an early age; his kingdom soon crumbled; and when on the memorable field of Pydna 168 BC, the Roman legions vanquished the Greek phalanxes, Rome took its place as the undisputed master of the civilized world. This was in full harmony with the prophetic outline given through Daniel:

"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.

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The Roman Empire Crashes to Its Doom

Yet even the mighty Caesars of the Seven-Hilted City were not destined to rule the world forever. We read the words of prophecy:

“And whereas you saw the feet and toes, part of potters’ clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as you saw the iron mixed with miry clay. 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 [“brittle,” margin].” Verses 41, 42.

History reveals the precise and accurate fulfillment. Between AD 351 and 476, Teutonic tribes from Northern Europe, swarming across the Rhine and the Danube, fell upon the dying Roman giant. Appropriating to themselves the rich provinces of his territory, they laid the foundations for the modern nations of Southern and Western Europe. The parallel prophecy recorded in the seventh chapter of Daniel states that Rome would be divided into ten parts. And in the words of one commentator writing on this subject: “Ten kingdoms, ten distinct and independent nations—no more, no less had fixed themselves within the boundaries of Western Rome; and the prophecy, spoken and written more than a thousand years before, was literally fulfilled.”

The tribal conquerors who established these nations were the Anglo-Saxons, the Alani, the Franks, the Burgundians, the Suevi, the Visigoths, the Lombards, the Huns, the Vandals, and the Ostrogoths. The three last named were long ago utterly destroyed, while the other seven are among the modern nations of Europe.

Throughout the years many rulers and statesmen have attempted to unite these kingdoms that were “partly strong, and partly brittle” in to one great empire, or at least into a United States of Europe. Diplomats devised leagues, treaties, and the bonds of intermarriage. Charlemagne, Charles V, Napoleon, and Kaiser Wilhelm marshaled their legions, but all dismally failed in their ambitions; and Hitler’s ambitious plans likewise went down to defeat. Along the centuries the sure word of prophecy has declared: “The kingdom shall be divided. . . . They shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay.” Verses 41-43. To the end of the present age no other universal kingdom is to be established. “The Scripture cannot be broken.”

World Empire of the Future

But what of the future? The prophet answers: “And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed, and 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. Forasmuch as you 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 has made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure.” Verses 44, 45.

Looking backward upon the vivid panorama of accurately fulfilled prophecy, we see how gilded Babylon, ruthless Medo-Persia, intellectual Greece, and iron Rome each arose, accomplished its national destiny according to the divine blueprint, then crumbled to ruins. The next act in the great drama will be the establishment of Christ’s eternal kingdom.

The foregoing are but a few of the many amazing Bible prophecies that have been accurately fulfilled through the centuries. They inspire complete confidence in the Bible as an authentic twentieth-century Book. They provide the Christian with heaven-born optimism and absolute assurance concerning the future. God’s certified forecast of “a new heaven and a new earth,” of “a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed,” is soon to become a glorious reality; and those who place their trust in the sure promises of God are ere long to share in the delights of a country and a city that is infinitely more radiant and attractive than gilded Babylon by the Euphrates.

12. DIVINE PREVIEW OF HISTORY

“ALL the world’s a stage,” Shakespeare wrote. Let us, therefore, imagine ourselves seated in a large auditorium where a prophetic drama is to be enacted. The scenes were prepared under divine direction by Daniel, the great statesman and prophet of Babylon, as described in the seventh chapter of his book.

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it as “that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ.” Titus 2:13. And Peter exhorts: “Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God.” 2 Peter 3:12. And Paul again, after speaking of the descent of the Lord from heaven, the resurrection of the dead in Christ, and their ascent with the living righteous to meet the Lord in the air, says, “Wherefore comfort one another with these words.”

08. The Next Universal Empire

Its Establishment, Nature, and Endurance Foretold by Prophecy

By George Teasdale

THE stream of time flows on. Its past is carefully explored by man in search of treasures of wisdom with which to enrich the present. The present is diligently exploited that nothing may pass unperceived or unappreciated. But who can proceed into the mysterious future and reveal that which is to be?

Only the present belongs to man. With the past he is slightly acquainted. The future is known to Him alone with whom time is not a stream, but an ocean, all the shores of which lie within the compass of His vision.

False Gods and the True

Addressing the idols of the heathen, Isaiah says, “Show the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that you are gods.” The sacred books of the great heathen systems contain no such wonderful and copious prophecies as are found in the Scriptures.

Of Jehovah there is abundant evidence that He knows the end from the beginning. With Him, “That which has been is now; and that which is to be has already been.” Ecclesiastes 3:15. Only divine omniscience can link the past with the future, and read them both in the present. God alone can foretell the events, great and small, that mark the history of this world, and affect the interests of the Church.

The Future Illuminated

Confidence in God’s predictive declarations concerning events still future in fact, confidence in the Bible is engendered and developed by a knowledge of prophecies already fulfilled. For this reason their study serves an important purpose in Christian growth. The “more sure word of prophecy” more sure than the evidence of the senses-is a “light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts.” It is a light that illuminates the darkness of the future-a darkness which no human eye can penetrate-revealing to the Christian events that would otherwise remain unknown. For this reason Inspiration declares to the Christian, “But you, brethren, are not in darkness [as to the future], that that .day [the day of Christ’s coming] should overtake you-as a thief. You are all children of the light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness.”

Neither the Old Testament nor the New is wanting in numerous prophecies, of still future import, or in prophecies that have been} only partially, and are now being wholly, fulfilled. The second chapter of Daniel contains a wonderful prediction that reaches down to our day, and also into the future, revealing international events soon to take place, which are of the greatest import to man. Prophecy penetrates the present cloud hanging over Europe and the world, portraying in beautiful and inspiring vision the nature of the next universal empire that is to control the destiny of the human race. Past the din and smoke of strife and battle, and the ebb and flow of human misery and woe, prophecy describes a land of peace and everlasting joy, for which the weary sojourner is urged and encouraged to diligently prepare.

Nebuchadnezzar and Daniel

When Nebuchadnezzar first besieged Jerusalem, in the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim, King of Judah, 607 BC, he carried to Babylon some of the vessels of the temple of God in Jerusalem, and put them in the temple of his own god in Babylon. Also he took “certain of the children of Israel, and of the king’s seed, and of the princes” with him to Babylon. These were carefully selected and taken that they

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might be taught the “learning and the tongue of the Chaldeans,” to fit them to “wait upon the king,” to be members of his council.

Among the young men were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, whom the king re-named, respectively, Belteshazzar, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego. These were given three years special instruction, at the end of which time they were examined personally by the king, “and in all matters of wisdom and understanding, that the king enquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers that were in all his realm.” “And Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams.”

Because of the excellence of the learning and ability of the youthful Daniel and his three companions, they were brought into immediate connection with the king “they stood before the king.”

The King’s Dream of Daniel Chapter 2

In the fourth year of Nebuchadnezzar’s reign (the second of his sole reign) the king “dreamed dreams, wherewith his spirit was troubled, and his sleep brake from him.” These dreams much impressed him, but he could not recall them. Therefore, he “commanded to call the magicians, and the astrologers, and the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans, for to show the king his dreams. So they came and stood before the king.” Nebuchadnezzar required these men to reveal to him the dream that he had forgotten. They replied by asking the king to tell them the dream, and they would interpret it for him. He had not demanded this, but now he required both the dream and the interpretation. His suspicions concerning the genuineness of their pretensions to reveal secret things had been aroused. He said to them: “Tell me the dream, and I shall know that you can show me the interpretation thereof.” They admitted their inability by declaring, “There is not a man upon the earth that can show the king’s matter.”

Then, in order to clear themselves, they cast reflection upon the king by saying, “There is no king, lord, nor ruler, that asked such things at any magician, or astrologer, or Chaldean.” Also they admitted the fraudulent nature of their own pretensions by stating that it was “a rare thing” that the king required, and that none could show it before the king “except the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh.” Heretofore they had always claimed to have such relationship with the supernatural that it was their prerogative to discover the will of the gods, and communicate it both to the king and to the people.

When Nebuchadnezzar fully realized that he and his subjects and also their ancestors had been deceived by these men, he was “angry and very furious, and commanded to destroy all the wise men of Babylon.” Among these were “counted Daniel and his companions, who, for some unstated reason, were not aware of all that had taken place. Nevertheless they were sought and apprehended by the captain who had been commanded to execute the king’s decree.

“Then Daniel went in, and desired of the king that he would give him time, and that he would show the king the interpretation “This reasonable request was granted. Together with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, Daniel went to his house, and desired “mercies of the God of heaven concerning this secret.” “Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a night vision.”

A Great Image

After giving grateful thanks to God for having made known to them the “king’s matter,” Daniel went before the king and said, “The secret which the king has demanded cannot the wise men, the astrologers, the magicians, the soothsayers, show unto the king; but there is a God in heaven that reveals secrets, and makes known to the King Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days.” Having thus directed the king’s attention to the true God, the source of all wisdom, Daniel continued:

“Thy dream, and the visions of thy head upon thy bed, are these: You, O king, saw, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible. This image’s head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, his legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay. You saw till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and broke them to pieces. 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: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth. This is the dream; and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the King. Daniel 2:31-36.

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Babylon the Great

Nebuchadnezzar was a wise ruler and a mighty conqueror, and also one of the greatest builders of antiquity. To him Babylon owed her greatness and her fame. In Holy Writ the city is described as “the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees’ excellence,” “the golden city,” and the “lady of kingdoms.” Her great buildings, her wonderful hanging gardens, her massive walls, her brazen gates, made her the wonder of the world. Into her coffers flowed the wealth of all nations. She sat a queen in peerless grandeur with the whole Earth prostrate at her feet. Never before had the world seen such a city, and never since has it seen her equal.

Such was Babylon when Daniel and his companions were held captives within her walls, with Nebuchadnezzar, bold, vigorous, and accomplished, seated upon her throne. Under him Babylon had attained to this proud position of pre-eminence, a position that he desired she should forever retain. The night on which he had his wonderful dream his thoughts were concerning her future, for, said the prophet, “As for thee, O king, thy thoughts came into thy mind upon thy bed, what should come to pass hereafter: and He that reveals secrets makes known to thee, what shall come to pass.”

The Lord desired to show the king that Babylon should continue only a little while; that other kingdoms would follow; and that the kingdom which would continue forever would be established by the Most High Himself. To accomplish this purpose God gave to Nebuchadnezzar the dream, which must be regarded as an act of divine favor toward the king. Yet God would not work for him independently of His own people; hence, though He gave the dream to the king, He permitted him to forget it, that the revelation and interpretation might come through Daniel, one of God’s own acknowledged servants. Also by this means no room was left for the king, nor any other person, to doubt the genuineness of the prophecy, for the ability to reveal the dream was full proof of ability to interpret it.

The king was an idolater. An image would at once command his attention and respect. Also earthly kingdoms, which were represented by this image; were objects of esteem and value in his eyes. ‘ How admirably adapted was this representation to convey a great and needful truth to the mind of Nebuchadnezzar, and to all mankind who should live after him?

The Interpretation-The Head of Gold

Having described to the king his dream, which he would, of course, immediately recognize, the prophet Daniel continued with the interpretation, as he had promised: “This is the dream; and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king. You, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven has given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. And where so ever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls, of the heaven has He given into, 4hine hand, and has made thee ruler over them all. You art this head of gold.” Verses 36-38.

Well did this precious metal represent the kingdom over which Nebuchadnezzar ruled. It was “a golden, kingdom of a golden age.” But the king was not satisfied that the head only should represent his kingdom, and that it should be superseded by other kingdoms inferior to his. He determined that his kingdom should continue forever; and to establish his purpose he made a great image, about one hundred feet tall and ten feet broad, all of gold, and set it up in the plain of Dura, and commanded all the world to worship it. Daniel 3.

In this way Nebuchadnezzar challenged the prophecy, asserting that his plans for the ruler ship of the earth should be carried out instead of the Lord’s. Yet the Lord used even this to instruct, not only the king, but all nations forever after, “that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomsoever He will.” Finally the king was led to declare concerning Jehovah, “He does according to His will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay His hand, or say unto Him, What doest You?” Thus should all men know that one word of prophecy is mightier than the martial pomp and power of earth’s most noted chieftains. The decree had, gone forth; Babylon was to be superseded, despite the hope and determination of its mighty ruler that it should continue forever. Said the prophet, “After thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth.” Daniel 2:39. Thus did prophecy sound the death-knell of Babylon.

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The Breast and Arms of Silver

Within the comparatively brief period of less than half a century after the death of Nebuchadnezzar, the empire and city of Babylon fell into the hands of the Medes and Persians. Wealth, with its accompanying luxuries, brought physical and mental decay and effeminacy, for which, in the strife of nations, massive embattlements and coats of mail cannot compensate. In the year 538 BC, the Persian King Cyrus took the city by strategy, and the King of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar's grandson, was slain. Darius, the uncle of Cyrus and King of the Medes, with whom the Persians were allied, was placed upon the throne of Babylon, which he occupied until his death two years afterward. Darius was succeeded by his nephew Cyrus, who once again welded the greater part of the known world into one mighty empire, in exact accordance with the terms of the prophecy.

As silver is inferior to gold, so was the Medo-Persian Empire inferior in richness and grandeur to the Babylonian Empire. "But still it was exceedingly powerful, and its magnificence was indicated by the silver of which the breast and arms of the image were composed. For two centuries the rulers of this empire held lordly sway, over the civilized portions of the earth, exacting tribute and homage from the most distant tribes.

But the same causes produced the same effect in the Medo-Persian Empire as in the Babylonian. Wealth and luxury brought individual inefficiency and national weakness. When Alexander the Great took the field at the head of his stalwart and abstemious Greek soldiers, the Persian armies were defeated in three great battles, their king was slain, and his empire passed into the hands of the Grecians, 331 BC, fulfilling the prediction: "Another third kingdom of brass shall bear rule over all the earth."

The Thighs of Brass

As the metals of the image decreased in value, and increased in strength and durability, so with the nations they represented. They decreased in magnificence and splendor, and increased in strength and virility. The successors of Alexander ruled over more people and territory than had preceding emperors, and with a rigor and authority never before known. The Grecian era continued from the year 331 until about the first half of the second century before Christ, when another race of men began to make itself felt, which, in a comparatively few years, wrested the ruler ship of the world from the Greeks. This fourth empire was represented in the image by the interpretation of which is given as follows:

The Legs Of Iron

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. And whereas you saw the feet and toes, part of potters' clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as you saw the iron mixed with miry clay. 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. Verses 40-42.

The fourth succeeding world-empire was Rome. From about the beginning of the first century before Christ it became the dominant power, and for many centuries "Rome ruled the world with an iron hand. At the time of Christ's birth, Caesar Augustus taxed the whole world, and Augustus was Roman Emperor. Imperious, irresistible, implacable, Rome broke in pieces and subdued every nation that would not own its sway. Says the historian Gibbon: "The arms of the Republic, sometimes vanquished in battle, always victorious in war, advanced with rapid steps to the Euphrates, the Danube, the Rhine, and the ocean; and the images of gold, or silver, or brass, that might serve to represent the, nations and their kings, were successively broken by the iron monarchy of Rome." "Decline and Fall," Chapter 38, Paragraph 43.

"The empire of the Romans filled the world. And when that empire fell into the hands of a single person, the world became a safe and dreary prison for his enemies. To resist was fatal, and it was impossible to fly." – "Decline and Fall," chapter 3, paragraph 37.

The Feet and Toes of Iron and Clay

It will be noticed that at first this fourth kingdom is described unqualifiedly as "strong as iron." Until the middle of the fourth century of the Christian era Rome remained without a peer. But the iron tenacity which it possessed in a superlative degree during the first centuries of its career was not to

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continue. The iron of the feet and toes was mixed with miry clay. Luxury, that destroyer of nations as well as of individuals, began to corrode and weaken the iron sinews of the empire, and thus prepare the way for its subsequent disruption into ten kingdoms.

To the toes of the image, of which there were of course just ten, attention is called by their explicit mention in the prophecy: and the kingdom represented by that portion of the image to which the toes belonged was finally divided into ten parts. The era of this dissolution covered the latter half of the fourth century and the greater part of the fifth. During that period ten kingdoms arose within the boundaries of: Western Rome (that portion of the empire not included in any of the preceding empires), and the prophecy, spoken and written more than a thousand years before, was literally fulfilled.

Divided And Not To Be United

When Rome fell, the last universal empire belonging to this world in its present state forever passed away. Crushed beneath the weight of its own proportions, it gradually crumbled to pieces. The iron was mixed with miry clay. Its elements lost the power of cohesion, and the parts are not to be consolidated again. According to the prophecy, efforts will be made to do this, but they shall not succeed:

“And whereas you 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.

For more than fourteen hundred years this divided condition has continued. During that time many revolutions and territorial changes have occurred in Europe, but ifs divided state still remains. Time and again men have dreamed of rearing on these dominions one mighty kingdom.

Of Charlemagne, the son of Pepin, the historian records, “From the first his object seems to have been to unite all German peoples in one great empire, and then to make that empire so strong that it would last forever.” So near succeeding did he come that on Christmas day in the year 800 AD he was crowned, emperor by Pope Leo III. “This act was regarded as the restoration of the Roman Empire, and Charlemagne was hailed as the successor of the Caesars.” – “Outlines of General History” (Colby), page 225. But his efforts were not lasting; after his death the tendency towards separation and, division was too; strong to be controlled, and Europe quickly reverted to its divided condition:

Charles of Spain and Louis of France

That which Charlemagne failed to accomplish by force of arms in the ninth century was almost accomplished for Charles V in the sixteenth century by diplomatic marriages.

“Charles V ruled over wider dominions than any European sovereign since Charlemagne. He belonged to the famous house of Hapsburg, from which he inherited Austria. It is said of Austria that, while other nations extended their power by conquest, it was her good fortune to gain territory by political marriages: This is well illustrated’ by the inheritances of Charles V. On his father’s side his grandmother was the heiress of Burgundy and the Netherlands, and his grandfather was the Emperor Maximilian, the mother of Charles V was the daughter, of Ferdinand and Isabella. Besides Austria, Charles possessed Spain, the kingdom of Naples, the Netherlands, and their dependencies, together with the vast regions newly discovered in America. All these lands he held by right of inheritance. To these Germany was added by his election to the imperial throne. “Outlines of General History,” page 341.

In the earlier part of his reign Charles was successful in hrs wars with France, Italy, and the Turks. But all his great plans finally failed. Thoroughly discouraged, he abdicated his throne, in 1556, and retired to a monastery. Says the historian, “It was too late for a universal monarchy, and any attempt to unite all Europe under the rule of one man was doomed to failure.” - Id., page 349.

In the latter part of the seventeenth century and the beginning of the eighteenth, Louis XIV endeavored to establish an over lordship in Europe. But he too was unsuccessful. In his most important projects he failed, and even where he succeeded, the results did not pay for all that it had cost to accomplish them.

Napoleon’s Ambition

Early in the nineteenth century Napoleon Bonaparte rose to supreme power in France, and by his skill and genius raised his country to the position of mistress of nations in Europe. After the battle of

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Austerlitz (1805), all-Europe was at his feet, with the exception of England, which country alone was able to thwart his ambition. At first the people of Europe had looked upon Napoleon as a deliverer from the despotism of their sovereigns. They were soon undeceived, for they saw that he aimed, not at bringing to the world universal liberty, but at founding a universal monarchy.

“But,” records history, “there were certain elements of weakness in his empire.”-Id., page 495. This the prophecy also had noted two thousand years before, for it says, the iron of the feet and toes was mixed with clay. Just as Napoleon had almost succeeded in welding the portions of the iron monarchy together again, a few blunders paralyzed his army, and the empire fell apart, as incohesive as ever. The prophecy says, “They shall not cleave one to another.”

The Kaiser’s Day-Dream

Once again, in 1914, Europe witnessed a mighty effort to reunite its severed members. History continues to repeat itself. Under the guiding hand of Bismarck, the German States were united in 1870, and in 1871 King William of Prussia was proclaimed Emperor of Germany. Since that time it has been the determination of the rulers of Germany to accomplish that which Charlemagne so nearly realized one thousand years before. For half a century the work of educating and drilling the Teuton for this great pan Germanic project has been diligently pursued. In 1914 the opportunity came. Success seemed certain. The opposing nations were unprepared. The shout of victory was on the lips of the mighty hosts of the German army. Paris was almost within their reach. But the sure word of prophecy was against them: “They (the nations of Western Europe) shall not cleave one to another.” Neither can any power, nor combination of powers, succeed in uniting again that which prophecy says shall not be united.

The German military leaders made the same mistake that caused the downfall of Napoleon, of whom it is recorded, “He showed too little regard for the spirit of nationality in other States, and while he knocked kings and princes about at-will, he did not reckon with the people.” Id page 495.

Diplomatic Marriages

In order to accomplish by policy that which cannot be forced by war, the reigning houses of Europe, for, more than a thousand years, have persistently intermarried. Many of the rulers are bound together by the closest ties of kinship. King George, the Czar, and the Kaiser are first cousins. The Queen of Spain, the Queen of Rumania, the Czarina, and the Emperor of Germany, are all grandchildren of the late Queen Victoria. Albert of Belgium is German by descent. The ruling houses of Holland, Norway, Sweden, and Denmark are all inter-related and also related with other ruling houses.

Arid yet despite this time-honored policy of inter marriage, the confederation of Europe was never more remote. All attempts to re-unite the divided Empire of Rome have proved abortive. The prophecy is true: “They shall mingle themselves with the seed of men but they shall not cleave one to another.” Daniel 2:43. How wonderfully does history emphasize the prophetic declarations of the Word of God. All this evidence goes to establish the reliability of the prophecy concerning the future.

Events Yet Future

And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and 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. Forasmuch as you saw that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it break in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God has made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure. Verses 44, 45.

Now we have reached the climax of this wonderful prophecy. The next universal empire is to be established by God Himself. He alone can accomplish His designs by word of mouth, without the help of men’s hands. Of His power we read, “He spoke and it was.” Nebuchadnezzar, Cyrus, Alexander, and the Caesars established their empires by force of arms in physical combat.

Of the Lord it is declared, “Out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should smite the nations.” All that it will be necessary for Him to do will be to speak the word, “And the slain of the Lord

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shall be at that day from one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth.” “The kingdoms of the world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign forever and ever.”

The stone cut out of the mountain without hands, represents the next universal empire, over which the Lord will rule as King. This stone smites the image upon its feet, breaks it in pieces, and utterly destroys it; and the stone becomes a great mountain and fills the whole earth.

A Glorious Kingdom

Finally the earth will be restored to its pristine condition, and will become the everlasting home of the redeemed. No more will man be required to earn his living by the sweat of his face, for the curse will be removed, and the wilderness and the desert will rejoice and blossom as the rose; and “instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree.”

Glimpses of the glory of that delightful land are given to the diligent student of the Scriptures. Its inhabitants “shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.” All that heart can wish will be theirs, for the Lord has promised, “And it shall come to pass, that before they call I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.”

In that land of delights there will be no infirmities of the flesh. “Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing.” Sorrow, sickness, and death will be experiences of the past, for it is written, “And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.”

The Way

Many things indicate that the time is nigh at hand when the God of heaven will establish His kingdom as He has promised. The question arises, By what means can an entrance be obtained into that desirable country? Which is the way? Readers that country is open to all who will by faith accept the righteousness of Him who died for sinful man. To that delectable land there is “a way, and it shall be called The Way of Holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it.” Christ is the way. With intense earnestness the God of heaven endeavors to distract man’s attention from this earth with its-disappointments, its sorrows its bereavements and lead him to make preparations for the world to come, of which it is written, “Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered-into the heart of man, the things which God has prepared for them that love Him.”

“And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that hears say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely.” COME!

09. The Millennium

THE word millennium literally signifies a thousand years. As used in theology, it has come to have a specific meaning which is attached to a period of one thousand years brought to view in the Scriptures, and located at the close of the present dispensation. As a distinct period, the millennium is first and only mentioned in the Bible in the 20th chapter of Revelation. This period occupies a most interesting place in the history of God’s people. It covers the events connected with the transition from the present sinful, mortal state, to that of everlasting life and glorious righteousness. It is the great antitypical jubilee, when the down-trodden children of God go free. It is a period full of events having eternal significance both to the just and to the unjust. It has been the subject of much study, and is now more than ever worthy of careful thought.

The millennium of Revelation 20 opens with the revelation of the Son of God from heaven, the destruction of the living wicked, the resurrection of the just, and the change of the living righteous to immortal life. It is a period in which Christ will reign with the just of all ages who have suffered with Him. This period is bounded at each end with a resurrection. Christ declares that “all that are in the graves shall hear his voice and shall come forth, they that have done good unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.” John 5:28, 29. And Paul testifies “that there shall be a

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This is very clear; but note that at this time, before He comes, the door of mercy is shut. Matthew 25:10. Probation for man is ended, and some are shut out, and lost. "When once the master of the house is risen up, and has shut to the door, and you begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and He shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence you are." Luke 13:25. Here is a time when the door of mercy will be shut, and the reply to those on the outside from the One who has shut the door, holds out no hope of "a second probation." "There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when you shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out." Verse 28.

But why should they weep and gnash their teeth if they are to have another chance to enter in? It is clear that they have no such chance, and fully understand that they are "thrust out" forever. We nowhere read that the "door" which is once "shut" is ever to be opened, and another "chance" offered to all the lost. It logically follows that if the Lord should do this for sinners, He would needs do the same for the devil and all the fallen angels. Why not give them another chance as well as man?

The great lines of prophecy in the book of Daniel throw much light upon this question. In the second chapter, under the symbol of a great metallic image, the history of the world from the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar till the final destruction of all the kingdoms of this world is given. Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome were to bear sway successively as universal monarchies. The fourth kingdom, Rome, symbolized by the legs of iron, was to lose its iron stability and become divided, as indicated by the mixture of iron and clay. Between the years AD 356 and 483 the Roman Empire was divided into ten kingdoms; namely, the Alemanni, Franks, Vandals, Burgundians, Visigoths, Lombards, Ostrogoths, Suevi, Heruli, Anglo-Saxons. The territory of these ten kingdoms is today occupied by the nations of the Old World. The Lord further declares, "And in the days of these [ten] kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and 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." Daniel 2:44.

This is not a description of the work of the gospel and the conversion of the world. Earthly kingdoms are to be broken in pieces and consumed. They are to be utterly wiped out of existence, and the fifth universal kingdom, symbolized by the stone which is cut out without hands, is to be eternally established in the territory now occupied by earthly kingdoms, when the earth is made new. "You saw till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. 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 thrashing-floors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth." Verses 34, 35.

This stone represents the kingdom of our Lord and Savior, which is to be established in the earth. When Jesus comes the second time with power and great glory, the wicked nations of earth will wail and lament because of Him. Matthew 24:30. They are not converted, but areas the worthless chaff blown from the thrashing-floor after the wheat has all been gathered out for the garner. They are not to have another probation in a glorious millennial age. Oh, no; they are carried away, and "no place" is found for them in the entire universe. Nothing, it would seem could be more conclusive on this point. See also Psalm 37:9, 10.

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This destruction of sinful nations is described also in the Psalms: "Ask of Me, and I shall give Thee the heathen for Your inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession." Psalm 2:8. Here the heathen, or nations, who, we are told, have not had "a full opportunity," are mentioned. Are they to have another probation in an age to come? Listen: "You shall break them with a rod of iron; You shall dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." Verse 9. This language is so clear that comment would but weaken its force. Having forgotten the Lord, they must needs perish. The wicked nations of the world are only chaff in the Lord's sight, and instead of having a second probation, will be "turned back unto Sheol." Psalm 9: 1.7, R.V.

In Daniel 7 the testimony upon this point is equally clear. Here the same four universal kingdoms are brought to view. Also the ten kingdoms, symbolized by the ten horns on the head of the "dreadful and terrible" fourth beast. The rise of the little horn, or papal power, is then brought to view, and the wicked and blasphemous work which it was to perform during the long dreary years of the papal millennium, is clearly outlined. "And he shall speak great words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time." Daniel 7:25. This brings us down the stream of time to the beginning of that period known as "the time of the end," which began AD 1798, or near the time when the kingdom of Christ is to be set up.

But what is done with this power symbolized by the "little horn"? Is it to be converted? No. Is a "second probation" in the "age to come" promised? No. "I beheld even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame." Daniel 7:11, last part. But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end." Verse 26.

This same beast power is brought to view in Revelation. When Jesus comes crowned "King of kings and Lord of lords," this anti-Christian power and all the armies of the earth are "gathered together to make war against Him that sat on the horse, and against His army." Revelation 19:19. And what is the conclusion of this terrible contest? Are they given another "opportunity" in the millennial age, under more "favorable" circumstances, to accept of the King against whom they are now making war? Indeed, they are not. "And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone." Verse 20. There is no hint in all this of a second probation. It is utter destruction from the presence of God. 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9. Instead of a "second probation" they go alive into the lake of fire. They are destroyed in the "burning flame."

A Conclusive Example

Through all the ages the Lord has had His witnesses. The fact that some from every kindred, tongue, and people have chosen to know God and be saved in the kingdom (Revelation 7:9) is conclusive evidence that all might have chosen life and been saved. The fact that they chose not to know God is no argument that they must be given another opportunity to see if they will change their minds. Notice what is said concerning the antediluvians: "By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith." Hebrews 11:7. Noah chose to follow God. All the antediluvians could have done the same. The Lord here says that the antediluvians are condemned because they did not repent. They made their choice, and, having decided they would not have Christ rule over them, the condemnation of God rests upon them. Are these sinful giants all to have another chance in which most of them are to repent and have their condemnation changed into approbation? God has never so stated. Having gone down into the tomb under condemnation because they rejected light, they must remain under it forever. "In the place where the tree falls, there it shall be." Ecclesiastes 11:3.

The Bible Teaching Concerning the Millennium

No discussion of the doctrine of a future probation would be complete without a consideration of Revelation 20:5, which reads as follows: "But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection." This scripture stands in connection with the record of the binding of Satan during the thousand years, the millennium, and seems to have been written expressly to

WILL ONE POWER RULE THE WORLD?

Arthur S. Maxwell joins M. C. Wilcox and A. O. Tait as long-term editors of the *Signs of the Times*. He was editor of the British *Present Truth* from 1920 to 1936, during much of this time also serving as manager of the Stanborough Park Press. In 1937 he became editor of the *Signs*.

"Uncle Arthur" is beloved by today's children, as well as by thousands of children grown up, who have heard and read from the thirty-three volumes of *Bedtime Stories*, the five volumes of *The Children's Hour*, or the ten volumes of *The Bible Story*. And there is a long list of books for adults—seventy-seven books in all—such as *Discovering London*, *War of the Worlds*, and *The Coming King*. Put with these the million words written for the *Signs*—the thousands for *Present Truth*, too—and you have an array from which it is hard to pick a "major opus." Perhaps it should be *The Bible Story*. Altogether this is a great output for a man born in 1896.

The article "Will One Power Rule the World?" appeared when Hitler seemed about to crush all opposition. Thus it was a daring confirmation of belief in Bible prophecy.

Signs of the Times, July 2, 1940.

MORE than sixty years ago, in one of the earliest issues of the *Signs of the Times*, there appeared the following fearless statement concerning the overthrow of the ancient Roman Empire and the future of Europe:

"Crushed beneath the weight of its own vast proportions, it crumbled to pieces, never to be united again. Its elements lost the power of cohesion, and *no man, nor combination of men, can again consolidate them.*"

In all the long, dark, turbulent years that have elapsed since then, this journal has never once gone back on this

interpretation of the great prophecy of the second chapter of Daniel. People are saying to us: "Look at what is happening in Europe today. What are you going to say now?"

We are going to say exactly what we have said in the past. We refuse to retract one jot or one tittle. This prophecy is the only one in the Bible to which the two words "certain" and "sure" are both attached. If for no other reason, with these two seals upon it we can surely trust it with complete confidence. It cannot fail.

To refresh our minds, and to re-establish our faith, let us examine it again in detail.

To do so we must go back twenty-five centuries into the court of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon. It is morning. The king has had a strange dream, and has forgotten what it was about. Yet the impression lingers; he wants to know. So he calls his counselors. Some of them are astrologers, some magicians, some sorcerers—the accomplished spirit mediums of the time.

To this assembly of the wise men of Babylon Nebuchadnezzar brings his strange demand: "Tell me what I dreamed about last night!"

None can answer. They offer to interpret the dream; but they first must know what it was.

But Nebuchadnezzar will not be put off. He suspects that they are merely trying to gain time so as to prepare "lying and corrupt words," and, finally, becoming "very furious," he gives the order for their immediate execution.

As the royal patrols go from house to house seeking their prey, they come upon Daniel, the youthful captive from Jerusalem, whose keen intellect and sterling character have already won him considerable royal favor. Informed of the reason why he has suddenly been condemned to death, he begs time to pray, and is soon on his knees before God.

That night he is shown in vision the selfsame dream that had so deeply impressed Nebuchadnezzar but a few hours before. Ushered into the throne room he finds himself face to face with the greatest ruler of ancient times. There follows the most dramatic interview ever recorded, with prophet and king thrilling with emotion as the curtain of the future is suddenly rolled back before their astonished eyes, and they stare stupefied across century after century of unborn years down to the end of time.

"There is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets," begins the prophet, "and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days. Thy dream, and the visions of thy head upon thy bed, are these; as for thee, O king, thy thoughts came into thy mind upon thy bed, what should come to pass hereafter: and He that revealeth secrets maketh known to thee what shall come to pass." Verses 28, 29.

Nebuchadnezzar evidently had been wondering about the future—wondering what would happen to his great kingdom after his demise. Now, in a wider revelation than he ever dared to hope for, the whole vast panorama of ages to come is opened before him.

"Thou, O king, sawest, and beheld a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible. This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, his legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay. Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. 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: and the stone that smote the image became

a great mountain, and filled the whole earth." Verses 31-35.

So this was Nebuchadnezzar's dream—a great metallic image, composed of four different metals, and with feet part iron, part clay; an image that was finally struck on the feet by some overwhelming force, which crushed it into such infinitesimal fragments that the wind blew them away.

But what is the meaning of it all? That is what Nebuchadnezzar wanted to know. He was soon satisfied.

Continued Daniel: "This is the dream; and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king." Verse 36.

Briefly it was this: The four metals represented four world empires, which were to follow one another in history. The fourth, typified by iron that merged into a mixture of iron and clay, was to be divided, and to remain divided until, by some spectacular divine intervention, the kingdoms of this world would be swept away to give place to the everlasting kingdom of God.

It is this interpretation that we must examine again with particular care, not only in the light of ancient history, but with the catastrophic events of recent days in mind.

No one, of course, questions the application of the four main metals of the image to the four great empires of Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome. That is so simple and so plain that the youngest child can understand it.

But the fourth kingdom—and it is most important to notice this fact—was not to be succeeded by another of similar extent and greater power. As stated above, it was to be *divided*.

This all-important revelation was repeated and emphasized in three different and most significant expressions:

"And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potters' clay, and part of iron, *the kingdom shall be divided*; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay.

"And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be *partly strong, and partly brittle* [margin].

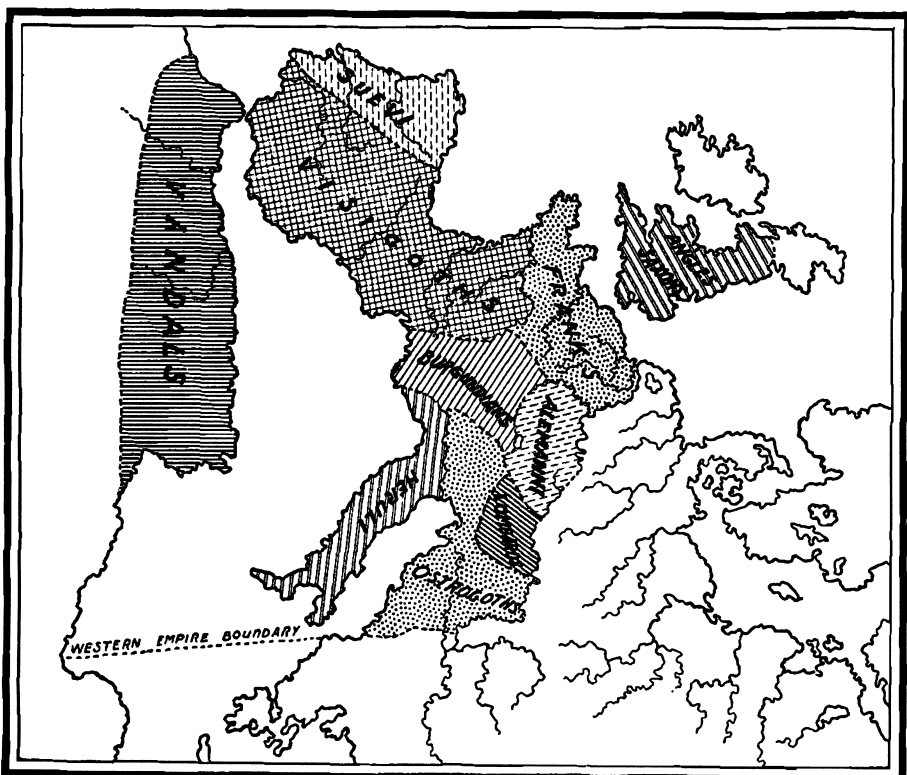
"And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but *they shall not cleave one to another*, even as iron is not mixed with clay." Verses 41-43.

Now it is one of the most interesting, and indeed one of the most momentous, facts of history, that when the Roman Empire, weakened by internal corruption, was overrun by invading barbarian tribes from the north and east during the fourth and fifth centuries A.D., it was divided into exactly ten divisions. In fact, with the overthrow of the last of the emperors in A.D. 476, and the establishment of the Herulian kingdom in Italy, the fourth kingdom, which had been strong as iron and had broken in pieces and subdued all kingdoms, was now broken in pieces itself. "Ten kingdoms, ten distinct and independent nations,—no more, no less,—had fixed themselves within the boundaries of Western Rome; and the prophecy, spoken and written more than a thousand years before, was literally fulfilled."

These ten kingdoms were the Anglo-Saxons, the Franks, the Alemanni, the Lombards, the Ostrogoths, the Visigoths, the Burgundians, the Vandals, the Suevi, and the Heruli; and the portions of Europe that they occupied are delineated as nearly as possible on the accompanying map. These peoples were the forerunners and progenitors of the nations of modern Europe.

All through the fifteen centuries that have elapsed since the breakup of the Roman Empire, despite the most desperate and determined efforts to bind these divisions together into one great whole again, the task has been found impossible.

Boundaries have changed, of course; but the prophecy said nothing about boundaries, or about the depredations of one nation upon another. Some nations might expand and others shrink. Some might be eliminated altogether—and were. The strong might profit at the expense of the weak. The fragments of iron might penetrate into the frontiers of the helpless clay. But the clay would remain, defying the power of the iron to weld itself together again.



Seen in the light of history, illuminated by the glow of a thousand battlefields, where men by millions have struggled to defeat the divine purpose, the ancient dictum, "THEY SHALL NOT CLEAVE ONE TO ANOTHER," is seen to be the greatest prophetic utterance of all time.

It is amazing how many schemes have been laid to unite the nations of Europe. Men have tried treaties until almost every nation was pledged in some way to every other nation. They have tried leagues until it seemed at last that peaceful unity was about to be achieved. They have tried internarrige until every ruling dynasty became related to every other dynasty and it was considered unethical for one of royal blood to wed outside this charmed circle. Yet every plan has failed.

As far back as the ninth century A.D., Charlemagne made his attempt to defeat the prophecy; he even permitted himself to be crowned emperor at Rome; but the iron and the clay that he tried to blend together quickly fell apart after his demise. As one historian has said: "His scepter was the bow of Ulysses, which could not be drawn by any weaker hand."

In the fifteenth century, Charles V became ruler of most of Europe, and had visions of completing the conquest of the Continent. It was said of him that "no monarch until Napoleon was so widely seen in Europe and in Africa." Yet, in 1555, through failing health, he was compelled to abdicate and to sign away his vast possessions to others.

Little more than a hundred years later, Louis XIV of France became the dominant figure on the Continent; he reached out in all directions for more and more authority, overturning the Netherlands, laying waste the Palatinate, and exclaiming: "There shall be no more Pyrenees." Nevertheless a combination of opposing forces finally brought his

grandiose schemes tumbling about him like a castle of cards. By the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713, "his dominions were pared away on every side."

Then, less than a century and a half ago, came Napoleon, perhaps the greatest of all these would-be lords of Europe and conquerors of the world. He was thrown up, as it were, by the French Revolution, and from 1795 to 1804, when he was proclaimed emperor, he consolidated his hold upon the people of France. Then for eight fearful years he swept over nation after nation, crowning himself king of Italy, placing his brother Louis on the throne of Holland, and his brother Jerome on the throne of the new kingdom of Westphalia, which he created. His brother-in-law Murat he made sovereign of his newly established Grand Duchy of Berg, and to his brother Joseph he gave the throne of Spain. No other conqueror ever made such thorough preparation for the establishment and perpetuation of a united Europe.

Nevertheless, even before his plans were completed, rumblings of the coming disintegration could already be heard.

In 1805, the French fleet was defeated at Trafalgar. In 1812 came Napoleon's Russian expedition, his retreat from Moscow, the subsequent defeat at Leipzig in October, 1813, followed by his final crushing overthrow at Waterloo in 1815.

In 1914, well within living memory, a similar attempt at European domination was made. The kaiser's armies swept over Belgium, rolled on into France, into Italy, into the Balkans. Their shattering blows seemed, for many a long day, to indicate that the final triumph would be theirs. Those who lived through those dark and evil days will not soon forget the gloom that settled over the world as retreat followed retreat before the advancing forces of the conqueror, nor the tremendous feeling of relief as, miraculously, the course of events suddenly changed, and, before one could scarcely

appreciate the magnitude of what was taking place, it had all ended at Versailles and Doorn.

Thus has it happened in the past. Thus will it happen again. After the overspreading eruption of iron has ceased, the elements of clay will reappear, cracking and breaking the mass of metal into its old-time divisions.

But mark this well. Events may for a time seem to go absolutely contrary to the course the prophecy would indicate. In every time of totalitarian ascendancy there has been a period when it must have seemed to the onlookers as though all hope was lost. Yet it was not. After the storm had passed and the weapons of war had been laid down, the word of God was seen to be more firmly established than ever.

So it will be in our day; and we shall not have to wait long now—not in these swifly moving times.

The tyrants, the invaders, the would-be conquerors, cannot succeed. Not for long, anyway. And it matters not whether they be German or Italian or French or Spanish, their plans to dominate Europe are doomed to failure from the outset. They may achieve temporary triumphs. They may overrun Holland and Belgium and France and every Balkan state. They may pour death and destruction on Britain. Yet along the very trail of their wanton cruelty and ruthless barbarism there will grow up and accumulate the very forces that will ultimately destroy them.

They shall not cleave.

One power will not rule the world. Not until Christ Himself comes to reign,—which is indeed the next and greatest event on the calendar of human history.

The divisions of the old Roman Empire will remain until the very end, for it is “*in the days of these kings*” that the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed, a kingdom that “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.

So “cast not away therefore your confidence.” Hebrews 10:35.

“The dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure.” Daniel 2:45.

On The Eve Of Armageddon

STRUCK WITH DIVINE JUSTICE

Similar to this is the instruction given to Ezekiel. After he beholds the terrible wrath of God poured out upon the nations which then existed, his eye pierces the future to the events of “the latter years.” And there, in connection with the consummation of the great controversy between a rebellious race and its Creator, he sees the countless foes of God marshaling themselves to battle against Jehovah, like the gathering of a great tempest. But he also sees them met with the fearful fury and vengeance of a despised God, who rains upon them “hailstones, fire, and brimstone,” while at the same time He summons all the fowls of heaven and the beasts of the earth to come and gorge themselves upon the flesh of His enemies, the great and mighty of the earth, who have been struck with divine justice. (Ezekiel 38:3-9, 17-22.)

In the vision of Daniel the kingdoms of the earth are represented by a great image, grand and imposing, the materials of which degenerate in character until from the head of gold we descend, through silver, brass, and iron, to the feet made of a mixture of iron and clay. And then, with a suddenness which takes the world unawares, a great stone, thrown by unseen hands with terrible velocity, strikes the colossal image on its feet, and crushes it all to powder, a powder which is driven and scattered by the whirlwinds and tempests of God’s wrath until not a vestige of it remains, while the stone which overthrows the kingdoms of the world becomes a great mountain which fills all the earth.

THE RESISTLESS MIGHT OF AN OFFENDED GOD

Here is foreshadowed the fact that earth’s kingdoms would degenerate, and the character of the race become so sinful that the resistless might of an offended God would at last smite them, and thus bring about their utter extermination, while their destruction would be followed by a better order of things in the

Our Day In The Light Of Prophecy

The Lord not only spoke the word in warning and entreaty for those to whom it first came but it is written in the scriptures of truth as a testimony to all time, that the Bible is the word of God, and that all His purposes revealed therein and all the promises of the blessed Book are certain and sure. The prophets who bore messages from God to Nineveh, and Babylon, and Tyre, spoke messages also for our day.

Fulfilled prophecy is the testimony of the centuries to the living God. The evidence of prophecy and its fulfillment is God's challenge and appeal to men to acknowledge Him as the true God and the Holy Scriptures as His word from heaven. "I have declared the former things from the beginning; and they went forth out of My mouth, and I showed them. I did them suddenly, and they came to pass. Because I knew that thou art obstinate, and thy neck is an iron sinew, and thy brow brass; I have even from the beginning declared it to thee; before it came to pass I showed it thee.... Thou has heard, see all this; and will not you declare it?" Isaiah 48:3-6.

Surely no one can look at the evidence in history of the fulfillment of prophecy without seeing that of a truth the One who spoke these words knew the end from the beginning. And finding the living God in the sure word of prophecy, one must be prepared to listen to His voice in all the scriptures, when it speaks of sin and the way of salvation through Jesus Christ. Further, the prophetic word also has much to say of yet future, of the course of history in modern times. It behooves us to give heed to what that word speaks concerning our own times and the events that are to take place upon the earth before the end. The apostle Peter exhorts us the study in these words:

"We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto you do well that you take heed, as unto a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts." 2 Peter 1:19.

3. PROPHETIC OUTLINE OF THE WORLD'S HISTORY

THE PROPHECY OF DANIEL 2

"There is a God in heaven that reveals secrets, and makes known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days." In a dream by night the Lord gave to Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, a clear historical outline of the course of world empire to the end of time and the coming of the eternal kingdom.

The king was a thoughtful monarch; and having reached the height of his power, he was one night meditating upon "what should come to pass hereafter." Not for his sake alone, but for the enlightenment and instruction of men in all time, the Lord answered the wondering question of the king's meditation by giving him the dream. "He that reveals secrets," said Daniel the prophet, "makes known to thee what shall come to pass."

And that we may know at the beginning that there is nothing fanciful and uncertain about this great historic outline reaching to the end of the world, we note first the assurance with which the prophet closed his interpretation: "The dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure."

The details of the dream had been taken from the king's mind, while conviction as to the wondrous import of it remained. This was in God's providence, to show the folly of the worldly-wise men of Babylon, and to bring before the king the prophet of the Lord with a divine message. The prophet Daniel, under the inspiration of God, brought his dream again to the king's mind:

"Thou, O king, saw, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible. "This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, his legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay.

"Thou saw till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. 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: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth." The prophet next declared the interpretation. And now follows the history of the world in miniature.

Our Day In The Light Of Prophecy

Babylon

“Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. And where so ever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath He given into your hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold.”

The parts of the image, then, of various metals, from head to, feet, represented successive empires, beginning with Babylon; and the kingdom of Babylon, represented by Nebuchadnezzar, was the head of gold. History shows how fitly the golden head symbolizes the Babylonian kingdom. Long before, the prophet Isaiah had described it as “the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency.” Isaiah 13:19. And now, in Nebuchadnezzar's day, it was the golden age of the Babylonian kingdom. No such gorgeous city as its capital ever before stood on earth. And Nebuchadnezzar was the great leader of its conquests, and the beautifier and builder of its walls and palaces. “For the astonishment of men I have built this house,” one tablet reads; and hundreds repeat the story.

“Those portals for the astonishment of multitudes of people with beauty I adorned. In order that the battle storm to Imgur-Bel the wall of Babylon might not reach. What no king before me had done.” - East India House Inscription.

Thus Nebuchadnezzar's records of stone today repeat the proud boast faithfully reported in the Scripture, “Is not this great Babylon, that I have built?” Daniel 4:30. To the king it seemed that such a city could never fall. One inscription reads:

“Thus I completely made strong the defenses of Babylon. May it last forever.”-Rawlinson, “Fourth Monarchy,” Appendix A.

Medo-Persia

But the prophet Daniel, proceeding with the divine interpretation, interrupted all such proud thoughts with the declaration, “After thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee.” Now the look was forward into the future. And the word came to pass. Babylon's decline was swift after Nebuchadnezzar's death. Daniel the prophet himself lived to interpret the handwriting on the wall at Belshazzar's feast:

“God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it. . . . Thou art weighed in the balances and art found wanting. . . . Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Modes and Persians.” Daniel 5:26-28.

The breast and arms of silver, in the great image, represented the Medo-Persian kingdom, which followed the Babylonian, “inferior” to it in brilliancy and grandeur, as silver is inferior to gold. Medo-Persia, however, enlarged the borders of the world empire; and the names of Cyrus and Darius are written among the mightiest conquerors of history. But the prophet does not stop to dwell upon the grandeur of fleeting earthly kingdoms. The interpretation hastens on to reach the setting up of a kingdom that shall not pass away. Following Medo-Persia, a third power was to rise.

Greece

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

The “third kingdom” after Babylon was Greece, which overthrew the empire of the Modes and Persians. And Greece's dominion fulfilled the specifications of the prophecy which indicated a yet wider expansion of empire. Its sway was to be over “all the earth,” said Daniel the prophet, foretelling its history. Arrian, the Greek historian, writing afterward, said that Alexander of Greece seemed truly glory of all the earth; “and he adds:

“I am persuaded there was no nation, city, nor people then in being whither his name did not reach; for which reason, whatever origin he might boast of, or claim to himself, there seems to me to have been some divine hand presiding both over his birth and action.” “History of the Expedition of Alexander the Great,” book 7, chapter 30.

The sides of brass in the great image represented Greece, the brazen metal itself being a fitting symbol of those “brazen-mailed” Greeks, celebrated in ancient poetry and song, “Among the foremost, armed in glittering brass.”

Our Day In The Light Of Prophecy

A Power Rising in the West

While Greece's supremacy under Alexander was disputed by none, there was a power rising in the West that was soon to enter the lists for the prize of world dominion.

Some of the ancient writers say that at the time of his death Alexander had in mind to push westward to strike down the growing power of the city of Rome, of which he had heard. Plutarch says that this man Alexander, “who shot like a star, with incredible swiftness, from the rising to the setting sun, was meditating to bring the luster of his arms into Italy. He had heard of the Roman power in Italy.” – “Morals,” chapter on Fortune of the Romans,” paragraph 13.

Lucan, the ancient Roman poet, repeats the thought:

“Driven headlong on by Fate's resistless force,
Through Asia's realms he took his dreadful course:
His ruthless sword laid human nature waste
And desolation followed where he passed....
Even to the utmost west he would have gone,
Where Tethys' lap receives the setting sun.”
“Pharsalia.”

But in the prime of his years, Alexander was cut down, and Rome had yet more time in which to develop its strength preparatory to the deciding contest for the mastery of all the world. Sure it is that after Greece, there followed the Roman Empire, the strongest and mightiest and most crushing of them all. This fourth universal empire the prophet proceeded to describe, as represented by the legs of iron in Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the great image.

Rome

“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.” How appropriately the iron of the image fits the character of the fourth great empire! Gibbon, the historian, calls it “the iron monarchy of Rome.” It broke in pieces the kingdoms, subduing all, just as prophecy had declared so long before. As iron is strongest of the common metals, so according to the prophecy – “as iron that breaks all these this fourth kingdom was to be more powerful than any before it. Strabo, the geographer, who lived in the days of Tiberius Caesar, said, “The Romans have surpassed (in power) all former rulers of whom we have any record.” – “Geography,” book 17, chap. 3.

Hippolytus, bishop and martyr, who lived in Rome in the third century, under the “iron monarchy,” wrote thus of this prophecy: “Already the iron rules; already it subdues and breaks all in pieces. Already it brings all the unwilling into subjection, already we see these things ourselves.” – “Treatise on Christ and Antichrist,” section 33. Hippolytus also saw clearly from the prophecy that the empire of his day would be divided, and he wrote of the kingdoms that were yet to rise out of it. For Daniel's interpretation explained clearly the meaning of the mingling of clay with the iron in the feet and toes of the great image.

The Kingdoms of Modern Europe

“Whereas thou saws the feet and toes, part of potters' clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou saws the iron mixed with miry clay. “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.

“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.” “The kingdom shall be divided.” So declared the prophet of God. In the height of its power, Rome scouted the thought that so mighty a fabric could ever be broken up. Horace sang in his “Odes,”

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“How, added to a conquered world, Euphrates 'bates his tide, And Huns, beyond our frontiers hurled, O'er straitened deserts ride. “The Goths beyond the sea may plot, The warlike Basques may plan. Friend, never heed them! Vex thee not. For this our mortal span of little wants.” -Book 2, Marris's Translation.

But the words were written on the ancient parchment in the days of Babylon, “The kingdom shall be divided;” and true to the word of the prophet, the Roman Empire fell apart with the mixture of nations and peoples that swept into it. The elements did not hold together, even as the mixture of iron and clay in the image did not cleave together. Broken tip by the invasions of fresh nations from the north, the Western Empire was divided into lesser kingdoms, out of which have grown the modern nations of western Europe.

Not one word in the outline of the prophecy thus far has failed of fulfillment. These modern kingdoms growing out of divided Rome have never been reunited. “They shall mingle themselves with the seed of men,” said the prophecy. Nearly all the reigning houses of Europe today are related by intermarriage; the prophecy said it would be so; but “they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay.” So we see it. No statesman, no master of legions, has been able to join these nations together again in one great empire. Charles V had the thought in mind, some think. Napoleon dreamed of doing it. But it was not to be. Never more was there to be one universal monarchy.

We may know that as surely as the course of world empire has followed the exact outline of the prophecy put on the inspired record in the days of Babylon of old, just so surely the specifications Of the closing portion of the outline will be fulfilled. The fourth great kingdom was to be divided. Rome was the fourth empire: it was divided. The kingdoms of the divided empire are acting their part before our eyes today.

The Next Great Event

And what next? That is the question for us. Now the prophetic outline that began with ancient Babylon touches the things of our own day. The word spoken before Nebuchadnezzar so long ago is now spoken especially to us:

“In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and 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.”

“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: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure.”

“In the days of these kings,”-these kingdoms of our Own time, the next great world-changing event is to be the coming of Christ to begin the setting up of his everlasting kingdom. That is the grand climax toward which all the course of history has been tending. At last the end is to come. Down in the feet of iron and of clay, Weak and divided, soon to pass away. What will the next great, glorious drama be? Christ and His coming, and eternity.”

As the stone, cut out of the mountain “without hands,” smote the image, so that all its parts, representative of earthly dominion, were ground to dust and blown away, so Christ's coming kingdom, set up “without hands,” by no human power, but by the power of the eternal God, will end all earthly dominion and bring the utter destruction of sin and sinners out of the earth. “The dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure.” Then may all eyes well be turned toward the next great step foretold in the prophetic outline - the coming of Christ's glorious everlasting kingdom, which shall not pass away.

“Look for the way marks as you journey on,
Look for the way marks, passing one by one,
Down through the ages, past the kingdoms four,
Where are we standing? Look the way marks over.”

4. THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST

“UNTO them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation.”

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at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book.” Daniel 12:1. Add to this the words of our Savior, “Then look up, for your redemption draws nigh.” Luke 21:28. At that time-look up! Deliverance will come-from the skies!

May I take you back to that glad day at the close of the second world conflict when two thousand prisoners of war were delivered from enemy hands. Two of the prisoners had built a little radio and secretly listened to the news. One day they heard a familiar voice. “This is General MacArthur speaking. I have returned!”

What marvelous news! The months had dragged wearily into two and a half long years since the day the general left behind him the promise to return. Now he was returning amid a thunder of guns, with an armada of ships and an air force the like of which had never before been seen in the Pacific.

In the meantime, the news filtered through the camp that the enemy, sensing the hopelessness of its own situation, and possibly in the spirit of reprisal, had actually decreed the death of the prisoners. Among the prisoners was one who had been asked to serve as a camp official. One evening the guard informed him that at seven o’clock the next morning he was to call the prisoners together. Could this be the time when they would hear the long-feared death sentence?

Terrible were those hours as he watched the hands of the clock moving toward that fateful moment. Then he went out with the bell ringer to call the camp. The steel bar was raised, ready to strike the gong. Would this be the camp’s death call?

But suddenly they both looked up. Each saw the same thing. In unison they exclaimed, “Look! Planes!” But were they friendly or enemy planes? The bell ringer, his hand still in the air, watched in breathless anticipation. Nearer and nearer they came. No, they were not enemy Planes. As they roared overhead, paratroopers leaped out into the prison yards. Deliverance had come at last!

Make no mistake about it. The forces of evil are intent on destroying the human race. The enemy of God and man has his hand raised, ready to strike the death gong. The great controversy between Christ and Satan, between good and evil, between right and wrong, is on the verge of its last titanic struggle. But it is written, “At that time thy people shall be delivered.” At that time – “look up for your redemption draws nigh.”

“Down the minister aisles of splendor, from betwixt the cherubim,
Through the wondering throng, with motion strong and fleet,
Sounds His victor tread approaching, with a music far and dim-
The music of the coming of His feet.

“Sandaled not with sheen of silver, girded not with woven gold,
Weighted not with shimmering gems and odors sweet,
But white-winged and shod with glory in the Tabor light of old-
The glory of the coming of His feet.

“He is coming, O my friend, with His everlasting peace,
With His blessedness immortal and complete;
He is coming, O my friend, and His coming brings release-
I listen for the coming of His feet.”

-Lyman W. Allen.

Footsteps in the sky! Deliverance at last! The Savior face to face! Eternal life with Him!
Just think of taking hold of a hand and finding it God’s hand! Just think of feeling invigorated and finding it immortality! Just think of waking up and finding it home!

9. The Hinge of Time

I WATCHED in England with the coronation crowds. All London was a spectacle of fantastic preparation, for royal splendor defies description. As early as twenty-four hours before the dawn of Coronation Day, eager thousands began their struggle for a vantage point along the streets where the

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procession was to pass. Through the long night they waited patiently. What mattered the cold, or the hardness of the sidewalks, or the light rain that fell? Were they not to see their queen?

Then as the morning came, those early watchers were joined by multitudes of others banked tier upon tier. Big Ben ticked above them as they watched. Occasionally their patriotic chatter was interrupted by the whisper, "She's coming!" At this every eye strained eagerly. Again and again the whisper rippled along the sidewalks, "She's coming!" But always there was disappointment.

Big Ben had struck high noon before the coronation was completed at Westminster Abbey. Finally in the distance the trumpets were heard, and the waiting throngs moved with justifiable pride, their eyes filled with tears of joy passed the cry from mouth to mouth, "The queen is coming! The queen is coming!" I shall never forget how that vast mass of humanity rocked with enthusiasm as at last their newly crowned sovereign appeared. Elizabeth II was queen!

Down along the centuries has echoed the promise of the Savior, "I will come again!" Hardly had He disappeared into the skies when His followers began to look for His return. Again and again a lone voice has whispered, "He is coming!" But always there has been disappointment. God's clock has not yet struck the hour.

The feeling of thousands might be expressed in these words: "I can understand the disappointment of those who waited for Elizabeth II to appear. For that is exactly the way I have felt about the second coming of Christ. Father and mother expected Christ's return, and they were disappointed. My grandparents before them were taught the second coming, but never saw that day. How can I know that I too will not be disappointed?"

Can men know when the hour will strike?

It was in the early days of preparation for the hydrogen bomb that men realized their need of larger and better computers. A computer that could remember only twenty-seven facts was hardly capable of the fantastic calculations that must now be made to determine the probable behavior of millions of atomic particles within the new bomb.

Then came Von Neumann with his MANIAC-Mathematical Analyzer, Numerical Integrator and Computer. MANIAC could handle 40,000 bits of information. At the console of such a computer, men who wanted to know the chances of war could divide the resources of a country into the panic and despair of its population or multiply those resources by the country's inventive capacity and its obsession with victory and come up with an intelligent answer. It was said that "for the MANIAC even the end of the world was only one more question to be answered by calculation."

But is the hour of Christ's coming and the end of the world a secret that will yield to the computations of men? Can men feed world conditions into an electronic brain, along with the thinking of great men, and come up with the answer?

The disciples of Jesus were first with the question, "When shall these things be?" Jesus answered, "Of that day and hour knows no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only." Matthew 24:36. Yet He qualified His answer with these words: "Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is nigh: so likewise you, when you shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors."

It has never been God's plan to take men by surprise. He said through the prophet Amos, "Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he reveals his secret unto his servants the prophets." Amos 3:7. The great catastrophe of Noah's day was preceded by the preaching of Noah. The ministry of Jesus on this earth was preceded by the work of John the Baptist. Will no prophet warn men that the hour of Christ's coming is upon us?

The difficulty is not that Scripture is silent on the subject of when Christ will return. For it is not. The difficulty is that men are unwilling to accept what the Scriptures say about the future.

A certain prophecy was once explained to Kaiser Wilhelm in the days when he was at the height of his power. As he began to get the drift of it, as he began to see what its fulfillment would mean to him personally, he said, I can't accept it! It doesn't fit in with my plans!"

Nor did it fit into the plans of the ancient king to whom it was first spoken. Watch the intriguing drama as it unfolds!

Absolute monarch of his golden day, the king lies in troubled sleep. As he tosses and turns on his royal couch, shadows of anxiety steal across his face. The cares of world dominion have weighed heavily upon his mind. He has looked questioningly into the future. Would his kingdom pass into ruins as had those before him?

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Now God takes note of what this man has been thinking and gives him a strange dream. And then He allows him to forget it. Morning comes, and the king's desperation to recall the dream brings confusion to the court. His counselors, even under threat of death, are unable to suggest what might have been the subject of his dream. But out of the confusion there arises a man of God—a captive from a conquered land.

The king—Nebuchadnezzar. The time—six hundred years before Christ. The hero of the hour—the prophet-statesman Daniel. Listen as in unmistakably clear language Daniel reveals first the dream and then its meaning:

“Thou, O king, saw, and behold a great image.” Daniel 2:31. Eagerly the king watches the noble face of the young prophet as he speaks. “This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, his legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay.”

Absolutely spellbound, Nebuchadnezzar, proud monarch of the mighty Babylonian empire, looks at the youthful Daniel in amazement. Here an unassuming servant of God is reporting with uncanny accuracy the dream that only a few hours ago had flooded his mind.

“Thou saw till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces.... And the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.”

The king relived the startling scene. He saw again the stately image with its head of glittering gold, its breast and arms of polished silver. He saw again the body and thighs of burnished brass, the legs of solid iron, and strangest of all, the mixture of iron and clay of which the feet were formed.

But why was the gold replaced by silver, and the silver by brass? What was the meaning of the great stone that came thundering upon the feet of the image to grind it to powder? What was this rock that would become a great mountain and fill the whole earth? Would Daniel tell him? Leaning to the edge of his throne, the monarch breathlessly awaited Daniel's next word. And how it pleased the king as Daniel said simply, “Thou art this head of gold.”

Here was flattering news. He—Nebuchadnezzar—the head of gold! After all, were not historians already calling Babylon the golden kingdom? Were not his hanging gardens destined to become one of the wonders of the ancient world? Would not future generations read his proud claim written in stone, “For the astonishment of men I have built this house. May it last forever”?

“Thou art this head of gold.” Any clever politician would have stopped there. But Daniel continued with the interpretation exactly as God had revealed it to him. “And after thee shall arise another kingdom.”

Babylon was not to last forever. Was Babylon, then, only the first of a series of kingdoms that would succeed upon the ruins of one another? Could God be tracing the rise and fall of nations to the end of time? Was He answering only Nebuchadnezzar's questions about the future? Or was He answering yours and mine? We shall see as we read on.

“After thee shall arise another kingdom.” These bold words were enough to interrupt anyone's thoughts of grandeur. Here was anything but a happy revelation. More perplexing still, the proud king was to be succeeded by an inferior power. This did not fit into his plans. His kingdom must not be succeeded by another. No wonder that some time after this, in defiance of the God of heaven, he made a great image, all of gold, and set it up in the plain of Dura.

But the gold was replaced by the silver—and in Daniel's lifetime, at that! You remember Belshazzar's feast, when in a drunken revelry the kingdom was overthrown, conquered by Cyrus the Persian.

The dual monarchy of the Medes and the Persians, represented by the two silver arms, ruled for about two hundred years. Today it, too, lies in ruins. The prophecy had said, “And another third kingdom of brass . . . shall bear rule over all the earth.”

Climaxing his conquests in the famous battle of Arbela, 331 years before Christ, the young and ambitious Alexander had swept to dizzy heights of victory in five short years. At the youthful age of twenty five he was master of all he surveyed. Seven years later he was dead! So swiftly does earthly glory fade. The brass kingdom toppled.

“And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron,” Daniel had continued in verse 40. That fourth kingdom was Rome—the iron monarchy of history. It was in the days of Rome that Christ lived and died. Roman soldiers officiated at the crucifixion. A Roman seal closed His tomb.

Four world empires! And would you not naturally expect that if there were four, there might also be a fifth, arising upon the ruins of the fourth?

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But no! The divine forecast says in verse 41, "And whereas thou saw the feet and toes, part of potters' clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided." Something new here. A change was to take place, a division to set in. And did it happen?

Yes, during the fourth and fifth centuries several distinct nations came into being within the boundaries of Western Rome. Rome, the mighty empire of the Caesars, disintegrated before the onslaughts of barbarians, and in her place we see the well-known nations of Germany, France, Switzerland, Portugal, England, Spain, and Italy.

I ask you, Could man in his own wisdom predict the future with such accuracy? No! Fulfilled Bible prophecy stamps the Word of God as divine. But now listen to verse 43: "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.'" What do you think of that! Europe will not stick together!

Just as the prophecy predicted long ago, men have repeatedly tried to unite the segments of ancient Rome into one mighty empire again. They have attempted to reestablish the dictatorship of the Caesars. But God says in seven crisp words of prophecy, "They shall not cleave one to another."

These are the words-the seven words-that form a barrier to every dictator who dreams of world conquest. No plan to rule the world will ever succeed for long. For the God who knows the end from the beginning says that the broken pieces of Rome will not cleave together. They will not stick!

We begin to see the reason for history's uncanny repetition. Nebuchadnezzar had no trouble ruling the world. Nor did Cyrus and Darius, or Alexander, or the Caesars. But then all was changed. Since the days of the Roman Empire, history, like a broken record, tells the story of every would-be dictator in one persistent word: "Defeat-defeat-defeat!"

That one word tells the story of Charlemagne, Louis XIV, Napoleon, Kaiser Wilhelm, Hitler, and every dreaming dictator who yet may follow. And back of it all is a power-packed prophecy.

Napoleon had seemed the master man of destiny. "Only five feet, two and a half inches tall, thin-faced, sallow-complexioned, and round-shouldered, he developed one of the most rapid, clear thinking, tireless brains ever to function in a human cranium." In 1799 he seized France and set out to unite the remaining segments of the old empire in Europe. But you remember how the prophecy was magnificently fulfilled through the Duke of Wellington at Waterloo, and Napoleon's idea of world empire was finished.

The Kaiser set out with the same idea in 1914, and I think we all know the end of that story. But even while the news of fresh disaster came in from every front, a corporal in action on the crumbling German lines was taken to a hospital. There seemed to be nothing seriously wrong with him, but he looked so completely prostrated that he was assigned to a cot. Patriots were roaming the hospital wards asking for signatures as the surrender was being signed. This man defiantly turned his face to the wall and refused to listen to the news of the new republic. It did not fit into his plans.

Two days later Adolf Hitler got off that bed and left the hospital with a feverish desire to marshal the world under his banner. And that story, too, has been written on the world's nerves with the blood, the sweat, and the tears of millions of men and women the globe around.

Many powerful peace agencies have attempted to bring about a United States of Europe. But no man, no group of men, no nation, no combination of powers, can ever long succeed, for it is written, "They shall not cleave one to another."

And now the climax of it all, the destiny of the nations-your destiny and mine-is found in the words of Daniel 2:44: "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed."

Not in the days of Baby on, not in the days of Persia, not in the days of Greece, not in the days of Rome, but down in the days of these kings, in our time, God will set up His kingdom. And Revelation 11:15 adds impact to the words of Daniel: "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever."

Wonderful news! I bring you no sensationalism, no wild or fanciful predictions. Rather, I bring you the sure and certain message from God that the next great event on the stage of human history is destined to be the second coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, to whom earth's crown belongs.

His coming kingdom is the stone that would strike the image on the feet-not in the days of the head of gold, or the silver, or the brass, but in the days of the feet of iron and clay-and become a great mountain and fill the whole earth.

There need be no confusion here. Just as surely as there was a Babylon, a Medo-Persia, a Greece, a Rome; just as surely as there came a breakup of these mighty empires into the nations of Europe as we

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see them today; just as surely as these nations have attempted to unite, and failed-just so surely will the next great event be the second coming of Jesus Christ, your Lord and mine, as King of kings, and Lord of lords!

And there need be no fear. Men may talk of a switchboard of annihilation, triggered by some fumbling finger. But the God of heaven places barriers before nations, dictators, and men. To all He says, "Hitherto shall thou come, but no further."

Through these perplexing days you may have the settled assurance that the Hand that made the atom is controlling the hands that discovered its secret. God will permit men to go only so far, for the kingdoms of this world are not to be totally destroyed by man's ingenious devices. According to the Word of God, they are finally to surrender, not to each other, but to the scepter of Christ Jesus Himself.

If this were a political book, if these were ordinary times, you might appreciate what you have just read and merely remark, "Well, that's interesting. It has added to my store of information." And all would be well. However, I sincerely believe that we are brought face to face with the most important decision a man or woman can make -that of placing ourselves on God's side.

The great coronation is about to take place. The King is coming! If it does not fit into your plans, then change your plans! God will help you.

The King is coming! No thoughtful man or woman interested in his own eternal welfare dare let this information go unnoticed. Some may not like it, may not care to adjust to it. But none dare ignore it. There is not time to ignore it!

You may recall the visit of Queen Elizabeth to Lord Leicester's proud castle in the Midlands of the British Isles. Rippling through the ranks of her eager, waiting subjects was the whisper, "The queen is coming!" Then as she stepped across the threshold into the castle, in her honor the great timepiece of the castle was stopped, never to be started again, forever marking the moment of her arrival.

The King is about to step across the threshold of time. Every clock, every watch, every timepiece the world around, will be forever stopped, never to be started again. Time will turn upon its hinge and become eternity.

Will you place yourself on God's side? This is the moment to decide. Eternity has no clock. Decision belongs to time. And time is now!

10. Race to the Stars

IT WAS on October 4, 1957, that men everywhere stopped their hurrying, their loitering, their worrying, their contemplations, their competitions, to learn that man had made a moon.

It took a little time to realize what had actually happened. Then the truth dawned upon even the dullest of us. That tiny moon had rocketed us into a new age, a space age. Man at last had weakened the gravitational hold of this planet upon its restless inhabitants.

America was a nation in shock. Gradually she recovered enough to lift her own satellites into orbit. We realized that we were actors in a technological revolution that would dwarf every other revolution into insignificance. And then came Lunik II, smashing into the bleak surface of its target barely eighty-four seconds off schedule. It had been only fourteen years from Hiroshima to the moon!

Like it or not, we were in the center of a moving, cosmic drama. What yesterday was fantasy, today was fact. What yesterday was elusively intriguing, today was dangerously near. We were in it! We had touched the universe, and its broken secrets had plunged us into nuclear and moral fear. These were the days to which Jesus looked when He spoke of "men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth." (Luke 21:26.)

The future filled men with terror. In fact, we had not yet recovered from what we saw on the morning of our first atomic test at Los Alamos, when we got our first glimpse of what we were really handling.

Everything happened faster than it could be understood that morning. No one saw the first flash of atomic fire. It was only possible to see its dazzling white reflection on the sky and on the hills. Those who ventured to turn their heads saw a bright ball of flame growing steadily larger and larger. One member of the Theoretical Division actually thought-though his reason told him it was impossible-that the ball of fire would never stop growing till it had enveloped all heaven and earth. And a senior officer shouted in terror, "The long-haired boys have lost control."

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predictions of that book, and "prophecy came not in old time by the will of man." - "Will the Old Book Stand?" H. L. Hastings, Page 19.

The March Of The Nations

1. May we understand prophecy? 2 Peter 1:19, 20
2. What did Christ say of Daniel's prophecy? Matthew 24:15.
3. Why was Nebuchadnezzar troubled: Daniel 2:1. (Read verses 1-35.)
4. Who gave this dream to the king? Daniel 2:28.
5. What was the dream to reveal? Daniel 2:29.
6. Whom did the head of gold represent? Daniel 2:37,38.
7. What kingdoms were to follow Babylon? Daniel 2:39,40.
8. What did the silver (breast and arms) represent? Daniel 5:28-31.
9. How long did Medo-persia rule? - From BC 538-331.
10. What did the brass symbolize? - Greece. (See Daniel 8:20, 21.)
11. What empire followed Greece? - Rome. Daniel 2:40; 8:23-25; Luke 2:1-4.
12. What change was to come to the kingdom of iron? Daniel 2:41, 42. Note 4.
13. How would these kings try to strengthen themselves? - By inter marriage. Daniel 2:43.
14. What eternal kingdom was to be set up in the days of these kings? Daniel 2:44.
15. What represented this eternal kingdom in the dream? Daniel 2: 45.
16. What must take place before Christ's kingdom is established? Matthew 24:14.

Notes

Note 1

(Daniel 2:37, 38). - Jeremiah 27: 1 - 11, God gave the kingdom to Nebuchadnezzar. Ezekiel 26: 7 - 11, the fall of Tyre. Ezekiel 29: 18, Egypt given as wages for work against Tyre.

Note 2

(Daniel 2: 39). - Jeremiah 51:11, 27, 28, downfall of Babylon foretold and Medes named. Isaiah 45:1-3, Cyrus named 113 years before he was born. Jeremiah 51:45, 46, God's sign to His children. Isaiah 47:5-13, the doom of the city. Daniel 5:1-28, the night of pleasure. Jeremiah 51:14, the entry of the army. Jeremiah 51:31, 32, the announcement taken to the king. Jeremiah 51:30, the slaying of the king of Babylon. Jeremiah 50:35, 37, 46; 51:53 -58; Isaiah 13:17-22, the destruction of Babylon.

Note 3

The historian Gibbon says: "The arms of the republic, sometimes vanquished in battle, always victorious in war, advanced with rapid steps to the Euphrates, the Danube, the Rhine, and the ocean; and the images of gold, or silver, or brass, that might serve to represent the nations and their kings, were successively broken by the iron monarchy of Rome." - "Decline and Fall, " Volume 3, page 634.

Note 4

The following took possession of the territory of Western Rome: AD 351, Franks, French; Alemanni, Germans: AD 406, Burgundians, Swiss: Suevi, Portugal; Vandals in northern part of Africa; AD 408, Visigoths, Spain; A. D. 449 Anglo-Saxons, English; AD 483, Ostrogoths, Austria: Lombards, part of Italy; Heruli, part of Italy.

The Second Coming of Christ

1. Does the Bible say positively that Jesus will appear the second time? Hebrews 9:28.
2. Did Christ promise to come again? John 14:1-3.
3. Did Christ go away? Acts 1:12.
Where to? Hebrews 9:24. When did He go? Acts 1:3. How did He go? Acts 1:9.
4. Did He ascend with the same body that was laid in the tomb? John 2:19 -21; Luke 24:36, 42, 50, 51.
5. Will this same Jesus return? Acts 1:9-11.

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nations sail the seas no longer, and every estuary is lined with gaunt reminders of a past glory and prosperity. "And every shipmaster, and all the company in ships, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea" bewail the ruin that has befallen them. [Revelation 18:11,17]

And from the heart of poor, suffering humanity rises a cry for help and deliverance. Its hopes have been shattered. Its precious trinkets, so eagerly grasped in the days of prosperity, have dissolved in its hands. The pleasant things that do so much to make life worth living have been taken away. Forces beyond its control have spoiled all its beautiful dreams and trampled ruthlessly upon its fair ambitions.

The situation is full of tremendous possibilities. Will the multitudes who have been crushed so overwhelmingly in the depression remain passive in silent despair? Will they seek to drown their sorrow in riotous debauchery? Will the old restraints break under the terrific strain? Will the primeval instinct of self-preservation stir men's hearts into a flame of bitter hatred against the world order that has permitted, if not brought about, their ruin?

ONLY ONE HOPE

In all the uncertainty that exists, there is one consoling fact. The cry of the poor and the broken-hearted has at least one attentive ear. "When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue fails for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them." [Isaiah 41:17]

The sorrows of the world are not hidden from God. He who "heals the broken in heart, and binds up their wounds" [Psalm 147:3] is not unmindful of the widespread misery that engulfs the creatures of His hand today. Indeed, the very extent of the tragedy, the hopelessness of it all, the utter inability of man to find a way out, is the surest guarantee that the hour for divine intervention has arrived.

"Behold," says the prophet Isaiah, "a King shall reign in righteousness and a Man shall be as an hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." [Isaiah 32:1,2.]

When God would take His people over Jordan He waited until the river overflowed its banks. Then, when thick mud and deep water covered the valley, and the prospects of taking an army through it could not have been worse, He bade the priests of Israel step into the flood. The waters rolled back and the people passed over.

Today we face a flood far worse than Jordan. We have reached the supreme crisis. And in this mighty hour we need the help of God. There is no hope apart from Him. There is no way out but His way.

But He has a way. The path through this, Jordan is known to Him. The world cry for deliverance will not go unheard nor unanswered. His plans are ready; and the time for their execution draws near.

"Every problem confronts us at once and in its most acute form. And no country or continent is exempt. An economic depression deepened by a financial crisis has spread impoverishment over both hemispheres. Revolutions arrested once are now again threatened. The dispatches of our daily papers announce new strokes of late in unending succession, like the messengers of Job, each heralding disaster. 'And while he yet spoke, there came another.'" Sir Arthur Salter, K.C.B

3. DIVISIONS AND DISSENSIONS

COMPLICATING the economic situation and adding to the misery of mankind is the intense rivalry and competition between the scores of national groups into which the world's population is divided. Truly the scattering at Babel was well and thoroughly done. And the sins of those pioneer builders have certainly been visited upon their children unto many generations.

Nothing would so help to change the present outlook as a spontaneous movement towards co-operation on the part of every nation. A genuine offer from all to give the utmost possible help in the work of reconstruction would work wonders in a week. Imagine what would happen if on a sudden every nation willingly removed its tariff barriers and destroyed all its armaments beyond police requisites! Suppose there were a general surrendering of "rights" in one great unselfish gesture! What a mighty trade revival there would be!

But it is too good to be true. Such an eventuality is as remote as the Pleiades. Men have dreamed such dreams before. Through the centuries visionaries have talked and written of "the brotherhood of man" and the possibility of a world federation of states. Not long before his death that great statesman and peacemaker M. Briand dared to advocate a "United States of Europe." But the frigid reception of his plan

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soon dashed his hopes. Many paid lip service to his “lofty idealism,” but none was willing to make any sacrificial contribution to secure its success.

DISINTEGRATION

Never was international co-operation so sorely needed, and never did it seem less likely to happen. Drifting apart seems more in fashion than pulling together. The singing of national songs and the waving of national flags is much more popular than any blending of interests for the common good. Even language areas that for centuries have been more or less contented provinces of larger countries are growing restive and demanding recognition of their “historic rights.”

The Irish Free State breaks away from Britain and revives a practically dead language for the use of its three million inhabitants. Wales agitates for the right to fly its “Red Dragon” beside the Union jack. Scotland develops a national party with hopes of breaking the Union some day.

On the Continent similar tendencies manifest themselves. Before Hitler seized power it was generally expected that the whole German Union was on the point of breaking up into its original sections. As for the new-born states created out of the remnants of the Austrian empire, their artificial composition, embracing large antagonistic groups that never desired amalgamation, makes them a constant source of anxiety.

The process of disintegration and separation has been carried to the utmost limits of folly. The immense tariff barriers raised by every nation amount to a virtual refusal to trade. Forgetting the Pauline maxim that no man can either live or die unto himself, each and all are saying, “We must protect ourselves, we must keep all available work for our own people, we must keep out the foreigner and his goods.” Thus each little group thinks that it can dwell more securely alone under its own vine and fig-tree, failing to remember the ancient proverb: “There is that scattered, and yet increased; and there is that withhold more than is meet, but it tends to poverty.” [Proverbs 11:24].

ROPES OF SAND

Meanwhile the world has not lacked men - and women, too-with vision and courage enough to attempt to break the evil spell which seems to have bewitched the nations. All sorts of societies and organizations have been created with the object of bringing about a better understanding between the various peoples. Leagues to promote international peace and good will abound. Advantage has been taken of the idealism of unspoiled youth, the common hopes of women, and the friendliness and faith of little children. No efforts have been spared in the noble endeavor to bind the nations together in the bonds of a new and better friendship, and millions of pounds have been gladly poured out as an oblation to this glorious vision.

But the bonds, alas, are only ropes of sand. The masses listen to the apostles of brotherhood as Israel once listened to Ezekiel. They grant that these idealists have “a pleasant voice” and sing “a very lovely song,” but after they bear their words “they do them not.” [Ezekiel 33:32] The pleading for fellowship and co-operation falls upon deaf ears. The radiant picture of a new world where nations bear each others’ burdens and move on towards a common goal, fades away almost before it is uttered. Hard facts of life, old, bitter memories, cruel human greed, combine to blot it out. Immediate needs, the avenging of wrongs, the attaining of some selfish ambition, seem more important, and to these the foolish, misguided peoples return “as dogs to their vomit”.

FORMER ATTEMPTS AT FUSION

Glancing back over the centuries one sees that this desire to blend the nations into one harmonious whole is no new ambition. Many kings and queens have entertained it, only their methods of bringing about the desired fusion have differed rather widely from their modern counterparts.

It is said that even the ex-Kaiser once dreamed dreams of world dominion. And who shall say that Queen Victoria never considered the creation of a great sister hood of nations as she beheld her sons and daughters, nephews and nieces, marrying into all the royal families of Europe until there was scarcely one royal house unrelated to herself, while in the ends of the earth her merchant princes and adventurers

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founded many a mighty state?

Napoleon certainly made a bold attempt at world sovereignty, as did also Charles the Fifth and Charlemagne. But somehow all such plans failed. Details went wrong. Just when success seemed imminent, a battle was lost or a revolution broke out. Sometimes from the most unexpected quarter opposition sprang up. As the molten metal of a conquered world seemed to be setting into one consolidated mass, cracks appeared. The iron was always mixed with clay.

Bestriding “the narrow world like a colossus,” the Emperor Napoleon, with consummate audacity, placed his relatives and friends on the thrones of Europe. French ascendancy over the whole Continent seemed well nigh complete. But ambition for yet wider dominion led him to Moscow. Success seemed again within his grasp. Then the unexpected happened. Fire and snow fought against him. And in that tragic retreat across the blizzard-swept plains of Russia the flower of his army perished.

FAILURE OF ALLIANCES

In like manner alliances which bound certain European states together in the nineteenth century perished in the holocaust of 1914. Solemn treaties of peace and concord turned as it were to ashes in the flames of war. Wood relationships availed nothing. Ties of friendship and family straightway dissolved. All the intricate system of royal intermarriage, so carefully developed through half a century, collapsed in ruins. The kings themselves lost their thrones. Emperors fled, or were massacred. Scores of minor potentates surrendered their coronets. Abdication became for a time almost a daily occurrence. Europe resounded to the fall of the mighty. There was a cataract of crowns.

When it was all over, and the noise of battle had died away, the world was seen to be more divided than ever. Through severely chastened, its old hatreds and suspicions remained. National groups, long crushed by stronger powers, demanded their freedom and independence. New boundaries had to be drawn, and when peace at last was signed there were more divisions and longer frontiers than there had been for generations. The fires even of such an inferno had brought no fusion.

FOUR WORLD EMPIRES

To find a time when one great power achieved universal rule one must needs trace history back to the days of the Caesars. True, before Rome ruled, other empires had enjoyed dominion over the then-known world. In direct succession Babylon, Medo-Persia, and Grecia had held, for their allotted span, undisputed sway. In those early times one supreme ruler was the order of the day. There was no change of government unless the whole dynasty was swept away by some invading host.

It was the decline and fall of the Roman empire which completely altered the course of history. Upon the ruins of that once all-powerful and all-prevailing empire, whose iron rule had brought civilized Europe and parts of Asia and Africa under its dominion, there arose ten separate kingdoms. Its vast territories were divided. Seizing the opportunity created by Rome’s decay, the so-called “barbarian” tribes, that had for years been gathering along her distant frontiers, gazing covetously at the fair fields and cities of her wide domain, poured in like an overwhelming flood. Each group seized the section it desired and set up its own primitive form of government. A new era began with the overthrow of Romulus Augustus in AD 476. Western Rome was then broken up into the ten kingdoms predicted in the prophecy of Daniel. Though unperceived at the time, the history of modern Europe had commenced.

Ever since then the divisions have remained. Every attempt to cement them together again has failed. Always something has stood in the way. Language difficulties; old grievances, unrighted wrongs, unalleviated hardships, divergencies of outlook, religious animosities, differing standards and valuation of life—all have contributed to keep the peoples apart. Though the strongest and wisest men have set themselves to overcome the obstacles, they have invariably suffered defeat. Always, against every device of man to the contrary, world forces have proved the truth of the divine forecast, “They shall not cleave together.”

“THEY SHALL NOT CLEAVE”

The ancient prediction in which these Words occur is of particular interest in this connection.

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Incredible as it may seem to some, the very situation described above was outlined in prophecy twenty-five centuries ago. While Rome was an unknown village, before MedoPersia or Greece had tasted world dominion, the pen of inspiration had already drawn the picture of modern Europe that we see today.

The channel used by God for this amazing revelation was a young Jewish nobleman, named Daniel, a captive in the court of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon. His sterling character and exceptional wisdom had so impressed the monarch that he had invited him to join the official staff of counselors to the court.

One night Nebuchadnezzar dreamed a dream that greatly troubled him. In the morning he found that the dream had gone from his mind, though its vivid impression remained. Convinced that he had been given a revelation of unusual importance, he sent for his wise men and demanded that they tell him forthwith both the dream and its interpretation.

Such a task was beyond them, and they were forced to admit it. Whereupon the king, with the impetuosity characteristic of eastern potentates, commanded that they all be slain. Daniel, of course, was involved, but with great courage he sought audience of Nebuchadnezzar and took upon himself the responsibility of meeting the king's requirements and so saving the lives of his associates.

The interview over, and time being granted him, he sought his immediate friends and set the position before them. Together they knelt in prayer. Doubtless the imminent peril made their prayers more earnest than they had ever been before. Certainly God heard them.

A KING'S DREAM

That night Daniel saw in vision the very dream that had appeared the previous night to the king, and in addition the meaning of it all was made plain to him. Early in the morning he arose, his heart full of thanksgiving. His beautiful prayer on this occasion is one of the choicest passages of Scripture:-

"Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever: for wisdom and might are His: and He changes the times and the seasons: He removes kings, and sets up kings. He gives wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding. He reveals the deep and secret things. He knows what is in the darkness, and the light dwells with Him. I thank Thee, and praise Thee, O Thou God of my fathers, who has given me wisdom and might, and has made known unto me now what we desired of Thee: for Thou has now made known unto us the king's matter." [Daniel 2: 20-23.]

Exultingly, yet with most commendable humility, he returned to the palace. The king was expecting him, skeptical no doubt as to the result of the interview, and perhaps regretting that his decree made it necessary that this fine young man should be put to death.

"The secret which the king hath demanded," began Daniel, "cannot the wise men, the astrologers, the magicians, the soothsayers, show unto the king; but there is a God in heaven that reveals secrets, and makes known to the King Nebuchadnezzar what shall be lit the latter days."

The conviction in the young man's voice, born of certain knowledge, stirred the king to the depths. One can almost see him leaning forward with eagerness to catch the next sentences.

"As for thee, O king, thy thoughts came into thy mind upon thy bed, what should come to pass hereafter: and He that reveals secrets makes known to thee what shall come to pass." Then followed the recounting of the dream.

"Thou, O king, saw, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible. This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, his legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay. Thou saw till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. 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: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth." [Daniel 31-35]

It was the very dream the king had seen and forgotten! . Every detail was perfectly drawn. Nothing was missing. His very inmost thoughts had been read by another. This was miraculous. Breathlessly he waited for the promised interpretation.

"This is the dream," went on the youthful prophet, and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king."

THIS MIGHTY HOUR

THE INTERPRETATION

"Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. And where so ever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath He given into your hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold."

A smile of satisfaction passed over the king's countenance, turning almost immediately, however, into a frown of puzzled anxiety as the young man continued:

"And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth. 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.

"And whereas thou saw the feet and toes, part of potter's clay, and part of iron, THE KINGDOM SHALL BE DIVIDED but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou saw the iron mixed with miry clay".

"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.

"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."

THE FUTURE UNVEILED

Like a flash the veil of the future dropped and both prophet and king found themselves gazing enraptured across the vast, enthralling landscape of history-to-be. In the foreground rose the golden domes of Babylon; not far distant the silvered heights of the coming Medo-Persian kingdom lifted themselves towards the skies. Farther on rose the brazen pinnacles of Greece, and beyond, the dark outline of the peaks of the Roman kingdom were clearly visible. Beyond these still, their eyes witnessed a time of confusion and chaos, division and dissension, with Rome partitioned, and each separate nation fighting desperately for its own existence. They beheld mighty plans on foot to fuse the broken iron into one great whole again, and the constant failures through the presence of the ineradicable clay. They looked upon events even of our own time and saw the main outlines of modern European politics.

And then? Suddenly through the blue mist on the far horizon a majestic, stupendous scene arrested their attention.

"And in the days of these kings," said the prophet, "shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed. And the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.

"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: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure." [Daniel 2:44,45]

Like a mighty beacon this amazing prophecy shines down the centuries, illuminating the great events of time. Glittering on the gold of Babylon, shimmering on the silver of Medo-Persia, glinting on the brass of Grecia, shining on the iron of Rome, lighting up the struggles and conflicts of the modern world, it glows at last upon the face of the King of kings as He comes back to the earth in His glory.

The very existence of this prophecy gives added significance to the events discussed in this chapter. The fact that so much of the vision has come true already is powerful, convincing evidence that the unfulfilled balance will yet take place. Indeed, there is nothing left now but the final consummation and the setting up of God's eternal kingdom. Can it be that even the national dissensions and rivalries of our time are but the shadows cast before by this coming event? Are they indeed but further indications that we are approaching the supreme crisis of this mighty hour?

"Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever: for wisdom and might are His: and He changes the times and the seasons. He removes kings, and sets up kings. He gives wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding. He reveals the deep and secret things: He knows what is in the darkness, and the light dwells with Him." Daniel 2:20-22.

2. THE GREAT IMAGE

"VERSE 1. And in the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuchadnezzar dreamed dreams, wherewith his spirit was troubled, and his sleep brake from him."

Daniel was carried into captivity in the first year of Nebuchadnezzar. For three years he was placed under instructors, during which time he would not, of course, be reckoned among the wise men of the kingdom, nor take part in public affairs. Yet in the second year of Nebuchadnezzar, the transactions recorded in this chapter took place. How, then, could Daniel be brought in to interpret the king's dream in his second year? The explanation lies in the fact that Nebuchadnezzar reigned for two years conjointly with his father, Nabopolassar. From this point the Jews reckoned, while the Chaldeans reckoned from the time he commenced

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to reign alone, on the death of his father. Hence, the year here mentioned was the second year of his reign according to the Chaldean reckoning, but the fourth according to the Jewish. It thus appears that the very next year after Daniel had completed his preparation to participate in the affairs of the Chaldean empire, the providence of God brought him into sudden and wonderful notoriety throughout all the kingdom.

"VERSE 2. Then the king commanded to call the magicians, and the astrologers, and the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans, for to show the king his dream. So they came and stood before the king."

The magicians were such as practiced magic, using the term in its bad sense; that is, they practiced all the superstitious rites and ceremonies of fortune-tellers, casters of nativities, etc. Astrologers were men who pretended to foretell future events by the study of the stars. The science, or the superstition, of astrology was extensively cultivated by the Eastern nations of antiquity. Sorcerers were such as pretended to hold communication with the dead. In this sense, we believe, it is always used in the Scriptures. Modern Spiritualism is simply ancient heathen sorcery revived. The Chaldeans here mentioned were a sect of philosophers similar to the magicians and astrologers, who made psychic, divinations, etc., their study. All these sects or professions abounded in Babylon. The end aimed at by each was the same; namely, the explaining of mysteries and the foretelling of future events, the principal difference between them being the means by which they sought to accomplish their object. The king's difficulty lay equally within the province of each to explain; hence he summoned them all. With the king it was an important matter. He was greatly troubled, and therefore concentrated upon the solution of his perplexity the whole wisdom of his realm.

"VERSE 3. And the king said unto them, I have dreamed a dream, and my spirit was troubled to know the dream. 4. Then spake the Chaldeans to the king in Syriac, O king, live forever; tell they servants the dream, and we will show the interpretation."

Whatever else the ancient magicians and astrologers may have been efficient in, they seem to have been thoroughly

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schooled in the art of drawing out sufficient information to form a basis for some shrewd calculation, or of framing their answers in so ambiguous a manner that they would be equally applicable, let the event turn either way. In the present case, true to their cunning instincts, they called upon the king to make known to them his dream. If they could get full information respecting this, they could easily agree on some interpretation which would not endanger their reputation. They addressed themselves to the king

in Syriac, a dialect of the Chaldean language which was used by the educated and cultured classes. From this point to the end of chapter 7, the record continues in Chaldaic.

"VERSE 5. The king answered and said to the Chaldeans, The thing is gone from me; if ye will not make known unto me the dream, with the interpretation thereof, ye shall be cut in pieces, and your houses shall be made a dunghill. 6. But if ye show the dream, and the interpretation thereof, ye shall receive of me gifts and rewards and great honor; therefore show me the dream, and the interpretation thereof. 7. They answered again and said, Let the king tell his servants the dream, and we will show the interpretation of it. 8. The king answered and said, I know of certainty that ye would gain the time, because ye see the thing is gone from me. 9. But if ye will not make known unto me the dream, there is but one decree for you; for ye have prepared lying and corrupt words to speak before me, till the time be changed; therefore tell me the dream, and I shall know that ye can show me the interpretation thereof. 10. The Chaldeans answered before the king, and said, There is not a man upon the earth that can show the king's matter; therefore there is no king, lord, nor ruler, that asked such things at any magician, or astrologer, or Chaldean. 11. And it is a rare thing that the king requireth, and there is none other that can show it before the king, except the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh. 12. For this cause the king was angry and very furious, and commanded to destroy all the wise men of Babylon. 13. And the decree went forth that the wise men should be slain; and they sought Daniel and his fellows to be slain."

These verses contain the record of the desperate struggle between the wise men, so called, and the king; the former seeking some avenue of escape, seeing they were caught on their own ground, and the latter determined that they should make known his dream, which was no more than their profession would warrant him in demanding. Some have severely censured Nebuchadnezzar in this matter, as acting the part of

a heartless, unreasonable tyrant. But what did these magicians profess to be able to do ? - To reveal hidden things; to foretell future events; to make known mysteries entirely beyond human foresight and penetration; and to do this by the aid of supernatural agencies. If, then, their claim was worth anything, could they not make known to the king what he had dreamed ? - They certainly could. And if they were able, knowing the dream, to give a reliable interpretation thereof, would they not also be able to make known the dream itself when it had gone from the king ? - Certainly, if there was any virtue in their pretended intercourse with the other world. There was therefore nothing unjust in Nebuchadnezzar's demand that they should make known his dream. And when they declared (verse 11) that none but the gods whose dwelling was not with flesh could make known the king's matter, it was a tacit acknowledgment that they had no communication with these gods, and knew nothing beyond what human wisdom and discernment could reveal. For this cause, the king was angry and very furious. He saw that he and all his people were being made the victims of deception. He accused them (verse 9) of endeavoring to dally along till the "time be changed," or till the matter had so passed from his mind that his anger at their duplicity should abate, and he would either recall the dream himself, or be unsolicitous whether it were made known and interpreted or not. And while we cannot justify the extreme measures to which he resorted, dooming them to death, and their houses to destruction, we cannot but feel a hearty sympathy with him in his condemnation of a class of miserable impostors.

The severity of his sentence was probably attributable more to the customs of those times than to any malignity on the part of the king. Yet it was a bold and desperate step. Consider who these were who thus incurred the wrath of the king. They were numerous, opulent, and influential sects. Moreover, they were the learned and cultivated classes of those times; yet the king was not so wedded

to his false religion as to spare it even with all this influence in its favor. If the system was one of fraud and imposition, it must fall, however

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high its votaries might stand in numbers or position, or however many of them might be involved in its ruin. The king would be no party to dishonesty or deception.

"VERSE 14. Then Daniel answered with counsel and wisdom to Arioch the captain of the king's guard, which was gone forth to slay the wise men of Babylon. 15. He answered and said to Arioch the king's captain, Why is the decree so hasty from the king? Then, Arioch made the thing known to Daniel. 16. Then Daniel went in, and desired of the king that he would give him time, and that he would show the king the interpretation. 17. Then Daniel went to his house, and made the thing known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions; 18. That they would desire mercies of the God of heaven concerning this secret; that Daniel and his fellows should not perish with the rest of the wise men of Babylon."

In this narrative we see the providence of God working in several remarkable particulars.

1. It was providential that the dream of the king should leave such a powerful impression upon his mind as to raise him to the greatest height of anxiety, and yet the thing itself should be held from his recollection. This led to the complete exposure of the false system of the magicians and other pagan teachers; for when put to the test to make known the dream, it was found that they were unable to do what their profession made it incumbent on them to do.

2. It was remarkable that Daniel and his companions, so lately pronounced by the king ten times better than all his magicians and astrologers, should not sooner have been consulted at all, in this matter. But there was a providence in this. Just as the dream was held from the king, so he was unaccountably held from appealing to Daniel for a solution of the mystery. For had he called on Daniel at first, and had he at once made known the matter, the magicians would not have been brought to the test. But God would give the heathen systems of the Chaldeans the first chance. He would let them try, and ignominiously fail, and confess their utter incompetency, even under the penalty of death, that they might be the better prepared to acknowledge his hand when he should finally reach it down in behalf of his captive servants, and for the honor of his own name.

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3. It appears that the first intimation Daniel had of the matter was the presence of the executioners, come for his arrest. His own life being thus at stake, he would be led to seek the Lord with all his heart till he should work for their deliverance. Daniel gains his request of the king for time to consider the matter, - a privilege which probably none of the magicians could have secured, as the king had already accused them of preparing lying and corrupt words, and of seeking to gain time for this very purpose. Daniel at once went to his three companions, and engaged them to unite with him in desiring the mercy of the God of heaven concerning this secret. He could have prayed alone, and doubtless would have been heard; but then, as now, in the union of God's people there is prevailing power; and the promise of the accomplishment of that which is asked, is to the two or three who shall agree concerning it. Matt.18:19,20.

"VERSE 19. Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a night vision. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven. 20. Daniel answered and said, Blessed be the name of God forever and ever; for

wisdom and might are his; 21. And he changeth the times and the seasons; he removeth kings, and setteth up kings; he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding; 22. He revealeth the deep and secret things; he knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him. 23. I thank thee, and praise thee, O thou God of my fathers, who hast given me wisdom and might, and hast made known unto me now what we desired of thee; for thou hast now made known unto us the king's matter.

Whether or not the answer came while Daniel and his companions were yet offering up their petitions, we are not informed. If it did, it shows their importunity in the matter; for it was through a night vision that God revealed himself in their behalf, which would show that they continued the supplications, as might reasonably be inferred, far into the night, and ceased not till the answer was obtained. Or, if their season of prayer had closed, and God at a subsequent time sent the answer, it would show us that, as is sometimes the case, prayers are not unavailing though not immediately answered. Some think the matter was made known to Daniel by his dreaming the same dream that Nebuchadnezzar had dreamed; but

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Matthew Henry considers it more probable that "when he was awake, and continuing instant in prayer, and watching in the same, the dream itself and the interpretation of it were communicated to him by the ministry of an angel, abundantly to his satisfaction." The words "night vision" mean anything that is seen, whether through dreams or visions.

Daniel immediately offered up praise to God for his gracious dealing with them; and while his prayer is not preserved, his responsive thanksgiving is fully recorded. God is honored by our rendering him praise for the things he has done for us, as well as by our acknowledging through prayer our need of his help. Let Daniel's course be our example in this respect. Let no mercy from the hand of God fail of its due return of thanksgiving and praise. Were not ten lepers cleansed? "But where," asks Christ sorrowfully, "are the nine?" Luke 17:17.

Daniel had the utmost confidence in what had been shown him. He did not first go to the king, to see if what had been revealed to him was indeed the king's dream; but he immediately praised God for having answered his prayer.

Although the matter was revealed to Daniel, he did not take honor to himself as though it were by his prayers alone that this thing had been obtained, but immediately associated his companions with himself, and acknowledged it to be as much an answer to their prayers as to his own. It was, said he, "what we desired of thee," and thou hast made it "known unto us."

"VERSE 24. Therefore Daniel went in unto Arioch, whom the king had ordained to destroy the wise men of Babylon; he went and said thus unto him: Destroy not the wise men of Babylon; bring me in before the king, and I will show unto the king the interpretation."

Daniel's first plea is for the wise men of Babylon. Destroy them not, for the king's secret is revealed. True it was through no merit of theirs or their heathen systems of divination that this revelation was made; they were worthy of just as much condemnation as before. But their own confession of utter impotence in the matter was humiliation enough for them, and Daniel was anxious that they should so far partake of

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the benefits shown to him as to have their own lives spared. Thus they were saved because there was a man of God among them. And thus it ever is. For the sake of Paul and Silas, all the prisoners with them were loosed. Acts 16:26. For the sake of Paul, the lives of all that sailed with him were saved. Chapter 27:24. Thus the wicked are benefited by the presence of the righteous. Well would it be if

they would remember the obligations under which they are thus placed. What saves the world to-day? For whose sake is it still spared? - For the sake for the few righteous persons who are yet left. Remove these, and how long would the wicked be suffered to run their guilty career? - No longer than the antediluvians were suffered, after Noah had entered the ark, or the Sodomites, after Lot had departed from their polluted and polluting presence. If only ten righteous persons could have been found in Sodom, the multitude of its wicked inhabitants would, for their sakes, have been spared. Yet the wicked will despise, ridicule, and oppress the very ones on whose account it is that they are still permitted the enjoyment of life and all its blessings.

"VERSE 25. Then Arioch brought in Daniel before the king in haste, and said thus unto him, I have found a man of the captives of Judah, that will make known unto the king the interpretation."

It is ever a characteristic of ministers and courtiers to ingratiate themselves with their sovereign. So here Arioch represented that he had found a man who could make known the desired interpretation; as if with great disinterestedness, in behalf of the king, he had been searching for some one to solve his difficulty, and had at last found him. In order to see through this deception of his chief executioner, the king had but to remember, as he probably did, his interview with Daniel (verse 16), and Daniel's promise, if time could be granted, to show the interpretation thereof.

"VERSE 26. The king answered and said to Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, Art thou able to make known unto me the dream which I have seen, and the interpretation thereof? 27. Daniel answered in the presence of the king, and said, The secret which the king hath demanded cannot the wise men, the astrologers, the magicians,

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the soothsayers, show unto the king; 28. But there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days. Thy dream, and the visions of thy head upon thy bed, are these."

Art thou able to make known the dream? was the king's doubtful salutation to Daniel, as he came into his presence. Notwithstanding his previous acquaintance with Daniel, the king seems to have questioned his ability, so young and inexperienced, to make known a matter in which the aged and venerable magicians and soothsayers had utterly failed. Daniel declared plainly that the wise men, the astrologers, the soothsayers, and the magicians could not make known this secret. It was beyond their power. Therefore the king should not be angry with them, nor put confidence in their inefficient superstitions. He then proceeds to make known the true God, who rules in heaven, and is the only revealer of secrets. And he it is, says Daniel, who maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days.

"VERSE 29. As for thee, O king, thy thoughts came into thy mind upon thy bed, what should come to pass hereafter; and he that revealeth secrets maketh known to thee what shall come to pass. 30. But as for me, this secret is not revealed to me for any wisdom that I have more than any living, but for their sakes that shall make known the interpretation to the king, and that thou mightest know the thoughts of thy heart."

Here is brought out another of the commendable traits of Nebuchadnezzar's character. Unlike some rulers, who fill up the present with folly and debauchery without regard to the future, he thought forward upon the days to come, with an anxious desire to know with what events they should be filled. His object in this was, doubtless, that he might the better know how to make a wise improvement of the present. For this reason God gave him this dream, which we must regard as a token of the divine favor toward the king, as there were many other ways in which the truth involved in this matter could have been brought out, equally to the honor of God's name, and the good of his people both at the time and through subsequent generations. Yet God would not work for the king independently of his own people; hence, though he gave the dream to

the king, he sent the interpretation through one of his own acknowledged servants. Daniel first disclaimed all credit for himself in the transaction, and then to modify somewhat the feelings of pride which it would have been natural for the king to have, in view of being thus noticed by the God of heaven, he informed him indirectly, that, although the dream had been given to him, it was not for his sake altogether that the interpretation was sent, but for their sakes through whom it should best be made known. Ah! God had some servants there, and it was for them that he was working. They are of more value in his sight than the mightiest kings and potentates of earth. Had it not been for them, the king would never have had the interpretation of his dream, probably not even the dream itself. Thus, when traced to their source, all favors, upon whomsoever bestowed, are found to be due to the regard which God has for his own children. How comprehensive was the work of God in this instance. By this one act of revealing the king's dream to Daniel, he accomplished the following objects: (1) He made known to the king the things he desired; (2) He saved his servants who trusted in him; (3) He brought conspicuously before the Chaldean nation the knowledge of the true God; (4) He poured contempt on the false systems of the soothsayers and magicians; and (5) He honored his own name, and exalted his servants in their eyes.

"VERSE 31. Thou, O king, sawest, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible. 32. This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, 33. His legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay. 34. Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. 35. 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; and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth."

Nebuchadnezzar, practicing the Chaldean religion, was an idolater. An image was an object which would at once command his attention and respect. Moreover, earthly kingdoms, which, as we shall hereafter see, were represented by this
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image, were objects of esteem and value in his eyes. With a mind unenlightened by the light of revelation, he was unprepared to put a true estimate upon earthly wealth and glory, and to look upon earthly governments in their true light. Hence the striking harmony between the estimate which he put upon these things, and the objects by which they were symbolized before him. To him they were presented under the form of a great image, an object in his eyes of worth and admiration. With Daniel the case was far different. He was able to view in its true light all greatness and glory not built on the favor and approbation of God; and therefore to him these same earthly kingdoms were afterward shown (see chapter 7) under the form of cruel and ravenous wild beasts.

But how admirably adapted was this representation to convey a great and needful truth to the mind of Nebuchadnezzar. Besides delineating the progress of events through the whole course of time for the benefit of his people, God would show Nebuchadnezzar the utter emptiness and worthlessness of earthly pomp and glory. And how could this be more impressively done than by an image commencing with the most precious of metals, and continually descending to the baser, till we finally have the coarsest and crudest of materials, - iron mingled with the miry clay, - the whole then dashed to pieces, and made like the empty chaff, no good thing in it, but altogether lighter than vanity, and finally

blown away where no place could be found for it, after which something durable and of heavenly worth occupies its place? So would God show to the children of men that earthly kingdoms were to pass away, and earthly greatness and glory, like a gaudy bubble, would break and vanish; and the kingdom of God, in the place so long usurped by these, should be set up, to have no end, and all who had an interest therein should rest under the shadow of its peaceful wings forever and ever. But this is anticipating.

"VERSE 36. This is the dream; and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king. 37. Thou, O king, art a king of kings; for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. 38. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the

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beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold."

Now opens one of the sublimest chapters of human history. Eight short verses of the inspired record tell the whole story; yet that story embraces the history of this world's pomp and power. A few moments will suffice to commit it to memory; yet the period which it covers, commencing more than twenty-five centuries ago, reaches on from that far-distant point past the rise and fall of kingdoms, past the setting up and overthrow of empires, past cycles and ages, past our own day, over into the eternal state. It is so comprehensive that it embraces all this; yet it is so minute that it gives us all the great outlines of earthly kingdoms from that time to this. Human wisdom never devised so brief a record which embraced so much. Human language never set forth in so few words, so great a volume of historical truth. The finger of God is here. Let us heed the lesson well.

With what interest, as well as astonishment, must the king have listened, as he was informed by the prophet that he, or rather his kingdom, the king being here put for his kingdom (see the following verse), was the golden head of the magnificent image which he had seen. Ancient kings were grateful for success; and in cases of prosperity, the tutelar deity, to whom they attributed their success, was the adorable object upon which they would lavish their richest treasures and bestow their best devotions. Daniel indirectly informs the king that in this case all these are due to the God of heaven, since he is the one who has given him his kingdom, and made him ruler over all. This would restrain him from the pride of thinking that he had attained his position by his own power and wisdom, and would enlist the gratitude of his heart toward the true God.

The kingdom of Babylon, which finally developed into the golden head of the great historic image, was founded by Nimrod, the great-grandson of Noah, over two thousand years before Christ. Gen.10:8-10: "And Cush begat Nimrod; he began to be a mighty one in the earth. He was a mighty

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hunter before the Lord; wherefore it is said, Even as Nimrod, the mighty hunter before the Lord. And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel [margin, Babylon], and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar." It appears that Nimrod also founded the city of Nineveh, which afterward became the capital of Syria. (See marginal reading of Gen.10:11, and Johnson's Cyclopaedia, art. Syria.) The following sketch of the history of Babylon, from Johnson's Universal Cyclopaedia, art. Babylon, is according to the latest authorities on this subject:

"About 1270 B.C., the Assyrian kings became masters of Chaldea, or Babylonia, of which Babylon was the capital. This country was afterward ruled by an Assyrian dynasty of kings, who reigned at Babylon, and sometimes waged war against those who reigned in Assyria proper. At other times the kings of Babylon were tributary to those of Assyria. Several centuries elapsed in which the

history of Babylon is almost a blank. In the time of Tiglathpileser of Assyria, Nabonassar ascended the throne of Babylon in 747 B.C. He is celebrated for the chronological era which bears his name, and which began in 747 B.C. About 720 Merodach-baladan became king of Babylon, and sent ambassadors to Hezekiah, king of Judah (see 2 Kings 20, and Isa.39). A few years later, Sargon, king of Assyria, defeated and dethroned Merodach-baladan. Sennacherib completed the subjection of Babylon, which he annexed to the Assyrian empire about 690 B.C. The conquest of Nineveh and the subversion of the Assyrian empire, which was effected about 625 B.C., by Cyaxeres the Mede, and his ally Nabopolassar, the rebellious governor of Babylon, enabled the latter to found the Babylonian empire, which was the fourth of Rawlinson's 'Five Great Monarchies,' and included the valley of the Euphrates, Susiana, Syria, and Palestine. His reign lasted about twenty-one years, and was probably pacific, as the history of it is nearly a blank; but in 605 B.C. his army defeated Necho, king of Egypt, who had invaded Syria. He was succeeded by his more famous son, Nebuchadnezzar (604 B.C.) who was the greatest of the kings of Babylon."

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Jerusalem was taken by Nebuchadnezzar in the first year of his reign, and the third year of Jehoiakim, king of Judah (Dan. 1:1), B.C.606. Nebuchadnezzar reigned two years conjointly with his father, Nabopolassar. From this point the Jews computed his reign, but the Chaldeans from the date of his sole reign, 604 B.C., as stated above. Respecting the successors of Nebuchadnezzar, the authority above quoted adds:

"He died in 561 B.C., and was succeeded by his son Evil-merodach, who reigned only two years. Nabonadius (or Labynetus), who became king in 555 B.C., formed an alliance with Croesus against Cyrus the Great. He appears to have shared the royal power with his son, Belshazzar, whose mother was a daughter of Nebuchadnezzar. Cyrus besieged Babylon, which he took by stratagem in 538 B.C., and with the death of Belshazzar, whom the Persians killed, the kingdom of Babylon ceased to exist."

When we say that the image of Daniel 2 symbolizes the four great prophetic universal monarchies, and reckon Babylon as the first of these, it is asked how this can be true, when every country in the world was not absolutely under the dominion of any one of them. Thus Babylon never conquered Grecia or Rome; but Rome was founded before Babylon had risen to the zenith of its power. Rome's position and influence, however, were then altogether prospective; and it is nothing against the prophecy that God begins to prepare his agents long years before they enter upon the prominent part they are to perform in the fulfilment of prophecy. We must place ourselves with the prophet, and view these kingdoms from the same standpoint. We shall then, as is right, consider his statements in the light of the location he occupied, the time in which he wrote, and the circumstances by which he was surrounded. It is a manifest rule of interpretation that we may look for nations to be noticed in prophecy when they become so far connected with the people of God that mention of them becomes necessary to make the records of sacred history complete. When this was the case with Babylon, it was, from the standpoint of the prophet, the great and overtowering

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object in the political world. In his eye, it necessarily eclipsed all else; and he would naturally speak of it as a kingdom having rule over all the earth. So far as we know, all provinces of countries against which Babylon did move in the height of its power, were subdued by its arms. In this sense, all were in its power; and this fact will explain the somewhat hyperbolic language of verse 38. That there were some portions of territory and considerable numbers of people unknown to history, and outside the pale

of civilization as it then existed, which were neither discovered nor subdued, is not a fact of sufficient strength or importance to condemn the expression of the prophet, or to falsify the prophecy.

In 606 B.C. Babylon came in contact with the people of God, when Nebuchadnezzar conquered Jerusalem and led Judah into captivity. It comes at this point, consequently, into the field of prophecy, at the end of Jewish theocracy.

The character of this empire is indicated by the nature of the material composing that portion of the image by which it was symbolized the head of gold. It was the golden kingdom of a golden age. Babylon, its metropolis, towered to a height never reached by any of its successors. Situated in the garden of the East; laid out in a perfect square sixty miles in circumference, fifteen miles on each side; surrounded by a wall three hundred and fifty feet high and eighty-seven feet thick, with a moat, or ditch around this, of equal cubic capacity with the wall itself; divided into six hundred and seventy-six squares each two and a quarter miles in circumference, by its fifty streets, each one hundred and fifty feet in width, crossing each other at right angles, twenty-five running each way, every one of them straight and level and fifteen miles in length; its two hundred and twenty-five square miles of inclosed surface, divided as just described, laid out in luxuriant pleasure-grounds and gardens, interspersed with magnificent dwellings, this city, with its sixty miles of moat, its sixty miles of outer wall, its thirty miles of river wall through its center, its hundred and fifty gates of solid brass, its hanging gardens, rising terrace above terrace, till they equaled in height the walls themselves, its temple of Belus, three miles in

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circumference, its two royal palaces, one three and a half, and the other eight miles in circumference, with its subterranean tunnel under the River Euphrates connecting these two palaces, its perfect arrangement for convenience, ornament, and defense, and its unlimited resources, this city, containing in itself many things which were themselves wonders of the world, was itself another and still mightier wonder. Never before saw the earth a city like that; never since has it seen its equal. And there, with the whole earth prostrate at her feet, a queen in peerless grandeur, drawing from the pen of inspiration itself this glowing title, "the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency," sat this city, fit capital of that kingdom which constituted the golden head of this great historic image.

Such was Babylon, with Nebuchadnezzar, in the the prime of life, bold, vigorous, and accomplished, seated upon its throne, when Daniel entered its impregnable walls to serve a captive for seventy years in its gorgeous palaces. There the children of the Lord, oppressed more than cheered by the glory and prosperity of the land of their captivity, hung their harps on the willows of the sparkling Euphrates, and wept when they remembered Zion.

And there commenced the captive state of the church in a still broader sense; for, ever since that time, the people of God have been in subjection to, and more or less oppressed by, earthly powers. And so they will be, till all earthly powers shall finally yield to Him whose right it is to reign. And lo, that day of deliverance draws on apace.

Into another city, not only Daniel, but all the children of God, from the least to greatest, from the lowest to highest, from first to last, are soon to enter; a city not merely sixty miles in circumference, but fifteen hundred miles; a city whose walls are not brick and bitumen, but precious stones and jasper; whose streets are not the stone-paved streets of Babylon, smooth and beautiful as they were, but transparent gold; whose river is not the mournful waters of the Euphrates, but the river

of life; whose music is not the sighs and laments of broken-hearted captives, but the thrilling paeans of victory over death and the grave,

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which ransomed multitudes shall raise; whose light is not the intermittent light of earth, but the unceasing and ineffable glory of God and the Lamb. Into this city they shall enter, not as captives entering a foreign land, but as exiles returning to their father's house; not as to a place where such chilling words as "bondage," "servitude," and "oppression," shall weigh down their spirits, but to one where the sweet words, "home," "freedom," "peace," "purity," "unutterable bliss," and "unending life," shall thrill their bosoms with delight forever and ever. Yea; our mouths shall be filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing, when the Lord shall turn again the captivity of Zion. Ps.126:1,2; Rev.21:1-27.

"VERSE 39. And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth."

Nebuchadnezzar reigned forty-three years, and was succeeded by the following rulers: His son, Evil-merodach, two years; Neriglissar, his son-in-law, four years; Laborosoarchod, Neriglissar's son, nine months, which, being less than one year, is not counted in the canon of Ptolemy; and lastly, Nabonadius, whose son, Belshazzar, grandson of Nebuchadnezzar, was associated with him on the throne, and with whom that kingdom came to an end.

In the first year of Neriglissar, only two years after the death of Nebuchadnezzar, broke out that fatal war between the Babylonians and the Medes, which was to result in the utter subversion of the Babylonian kingdom. Cyaxares, king of the Medes, who is called "Darius" in Dan. 5:31, summoned to his aid his nephew, Cyrus, of the Persian line, in his efforts against the Babylonians. The war was prosecuted with uninterrupted success on the part of the Medes and Persians, until, in the eighteenth year of Nabonadius (the third year of his son Belshazzar), Cyrus laid siege to Babylon, the only city in all the East which held out against him. The Babylonians, gathered within their impregnable walls, with provision on hand for twenty years, and land within the limits of their broad city sufficient to furnish food for the inhabitants

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and garrison for an indefinite period, scoffed at Cyrus from their lofty walls, and derided his seemingly useless efforts to bring them into subjection. And according to all human calculation, they had good ground for their feelings of security. Never, weighed in the balance of any earthly probability, with the means of warfare then known, could that city be taken. Hence, they breathed as freely and slept as soundly as though no foe were waiting and watching for their destruction around their beleaguered walls. But God had decreed that the proud and wicked city should come down from her throne of glory; and when he speaks, what mortal arm can defeat his word?

In their very feeling of security lay the source of their danger. Cyrus resolved to accomplish by stratagem what he could not effect by force; and learning of the approach of an annual festival, in which the whole city would be given up to mirth and revelry, he fixed upon that day as the time to carry his purpose into execution. There was no entrance for him into that city except he could find it where the River Euphrates entered and emerged, passing under its walls. He resolved to make the channel of the river his own highway into the stronghold of his enemy. To do this, the water must be turned aside from its channel through the city. For this purpose, on the evening of the feast-day above referred to, he detailed three bodies of soldiers, the first, to turn the river at a given hour into a large artificial lake a short distance above the city; the second, to take their station at the point where the

river entered the city; the third to take a position fifteen miles below, where the river emerged from the city; and these two latter parties were instructed to enter the channel, just as soon as they found the river fordable, and in the darkness of the night explore their way beneath the walls, and press on to the palace of the king, where they were to meet, surprise the palace, slay the guards, and capture or slay the king. When the water was turned into the lake mentioned above, the river soon became fordable, and the soldiers detailed for that purpose followed its channel into the heart of the city of Babylon.

But all this would have been in vain, had not the whole city, on that eventful night, given themselves over to the most

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reckless carelessness and presumption, a state of things upon which Cyrus calculated largely for the carrying out of his purpose. For on each side of the river, through the entire length of the city, were walls of great height, and of equal thickness with the outer walls. In these walls were huge gates of solid brass, which when closed and guarded, debarred all entrance from the river-bed to any and all of the twenty-five streets that crossed the river; and had they been thus closed at this time, the soldiers of Cyrus might have marched into the city along the river-bed, and then marched out again, for all that they would have been able to accomplish toward the subjugation of the place. But in the drunken revelry of that fatal night, these river gates were all left open, and the entrance of the Persian soldiers was not perceived. Many a cheek would have paled with terror, had they noticed the sudden going down of the river, and understood its fearful import. Many a tongue would have spread wild alarm through the city, had they seen the dark forms of their armed foes stealthily treading their way to the citadel of their strength. But no one noticed the sudden subsidence of the waters of the river; no one saw the entrance of the Persian warriors; no one took care that the river gates should be closed and guarded; no one cared for aught but to see how deeply and recklessly he could plunge into the wild debauch. That night's work cost them their kingdom and their freedom. They went into their brutish revelry subjects of the king of Babylon; they awoke from it slaves to the king of Persia.

The soldiers of Cyrus first made known their presence in the city by falling upon the royal guards in the very vestibule of the palace of the king. Belshazzar soon became aware of the cause of the disturbance, and died vainly fighting for his imperiled life. The feast of Belshazzar is described in the fifth chapter of Daniel; and the scene closes with the simple record, "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."

Thus the first division of the great image was completed. Another kingdom had arisen, as the prophet had declared.

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The first instalment of the prophetic dream was fulfilled.

But before we take leave of Babylon, let us glance forward to the end of its thenceforth melancholy history. It would naturally be supposed that the conqueror, becoming possessed of so noble a city, far surpassing anything in the world, would have taken it as the seat of his empire, and maintained it in its primitive splendor. But God had said that that city should become a heap, and the habitation of the beasts of the desert; that their houses should be full of doleful creatures; that the wild beasts of the islands should cry in their desolate dwellings, and dragons in their pleasant places.

Isa.13:19-22. It must first be deserted. Cyrus removed the imperial seat to Susa, a celebrated city in the province of Elam, east from Babylon, on the banks of the River Choaspes, a branch of the Tigris. This was probably done, says Prideaux (i.180), in the first year of his sole reign. The pride of the Babylonians being particularly provoked by this act, in the fifth year of Darius Hystaspes, B.C. 517, they rose in rebellion, which brought upon themselves again the whole strength of the Persian empire. The city was once more taken by stratagem. Zopyrus, one of the chief commanders of Darius, having cut off his own nose and ears, and mangled his body all over with stripes, fled in this condition to the besieged, apparently burning with desire to be revenged on Darius for his great cruelty in thus mutilating him. In this way he won the confidence of the Babylonians till they at length made him chief commander of their forces; whereupon he betrayed the city into the hands of his master. And that they might ever after be deterred from rebellion, Darius impaled three thousand of those who had been most active in the revolt, took away the brazen gates of the city, and beat down the walls from two hundred cubits to fifty cubits. This was the commencement of its destruction. By this act, it was left exposed to the ravages of every hostile band. Xerxes, on his return from Greece, plundered the temple of Belus of its immense wealth, and then laid the lofty structure in ruins. Alexander the Great endeavored to rebuild it; but after employing ten thousand men two months to clear away the rubbish, he died from excessive drunkenness and debauchery,

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and the work was suspended. In the year 294 B.C., Seleucus Nicator built the city of New Babylon in its neighborhood, and took much of the material and many of the inhabitants of the old city, to build up and people the new. Now almost exhausted of inhabitants, neglect and decay were telling fearfully upon the ancient city. The violence of Parthian princes hastened its ruin. About the end of the fourth century, it was used by the Persian kings as an enclosure for wild beasts. At the end of the twelfth century, according to a celebrated traveler, the few remaining ruins of Nebuchadnezzar's palace were so full of serpents and venomous reptiles that they could not, without great danger, be closely inspected. And to-day scarcely enough even of the ruins is left to mark the spot where once stood the largest, richest, and proudest city the world has ever seen. Thus the ruin of great Babylon shows us how accurately God will fulfill his word, and make the doubts of skepticism appear like wilful blindness.

"And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee." The use of the word kingdom here, shows that kingdoms, and not particular kings are represented by the different parts of this image; and hence when it was said to Nebuchadnezzar, "Thou art this head of gold," although the personal pronoun was used, the kingdom, not the person of the king, was meant.

The succeeding kingdom, Medo-Persia, is the one which answers to the breast and arms of silver of the great image. It was to be inferior to the preceding kingdom. In what respect inferior? Not in power; for it was its conqueror. Not in extent; for Cyrus subdued all the East from the Aegean Sea to the River Indus, and thus erected the most extensive empire that up to that time had ever existed. But it was inferior in wealth, luxury, and magnificence.

Viewed from a Scriptural standpoint, the principal event under the Babylonish empire was the captivity of the children of Israel; so the principal event under the Medo-Persian kingdom was the restoration of Israel to their own land. At the taking of Babylon, B.C.538, Cyrus, as an act of courtesy, assigned the first place in the kingdom to his uncle, Darius.

But two years afterward, B.C.536, Darius died; and in the same year also died Cambyses, king of Persia, Cyrus' father. By these events, Cyrus was left sole monarch of the whole empire. In this year, which closed Israel's seventy years of captivity, Cyrus issued his famous decree for the return of the Jews and the rebuilding of their temple. This was the first instalment of the great decree for the restoration and building again of Jerusalem (Ezra 6:14), which was completed in the seventh year of the reign of Artaxerxes, B.C.457, and marked, as will hereafter be shown, the commencement of the 2300 days of Daniel 8, the longest and most important prophetic period mentioned in the Bible. Dan.9:25.

After a reign of seven years, Cyrus left the kingdom to his son Cambyses, who reigned seven years and five months, to B.C.522. Eight monarchs, whose reigns varied from seven months to forty-six years each, took the throne in order till the year B.C.336, as follows: Smerdis the Magian, seven months, in the year B.C.522; Darius Hystaspes, from B.C.521 to 486; Xerxes from B.C.485 to 465; Artaxerxes Longimanus, from B.C.464 to 424; Darius Nothus, from B.C.423 to 405; Artaxerxes Mnemon, from B.C.404 to 359; Ochus, from B.C.358 to 338; Arses, from B.C.337 to 336. The year 335 is set down as the first of Darius Codomanus, the last of the line of the old Persian kings. This man, according to Prideaux, was of noble stature, of goodly person, of the greatest personal valor, and of a mild and generous disposition. Had he lived at any other age, a long and splendid career would undoubtedly have been his. But it was his ill-fortune to have to contend with one who was an agent in the fulfilment of prophecy; and no qualifications, natural or acquired, could render him successful in the unequal contest. "Scarcely was he warm upon the throne," says the last-named historian, "ere he found his formidable enemy, Alexander, at the head of the Greek soldiers, preparing to dismount him from it."

The cause and particulars of the contest between the Greeks and Persians we leave to histories specially devoted to such matters. Suffice it here to say that the deciding point was

reached on the field of Arbela, B.C. 331, in which the Grecians, though only twenty in number as compared with the Persians, were entirely victorious; and Alexander thenceforth became absolute lord of the Persian empire to the utmost extent that it was ever possessed by any of its own kings.

"And another third kingdom of brass shall bear rule over all the earth," said the prophet. So few and brief are the inspired words which involved in their fulfilment a change of the world's rulers. In the ever-changing political kaleidoscope, Grecia now comes into the field of vision, to be, for a time, the all-absorbing object of attention, as the third of what are called the great universal empires of the earth.

After the fatal battle which decided the fate of the empire, Darius still endeavored to rally the shattered remnants of his army, and make a stand for his kingdom and his rights. But he could not gather, out of all the host of his recently so numerous and well-appointed army, a force with which he deemed it prudent to hazard another engagement with the victorious Grecians. Alexander pursued him on the wings of the wind. Time after time did Darius barely elude the grasp of his swiftly following foe. At length two traitors, Bessus and Nabarzanes, seized the unfortunate prince, shut him up in a close cart, and fled with him as their prisoner toward Bactria. It was their purpose, if Alexander pursued them, to purchase their own safety by delivering up their king. Hereupon Alexander, learning of Darius's dangerous position in the hands of the traitors, immediately put himself with the lightest part of his army upon a forced pursuit. After several days' hard march, he came up with the traitors. They urged Darius to mount on horseback for a more speedy flight. Upon his refusing to do this, they

gave him several mortal wounds, and left him dying in his cart, while they mounted their steeds and rode away.

When Alexander came up, he beheld only the lifeless form of the Persian king. As he gazed upon the corpse, he might have learned a profitable lesson of the instability of human fortune. Here was a man who but a few months before, possessing many noble and generous qualities, was seated upon the throne of universal empire. Disaster, overthrow, and desertion

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had come suddenly upon him. His kingdom had been conquered, his treasure seized, and his family reduced to captivity. And now, brutally slain by the hand of traitors, he lay a bloody corpse in a rude cart. The sight of the melancholy spectacle drew tears even from the eyes of Alexander, familiar though he was with all the horrible vicissitudes and bloody scenes of war. Throwing his cloak over the body, he commanded it to be conveyed to the captive ladies of Susa, himself furnishing the necessary means for a royal funeral. For this generous act let us give him credit; for he stands sadly in need of all that is his due.

When Darius fell, Alexander saw the field cleared of his last formidable foe. Thenceforward he could spend his time in his own manner, now in the enjoyment of rest and pleasure, and again in the prosecution of some minor conquest. He entered upon a pompous campaign into India, because, according to Grecian fable, Bacchus and Hercules, two sons of Jupiter, whose son he also claimed to be, had done the same. With contemptible arrogance, he claimed for himself divine honors. He gave up conquered cities, freely and unprovoked, to the absolute mercy of his blood-thirsty and licentious soldiery. He himself often murdered his own friends and favorites in his drunken frenzies. He sought out the vilest persons for the gratification of his lust. At the instigation of a dissolute and drunken woman, he, with a company of his courtiers, all in a state of frenzied intoxication, sallied out, torch in hand, and fired the city and palace of Persepolis, one of the then finest palaces in the world. He encouraged such excessive drinking among his followers that on one occasion twenty of them together died as the result of their carousal. At length, having sat through one long drinking spree, he was immediately invited to another, when after drinking to each of the twenty guests present, he twice drank full, says history incredible as it may seem, the Herculean cup containing six of our quarts. he thereupon fell down, seized with a violent fever, of which he died eleven days later, in May or June, B.C. 323, while yet he stood only at the threshold of mature life, in the thirty-second year of his age.

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The progress of the Grecian empire we need not stop to trace here, since its distinguishing features will claim more particular notice under other prophecies. Daniel thus continues in his interpretation of the great image: -

"VERSE 40. 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 things, shall it break in pieces and bruise."

Thus far in the applications of this prophecy there is a general agreement among expositors. That Babylon, Medo-Persia, and Grecia are represented respectively by the head of gold, the breast and arms of silver, and sides of brass, is acknowledged by all. But with just as little ground for diversity of

views, there is strangely a difference of opinion as to what kingdom is symbolized by the fourth division of the great image, - the legs of iron. On this point we have only to inquire, What kingdom did succeed Grecia in the empire of the world? for the legs of iron denote the fourth kingdom in the series. The testimony of history is full and explicit on this point. One kingdom did this, and one only, and that was Rome. It conquered Grecia; it subdued all things; like iron, it broke in pieces and bruised. Gibbon, following the symbolic imagery of Daniel, thus describes this empire: -

"The arms of the Republic, sometimes vanquished in battle, always victorious in war, advanced with rapid steps to the Euphrates, the Danube, the Rhine, and the ocean; and the images of gold, or silver, or brass, that might serve to represent the nations or their kings, were successively broken by the iron monarchy of Rome."

At the opening of the Christian era, this empire took in the whole south of Europe, France, England, the greater part of the Netherlands, Switzerland, and the south of Germany, Hungary, Turkey, and Greece, not to speak of its possessions in Asia and Africa. Well, therefore, may Gibbon say of it: -

"The empire of the Romans filled the world. And when that empire fell into the hands of a single person, the world became a safe and dreary prison for his enemies. To resist was fatal; and it was impossible to fly."

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It will be noticed that at first the kingdom is described unqualifiedly as strong as iron. And this was the period of its strength, during which it has been likened to a mighty Colossus, bestriding the nations, conquering everything, and giving laws to the world. But this was not to continue.

"VERSE 41. And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potters' clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay. 42. 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."

The element of weakness symbolized by the clay, pertained to the feet as well as to the toes. Rome, before its division into ten kingdoms, lost that iron tenacity which it possessed to a superlative degree during the first centuries of its career. Luxury, with its accompanying effeminacy and degeneracy, the destroyer of nations as well as of individuals, began to corrode and weaken its iron sinews, and thus prepared the way for its subsequent disruption into ten kingdoms.

The iron legs of the image terminate, to maintain the consistency of the figure, in feet and toes. To the toes, of which there were of course just ten, our attention is called by the explicit mention of them in the prophecy; and the kingdom represented by that portion of the image to which the toes belonged, was finally divided into ten parts. The question there naturally arises, Do the ten toes of the image represent the ten final divisions of the Roman empire? To those who prefer what seems to be a natural and straightforward interpretation of the word of God, it is a matter of no little astonishment that any question here should be raised. To take the ten toes to represent the ten kingdoms into which Rome was divided seems like such an easy, consistent, and matter-of-course procedure, that it requires a labored effort to interpret it otherwise. Yet such an effort is made by some - by Romanists universally, and by such Protestants as still cling to Romish errors.

A volume by H. Cowles, D.D., may perhaps best be taken as a representative exposition on this side of the question.

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The writer gives every evidence of extensive erudition and great ability. It is the more to be regretted, therefore, that these powers are devoted to the propagation of error, and to misleading the anxious inquirer who wishes to know his whereabouts on the great highway of time.

We can but briefly notice his positions. They are, (1) That the third kingdom was Grecia during the lifetime of Alexander only; (2) That the fourth kingdom was Alexander's successors; (3) That the latest point to which the fourth kingdom could extend, is the manifestation of the Messiah: for (4) There the God of heaven set up his kingdom; there the stone smote the image upon its feet, and commenced the process of grinding it up.

Nor can we reply at any length to these positions.

1. We might as well confine the Babylonian empire to the single reign of Nebuchadnezzar, or that of Persia to the reign of Cyrus, as to confine the third kingdom, Grecia, to the reign of Alexander.

2. Alexander's successors did not constitute another kingdom, but a continuation of the same, the Grecian kingdom of the image; for in this line of prophecy the succession of kingdoms is by conquest. When Persia had conquered Babylon, we had the second empire; and when Grecia had conquered Persia, we had the third. But Alexander's successors (his four leading generals) did not conquer his empire, and erect another in its place; they simply divided among themselves the empire which Alexander had conquered, and left ready to their hand.

"Chronologically," says Professor C., "the fourth empire must immediately succeed Alexander, and lie entirely between him and the birth of Christ." Chronologically, we reply, it must do no such thing; for the birth of Christ was not the introduction of the fifth kingdom, as will in due time appear. Here he overlooks almost the entire duration of the third diversion of the image, confounding it with the fourth, and giving no room for the divided state of the Grecian empire as symbolized by the four heads of the leopard of chapter 7, and the four horns of the goat of chapter 8.

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"Territorially," continues Professor C., "it [the fourth kingdom] should be sought in Western Asia, not in Europe; in general, on the same territory where the first, second, and third kingdoms stood." Why not Europe? we ask. Each of the first three kingdoms possessed territory which was peculiarly its own. Why not the fourth? Analogy requires that it should. And was not the third kingdom a European kingdom? that is, did it not rise on European territory, and take its name for the land of its birth? Why not, then, go a degree farther west for the place where the fourth great kingdom should be founded? And how did Grecia ever occupy the territory of the first and second kingdoms? - Only by conquest. And Rome did the same. Hence, so far as the territorial requirements of the professor's theory are concerned, Rome could be the fourth kingdom as truthfully as Grecia could be the third.

"Politically," he adds, "it should be the immediate successor of Alexander's empire, ...changing the dynasty, but not the nations." Analogy is against him here. Each of the first three kingdoms was distinguished by its own peculiar nationality. The Persian was not the same as the Babylonian, nor the Grecian the same as either of the two that preceded it. Now analogy requires that the fourth kingdom, instead of being composed of a fragment of this Grecian empire, should possess a nationality of its own, distinct from the other three. And this we find in the Roman kingdom, and in it alone. But,

3. The grand fallacy which underlies this whole system of misinterpretation, is the too commonly taught theory that the kingdom of God was set up at the first advent of Christ. It can easily be seen how fatal to this theory is the admission that the fourth empire is Rome. For it was to be after the diversion of that fourth empire, that the God of heaven was to set up his kingdom. But the division of the Roman empire into ten parts was not accomplished previous to A.D. 476; consequently the kingdom of God could not have been set up at the first advent of Christ, nearly five hundred years before that date. Rome must not, therefore, from their standpoint, though it answers admirably to the prophecy in every particular, be allowed to

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be the kingdom in question. The position that the kingdom of God was set up in the days when Christ was upon earth, must, these interpreters seem to think, be maintained at all hazards.

Such is the ground on which some expositors appear, at least, to reason. And it is for the purpose of maintaining this theory that our author dwindles down the third great empire of the world to the insignificant period of about eight years! For this, he endeavors to prove that the fourth universal empire was bearing full sway during a period when the providence of God was simply filling up the outlines of the third! For this, he presumes to fix the points of time between which we must look for the fourth, though the prophecy does not deal in dates at all, and then whatever kingdom he finds within his specified time, that he sets down as the fourth kingdom, and endeavors to bend the prophecy to fit his interpretation, utterly regardless of how much better material he might find outside of his little inclosure, to answer to a fulfilment of the prophetic record. Is such a course logical? Is the time the point to be first established? - No; the kingdoms are the great features of the prophecy, and we are to look for them; and when we find them, we must accept them, whatever may be the chronology or location. Let them govern the time and place, not the time and place govern them.

But that view which is the cause of all this misapplication and confusion is sheer assumption. Christ did not smite the image at his first advent. Look at it! When the stone smites the image upon its feet, the image is dashed in pieces. Violence is used. The effect is immediate. The image becomes as chaff. And then what? Is it absorbed by the stone, and gradually incorporated with it? - Nothing of the kind. It is blown off, removed away, as incompatible and unavailable material; and no place is found for it. The territory is entirely cleared; and then the stone becomes a mountain, and fills the whole earth. Now what idea shall we attach to this work of smiting and breaking in pieces? Is it a gentle, peaceful, and quiet work? or is it a manifestation of vengeance and violence? How did the kingdoms of the prophecy succeed the one to the

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other? - It was through the violence and din of war, the shock of armies and the roar of battle. "Confused noise and garments rolled in blood," told of the force and violence with which one nation had been brought into subjection by another. Yet all this is not called "smiting" or "breaking in pieces."

When Persia conquered Babylon, and Greece Persia, neither of the conquered empires is said to have been broken in pieces, though crushed beneath the overwhelming power of a hostile nation. But when we reach the introduction of the fifth kingdom, the image is smitten with violence; it is dashed to pieces, and so scattered and obliterated that no place is found for it. And now what shall we understand by this? - We must understand that here a scene transpires in which is manifested so much more violence and force and power than accompany the overthrow of one nation by another through the strife of war, that the latter is not worthy even of mention in connection with it. The subjugation of one nation by another by war, is a scene of peace and quietude in comparison with that which transpires when the image is dashed in pieces by the stone cut out of the mountain without hands.

Yet what is the smiting of the image made to mean by the theory under notice? - Oh, the peaceful introduction of the gospel of Christ! the quiet spreading abroad of the light of truth! the gathering out of a few from the nations of the earth, to be made ready through obedience to the truth, for his second coming, and reign! the calm and unpretending formation of a Christian church, - a church that has been domineered over, persecuted, and oppressed by the arrogant and triumphant powers of earth from that day to this! And this is the smiting of the image! this is the breaking of it into pieces, and violently removing the shattered fragments from the face of the earth! Was ever absurdity more absurd?

From this digression we return to the inquiry, Do the toes represent the ten divisions of the Roman empire? We answer, Yes; because, -

1. The image of chapter 2 is exactly parallel with the vision of the four beasts of chapter 7. The fourth beast of chapter 7 represents the same as the iron legs of the image.

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The ten horns of the beast, of course, correspond very naturally to the ten toes of the image; and these horns are plainly declared to be ten kings which should arise; and they are just as much independent kingdoms as are the beasts themselves; for the beasts are spoken of in precisely the same manner; namely, as "four kings which should arise." Verse 17. They do not denote a line of successive kings, but kings or kingdoms which exist contemporaneously; for three of them were plucked up by the little horn. The ten horns, beyond controversy, represent the ten kingdoms into which Rome was divided.

2. We have seen that in Daniel's interpretation of the image he uses the words /king// and /kingdom// interchangeably, the former denoting the same as the latter. In verse 44 he says that "in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom." This shows that at the time the kingdom of God is set up, there will be a plurality of kings existing contemporaneously. It cannot refer to the four preceding kingdoms; for it would be absurd to use such language in reference to a line of successive kings, since it would be in the days of the last king only, not in the days of any of the preceding, that the kingdom of God would be set up.

Here, then, is a division presented; and what have we in the symbol to indicate it? - Nothing but the toes of the image. Unless they do it, we are left utterly in the the dark as to the nature and extent of the division which the prophecy shows did exist. To suppose this would be to cast a serious imputation upon the prophecy itself. We are therefore held to the conclusion that the ten toes of the image denote the ten parts into which the Roman empire was divided.¹

¹ This division was accomplished between the years A.D.351 and A.D.476. The era of this dissolution thus covered a hundred and twenty-five years, from about the middle of the fourth century to the last quarter of the fifth. No historians of whom we are aware, place the beginning of this work of the dismemberment of the Roman empire earlier than A.D.351, and there is general agreement in assigning its close in A.D.476. Concerning the intermediate dates, that is, the precise time from which each of the ten kingdoms that arose on the ruins of the Roman empire is to be dated, there is some difference of views among historians. Nor does this seem strange, when we consider that there was an era of great confusion, that the map of the Roman empire during that time underwent many sudden and violent changes, and that the paths of hostile nations charging upon its territory, crossed and recrossed each other in a labyrinth of confusion. But all historians agree in this, that out of the territory of Western Rome, ten separate kingdoms were ultimately established, and we may safely assign them to the time between the dates above named; namely, A.D.351 and 476.

The ten nations which were most instrumental in breaking up the Roman empire, and which at some time in their history held respectively portions of Roman territory as separate and independent kingdoms, may be enumerated (without respect to the time of their establishment) as follows: The Huns, Ostrogoths, Visigoths, Franks, Vandals, Suevi, Burgundians, Heruli, Anglo- Saxons, and Lombards. The connection between these and some of the modern nations of Europe, is still traceable in the names, as England, Burgundy, Lombardy, France, etc. Such authorities as Calmet, Faber, Lloyd, Hales, Scott, Barnes, etc., concur in the foregoing enumeration. (See Barnes's concluding notes on Daniel 7.)

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As an objection to the view that the ten toes of the image denote the ten kingdoms, we are sometimes reminded that Rome, before its division into ten kingdoms, was divided into two parts, the Western and Eastern empires, corresponding to the two legs of the image; and as the ten kingdoms all arose out of the western division, if they are denoted by the toes, we would have, it is claimed, ten toes on one foot of the image, and none on the other; which would be unnatural and inconsistent.

But this objection devours itself; for certainly if the two legs denote division, the toes must denote division also. It would be inconsistent to say that the legs symbolize division, but the toes do not. But if the toes do indicate division at all, it can be nothing but the division of Rome into ten parts.

The fallacy, however, which forms the basis of this objection, is the view that the two legs of the image do signify the separation of the Roman empire into its eastern and western divisions. To this view there are several objections.

1. The two legs of iron symbolize Rome, not merely during its closing years, but from the very beginning of its existence as a nation; and if these legs denote division, the kingdom should have been divided from the very commencement of its history. This claim is sustained by the other symbols. Thus the division (that is, the two elements) of the Persian kingdom, denoted by the two horns of the ram (Dan.8:20), also by the elevation of the bear upon one side (Dan.7:5), and perhaps by the two arms of the image of this chapter, existed from the first. The division of the Grecian kingdom, denoted by the four horns of the goat and the four heads of the leopard, dates back to within eight years of the time when it was introduced into prophecy. So Rome should have been divided from the first, if the legs denote division, instead of remaining a unit for nearly six hundred years, and separating into its eastern

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and western divisions only a few years prior to its final disruption into ten kingdoms.

2. No such division into two great parts is denoted by the other symbols under which Rome is represented in the book of Daniel; namely, the great and terrible beast of Daniel 7, and the little horn of chapter 8. Hence it is reasonable to conclude that the two legs of the image were not designed to represent such a division.

But it may be asked, Why not suppose the two legs to denote division as well as the toes? Would it not be just as inconsistent to say that the toes denote division, and the legs do not, as to say that the legs denote division, and the toes do not? We answer that the prophecy itself must govern our conclusions in this matter; and whereas it says nothing of division in connection with the legs, it does introduce the subject of division as we come down to the feet and toes. It says, "And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potters' clay and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided." No division could take place, or at least none is said to have taken place, till the weakening element of the clay is introduced; and we do not find this till we come to the feet and toes. But we are not to understand that the clay denotes one division and the iron the other; for after the long-existing unity of the kingdom was broken, no one of the fragments was as strong as the original iron, but all were in a state of weakness denoted by the mixture of iron and clay. The conclusion is inevitable, therefore, that the prophet has here stated the cause for the effect. The introduction of the weakness of the clay element, as we come to the feet, resulted in the division of the kingdom into ten parts, as represented by the ten toes; and this result, or division, is more than intimated in the sudden mention of a plurality of contemporaneous kings. Therefore, while we find no evidence that the legs denote division, but serious objections against such a view, we do find, we think, good reason for supposing that the toes denote division, as here claimed.

3. Each of the four monarchies had its own particular territory, which was the kingdom proper, and where we are to

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look for the chief events in its history shadowed forth by the symbol. We are not, therefore, to look for the divisions of the Roman empire in the territory formerly occupied by Babylon, or Persia, or Grecia, but in the territory proper of the Roman kingdom, which was what was finally known as the Western empire. Rome conquered the world; but the kingdom of Rome proper lay west of Grecia. That is what was represented by the legs of iron. There, then, we look for the ten kingdoms; and there we find them. We are not obliged to mutilate or deform the symbol to make it a fit and accurate representation of historical events.

"VERSE 43. And whereas thou sawest 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."

With Rome fell the last of the universal empires belonging to the world in its present state. Heretofore the elements of society had been such that it was possible for one nation, rising superior to its neighbors in prowess, bravery, and the science of war, to attach them one after another to its chariot wheels till all were consolidated into one vast empire, and one man seated upon the dominant throne could send forth his will as law to all the nations of the earth. When Rome fell, such possibilities forever passed away. Crushed beneath the weight of its own vast proportions, it crumbled to pieces, never to be united again. The iron was mixed with the clay. Its elements lost the power of cohesion, and no man or combination of men can again consolidate them. This point is so well set forth by another that we take pleasure in quoting his words: -

"From this, its divided state, the first strength of the empire departed; but not as that of the others had done. No other kingdom was to succeed it, as it had the three which went before it. It was to continue in this tenfold division, until the kingdom of stone smote it upon its feet, broke them in pieces, and scattered them as the wind does the chaff of the summer threshing-floor! Yet, through all this time, a portion of its strength was to remain. And so the prophet says, '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.'

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"Verse 42. How in any other way could you so strikingly represent the facts? For more than fourteen hundred years, this tenfold division has existed. Time and again men have dreamed of rearing on these dominions one mighty kingdom. Charlemagne tried it. Charles V tried it. Louis XIV tried it. Napoleon tried it. But none succeeded. A single verse of prophecy was stronger than all their hosts. Their own power was wasted, frittered away, destroyed. But the ten kingdoms did not become one. 'Partly

strong, and partly broken,' was the prophetic description. And such, too, has been the historic fact concerning them. With the book of history open before you, I ask you, Is not this an exact representation of the remnants of this once mighty empire? It ruled with unlimited power. It was the throned mistress of the world. Its scepter was broken; its throne pulled down; its power taken away. Ten kingdoms were formed out of it; and 'broken' as then it was, it still continues; i.e., 'partly broken;' for its dimensions still continue as when the kingdom of iron stood upright upon its feet. And then it is 'partly strong;' i.e., it retains, even in its broken state, enough of its iron strength to resist all attempts to mold its parts together. 'This shall not be,' says the word of God. 'This has not been,' replies the book of history.

"But then,' men may say, 'another plan remains. If force cannot avail, diplomacy and reasons of state may; we will try them.' And so the prophecy foreshadows this when it says, 'They shall mingle themselves with the seed of men;' i.e., marriages shall be formed, in hope thus to consolidate their power, and, in the end, to unite these divided kingdoms into one.

"And shall this device succeed? - No. The prophet answers: 'They shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay.' And the history of Europe is but a running commentary on the exact fulfilment of these words. From the time of Canute to the present age, it has been the policy of reigning monarchs, the beaten path which they have trodden in order to reach a mightier scepter and a wider sway. And the most signal instance of it which history has recorded

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in our own day, is in the case of Napoleon. He ruled in one of the kingdoms.... He sought to gain by alliance what he could not gain by force; i.e., to build up one mighty, consolidated empire. And did he succeed? - Nay. The very power with which he was allied, proved his destruction, in the troops of Blucher, on the field of Waterloo! The iron would not mingle with clay. The ten kingdoms continue still.

"And yet, if as the result of these alliances or of other causes, that number is sometimes disturbed, it need not surprise us. It is, indeed, just what the prophecy seems to call for. The iron was 'mixed with the clay.' For a season, in the image, you might not distinguish between them. But they would not remain so. 'They shall not cleave one to another.' The nature of the substances forbids them to do so in the one case; the word of prophecy in the other. Yet there was to be an attempt to mingle - nay, more, there was an approach to mingling in both cases. But it was to be abortive. And how marked the emphasis with which history affirms this declaration of the word of God!" - Wm. Newton, Lectures on the First Two Visions of the Book of Daniel, pp.34-36.

Yet with all these facts before them, asserting the irresistible power of God's providence through the overturnings and changes of centuries, the efforts of warriors, and the diplomacy and intrigues of courts and kings, some modern expositors have manifested such a marvelous misapprehension of this prophecy as to predict a future universal kingdom, and point to a European ruler, even now of waning years and declining prestige, as the "destined monarch of the world." Vain is the breath they spend in promulgating such a theory, and delusive the hopes or fears they may succeed in raising over such an expectation.¹

"VERSE 44. And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed; and 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. 45. Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without

¹ Shortly after this language was penned, Napoleon III, this "destined monarch of the world"! was dethroned, and died in ignominious retirement, and his son and heir has since fallen by the hands of savages in Africa.

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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; and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure."

We here reach the climax of this stupendous prophecy; and when Time in his onward flight shall bring us to the sublime scene here predicted, we shall have reached the end of human history.

The kingdom of God! Grand provision for a new and glorious dispensation, in which his people shall find a happy terminus of this world's sad, degenerate, and changing career. Transporting change for all the righteous, from gloom to glory, from strife to peace, from a sinful to a holy world, from death to life, from tyranny and oppression to the happy freedom and blessed privileges of a heavenly kingdom! Glorious transition, from weakness to strength, from the changing and decaying to the immutable and eternal!

But when is this kingdom to be established? May we hope for an answer to an inquiry of such momentous concern to our race? These are the very questions on which the word of God does not leave us in ignorance; and herein is seen the surpassing value of this heavenly boon. We do not say that the exact time is revealed (we emphasize the fact that it is not) either in this or in any other prophecy; but so near an approximation is given that the generation which is to see the establishment of this kingdom may mark its approach unerringly, and make that preparation which will entitle them to share in all its glories.

As already explained, we are brought down by verses 41-43 this side of the division of the Roman empire into ten kingdoms; which division was accomplished, as already noticed, between 351 and 476. The kings, or kingdoms, in the days of which the God of heaven is to set up his kingdom, are evidently those kingdoms which arose out of the Roman empire. Then the kingdom of God here brought to view could not have been set up, as some claim it was, in connection with the first advent of Christ, four hundred and fifty years before. But whether we apply this division to the ten kingdoms or not, it is certain that some kind of division was to take place in

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the Roman empire before the kingdom of God should be set up; for the prophecy expressly declares, "The kingdom shall be divided." And this is equally fatal to the popular view; for after the unification of the first elements of the Roman power down to the days of Christ, there was no division of the kingdom; nor during his days, nor for many years after, did any such thing take place. The civil wars were not divisions of the empire; they were only the efforts of individuals worshipping at the shrine of ambition, to obtain supreme control of the empire. The occasional petty revolts of distant provinces, suppressed as with the power, and almost with the speed, of a thunderbolt, did not constitute a division of the kingdom. And these are all that can be pointed to as interfering with the unity of the kingdom, for more than three hundred years this side of the days of Christ. This one consideration is sufficient to disprove forever the view that the kingdom of God, which constitutes the fifth kingdom of this series as brought to view in Daniel 2, was set up at the commencement of the Christian era. But a thought more may be in place.

1. This fifth kingdom, then, could not have been set up at Christ's first advent, because it is not to exist contemporaneously with earthly governments, but to succeed them. As the second kingdom succeeded the first, the third the second, and the fourth the third, by violence and overthrow, so the fifth succeeds the fourth. It does not exist at the same time with it. The fourth kingdom is first destroyed, the fragments are removed, the territory is cleared, and then the fifth is established as a succeeding kingdom in the order of time. But the church has existed contemporaneously with earthly governments ever since earthly governments were formed. There was a church in Abel's day, in Enoch's, in Noah's, in Abraham's, and so on to the present. No; the church is not the stone that smote the image upon its feet. It existed too early in point of time, and the work in which it is engaged is not that of smiting and overthrowing earthly governments.

2. The fifth kingdom is introduced by the stone smiting the image. What part of the image does the stone smite? - The feet and toes. But these were not developed until

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four centuries and a half after the crucifixion of Christ. The image was, at the time of the crucifixion, only developed to the thighs, so to speak; and if the kingdom of God was there set up, if there the stone smote the image, it smote it upon the thighs, not upon the feet, where the prophecy places the smiting.

3. The stone that smites the image is cut out of the mountain without hands. The margin reads, "Which was not in hand." This shows that the smiting is not done by an agent acting for another, not by the church, for instance, in the hands of Christ; but it is a work which the Lord does by his own divine power, without any human agency.

4. Again, the kingdom of God is placed before the church as a matter of hope. The Lord did not teach his disciples a prayer which in two or three years was to become obsolete. The petition may as appropriately ascend from the lips of the patient, waiting flock in these last days, as from the lips of his first disciples, "Thy kingdom come."

5. We have plain Scripture declarations to establish the following propositions: (1) The kingdom was still future at the time of our Lord's last Passover. Matt.26:29. (2) Christ did not set it up before his ascension. Acts 1:6. (3) Flesh and blood cannot inherit it. 1Cor.15:50. (4) It is a matter of promise to the apostles, and to all those that love God. James 2:5. (5) It is promised in the future to the little flock. Luke 12:32. (6) Through much tribulation the saints are to enter therein. Acts 14:22. (7) It is to be set up when Christ shall judge the living and the dead. 2Tim.4:1. (8) This is to be when he shall come in his glory with all his holy angels. Matt.25:31-34.

As militating against the foregoing view, it may be asked if the expression, "Kingdom of heaven," is not, in the New Testament, applied to the church. In some instances it may be; but in others as evidently it cannot be. In the decisive texts referred to above, which show that it was still a matter of promise even after the church was fully established, that mortality cannot inherit it, and that it is to be set up only in connection with the coming of our Lord to judgment, the reference

cannot be to any state or organization here upon earth. The object we have before us is to ascertain what constitutes the kingdom of Dan.2:44; and we have seen that the prophecy utterly forbids our applying it there to the church, inasmuch as by the terms of the prophecy itself we are prohibited from looking for that kingdom till over four hundred years after the crucifixion of Christ and the establishment of the gospel church. Therefore if in some expressions in the New Testament the word "kingdom" can be found applying to the work of God's grace, or the spread of the gospel, it cannot in such instances be the kingdom mentioned in Daniel. That can only be the future literal kingdom of Christ's glory, so often brought to view in both the Old Testament and the New.

It may be objected again, that when the stone smites the image, the iron, the brass, the silver, and the gold are broken to pieces together; hence the stone must have smitten the image when all these parts were in existence. In reply we ask, What is meant by their being broken to pieces together? Does the expression mean that the same persons who constituted the kingdom of gold would be alive when the image was dashed to pieces? - No; else the image covers but the duration of a single generation. Does it mean that that would be a ruling kingdom? - No; for there is a succession of kingdoms down to the fourth. On the supposition, then, that the fifth kingdom was set up at the first advent, in what sense were the brass, silver, and gold in existence then any more than at the present day? Does it refer to the time of the second resurrection, when all these wicked nations will be raised to life? - No; for the destruction of earthly governments in this present state, which is here symbolized by the smiting of the image, certainly takes place at the end of this dispensation; and in the second resurrection national distinctions will be no more known.

No objection really exists in the point under consideration; for all the kingdoms symbolized by the image are, in a certain sense, still in existence. Chaldea and Assyria are still the first divisions of

the image; Media and Persia, the second; Macedonia, Greece, Thrace, Asia Minor, and Egypt, the third. Political

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life and dominion, it is true, have passed from one to the other, till, so far as the image is concerned, it is all now concentrated in the divisions of the fourth kingdom; but the other, in location and substance, though without dominion, are still there; and together all will be dashed to pieces when the fifth kingdom is introduced.

It may still further be asked, by way of objection, Have not the ten kingdoms, in the days of which the kingdom of God was to be set up, all passed away? and as the kingdom of God is not yet set up, has not the prophecy, according to the view here advocated, proved a failure? We answer: Those kingdoms have not yet passed away. We are yet in the days of those kings. The following illustration from Dr. Nelson's "Cause and Cure of Infidelity," pp.374,375, will set this matter in a clear light: -

"Suppose some feeble people should be suffering from the almost constant invasions of numerous and ferocious enemies. Suppose some powerful and benevolent prince sends them word that he will, for a number of years, say thirty, maintain, for their safety along the frontier, ten garrisons, each to contain one hundred well-armed men. Suppose the forts are built and remain a few years, when two of them are burned to the ground and rebuilt without delay; has there been any violation of the sovereign's word? - No; there was no material interruption in the continuance of the walls of strength; and, furthermore, the most important part of the safeguard was still there. Again, suppose the monarch sends and has two posts of strength demolished, but, adjoining the spot where these stood, and immediately, he has other two buildings erected, more capacious and more desirable; does the promise still stand good? We answer in the affirmative, and we believe no one would differ with us. Finally, suppose, in addition to the ten garrisons, it could be shown that for several months during the thirty years, one more had been maintained there; that for one or two years out of the thirty, there had been there eleven instead of ten fortifications; shall we call it a defeat or a failure of the original undertaking? Or shall any seeming interruptions, such as have been stated, destroy the propriety of

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our calling these the ten garrisons of the frontier? The answer is, No, without dispute.

"So it is, and has been, respecting the ten kingdoms of Europe once under Roman scepter. They have been there for twelve hundred and sixty years. If several have had their names changed according to the caprice of him who conquered, this change of name did not destroy existence. If others have had their territorial limits changed, the nation was still there. If others have fallen while successors were forming in their room, the ten horns were still there. If, during a few years out of a thousand, there were more than ten, if some temporary power reared its head, seeming to claim a place with the rest and soon disappeared, it has not caused the beast to have less than ten horns."

Scott remarks: -

"It is certain that the Roman empire was divided into ten kingdoms; and though they might be sometimes more sometimes fewer, yet they were still known by the name of the ten kingdoms of the Western empire."

Thus the subject is cleared of all difficulty. Time has fully developed this great image in all its parts. Most strictly does it represent the important political events it was designed to symbolize. It stands complete upon its feet. Thus it has been standing for over fourteen hundred years. It waits to be smitten upon the feet by the stone cut out of the mountain without hand, that is, the kingdom of Christ. This is to be accomplished when the Lord shall be revealed in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. (See Ps.2:8,9.) In the days

of these kings the God of heaven is to set up a kingdom. We have been in the days of these kings for over fourteen centuries, and we are still in their days. So far as this prophecy is concerned, the very next event is the setting up of God's everlasting kingdom. Other prophecies and innumerable signs show unmistakably its immediate proximity.

The coming kingdom! This ought to be the all-absorbing topic with the present generation. Reader, are you ready for the issue? He who enters this kingdom enters it not merely

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for such a lifetime as men live in this present state, not to see it degenerate, not to see it overthrown by a succeeding and more powerful kingdom; but he enters it to participate in all its privileges and blessings, and to share its glories forever; for this kingdom is not to "be left to other people." Again we ask you, Are you ready? The terms of heirship are most liberal: "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Are you on terms of friendship with Christ, the coming King? Do you love his character? Are you trying to walk humbly in his footsteps, and obey his teachings? If not, read your fate in the cases of those in the parable, of whom it was said, "But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me." There is to be no rival kingdom where you can find an asylum if you remain an enemy to this; for this is to occupy all the territory ever possessed by any and all of the kingdoms of this world, past or present. It is to fill the whole earth. Happy they to whom the rightful Sovereign, the all-conquering King, at last can say, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

"VERSE 46. Then the king Nebuchadnezzar fell upon his face, and worshiped Daniel, and commanded that they should offer an oblation and sweet odors unto him. 47. The king answered unto Daniel, and said, Of a truth it is, that your God is a God of gods, and a Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, seeing thou couldest reveal this secret. 48. Then the king made Daniel a great man, and gave him many great gifts, and made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon, and chief of the governors over all the wise men of Babylon. 49. Then Daniel requested of the king, and he set Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego over the affairs of the province of Babylon; but Daniel sat in the gate of the the king."

We have dwelt quite at length on the interpretation of the dream, which Daniel made known to the Chaldean monarch. From this we must now return to the palace of Nebuchadnezzar, and to Daniel, as he stands in the presence of the king, having made known to him the dream and the interpretation thereof, while the courtiers and the baffled soothsayers and astrologers wait around in silent awe and wonder.

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It might be expected that an ambitious monarch, raised to the highest earthly throne, and in the full flush of uninterrupted success, would scarcely brook to be told that his kingdom, which he no doubt fondly hoped would endure through all time, was to be overthrown by another people. Yet Daniel plainly and boldly made known this fact to the king, and the king, so far from being offended, fell upon his face before the prophet of God, and offered him worship. Daniel doubtless immediately countermanded the orders the king issued to pay him divine honors. That Daniel had some communication with the king which is not here recorded, is evident from verse 47: "The king answered unto Daniel," etc. And it may be still further inferred that Daniel labored to turn the king's feelings of reverence from himself to the God of heaven, inasmuch as the king replies, "Of a truth it is that your God is a God of gods and a Lord of kings."

Then the king made Daniel a great man. There are two things which in this life are specially supposed to make a man great, and both these Daniel received from the king: (1) Riches. A man is considered great if he is a man of wealth; and we read that the king gave him many and great gifts. (2) Power. If in conjunction with riches a man has power, certainly in popular estimation he is considered a great man; and power was bestowed upon Daniel in abundant measure. He was made ruler over the whole province of Babylon, and chief of the governors over all the wise men of Babylon.

Thus speedily and abundantly did Daniel begin to be rewarded for his fidelity to his own conscience and the requirements of God. So great was Balaam's desire for the presents of a certain heathen king, that he endeavored to obtain them in spite of the Lord's expressed will to the contrary, and thus signally failed. Daniel did not act with a view to obtaining these presents; yet by maintaining his integrity with the Lord they were given abundantly into his hands. His advancement, both with respect to wealth and power, was a matter of no small moment with him, as it enabled him to be of service to his fellow-countrymen less favored than himself in their long captivity.

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Daniel did not become bewildered nor intoxicated by his signal victory and his wonderful advancement. He first remembers the three who were companions with him in anxiety respecting the king's matter; and as they had helped him with their prayers, he determined that they should share with him in his honors. At his request they were placed over the affairs of Babylon, while Daniel himself sat in the gate of the king. The gate was the place where councils were held, and matters of chief moment were deliberated upon. The record is a simple declaration that Daniel became chief counselor to the king.

Tomorrow In Prophecy

mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay!" Chapter 2: 41-43. Observe also the expression, "They shall mingle themselves with the seed of men." That which could not be accomplished by force of arms was attempted by diplomacy, leagues, treaties, and intermarriage. For centuries the reigning houses of Europe were closely related by the ties of family and wedlock. So many of the sons, daughters, grandsons, and granddaughters of Christian I of Denmark became crowned heads in the European capitals that he was known as "the grandfather of Europe"; and for similar reasons Queen Victoria of England might have been considered the grandmother of Europe.

Yet international hatreds and war were not averted. Not the "mailed fist," the shrewd diplomat, or the adroit matchmaker have availed to cement again the shattered fragments of empire; nor will a totalitarian blitzkrieg be any more successful. And down the centuries Inspiration has declared, "They shall not cleave one to another"; and "the Scripture cannot be broken!"

Coming World Rulership. And what of the future? We face the climax of Daniel's prophecy and the climax of earthly history.

"In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever. 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: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure." Verses 44, 45.

Through the centuries we trace the vivid panorama of world events. Gilded Babylon, ruthless Medo-Persia, intellectual Greece, and iron Rome each arose, fulfilled its destiny according to the divine blueprint, then crumbled to ruins. As told in verse:

"First the Assyrian kingdom ruled the world, Then Medo-Persia's banners were unfurled; And after Greece held universal sway, Rome seized the scepter where are we today?

"Down in the feet of iron and of clay, Weak and divided, soon to pass away; What will the next great, glorious drama be? Christ and His coming, and eternity."

"The dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure." The stone cut from "the mountain without hands" is about to roll across the face of the earth, and terminate the mad scramble of warring nations. Then will be realized the hope of the ages and the establishment of Christ's kingdom in which love, peace, security, health, and happiness will reign evermore.

2. Great Empires of Prophecy

IN the modern magazine and newspaper world, cartoons play an important part. "Uncle Sam," "John Bull," the swastika, the rising sun, and countless other national insignia are conspicuous in symbolic art. Ancient peoples delighted in their national emblems and tribal hieroglyphics. Likewise the God of heaven caricatured the nations in a moving picture of world history in advance.

"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.

In Bible prophecy, "winds" frequently denote war and strife (Jeremiah 25:31-33); the "sea," or "waters," represent nations and peoples (Revelation 17:15); while the four animals which arose from the sea are declared in this prophecy to symbolize four kings, or kingdoms, "which shall arise out of the earth." Daniel 7:17,24. Careful study reveals that the four nations prefigured by the great image of Nebuchadnezzar's dream, are again introduced. Additional features are emphasized. To the mind of a pagan monarch, towering kingdoms may appear as dazzling objects of worship; to the God of heaven they are as ravenous, bloodthirsty beasts of prey.

The Babylonian Lion. "The first was like a lion, and had eagle's wings: I beheld till the wings thereof were plucked, and it was lifted up from the earth, and made stand upon the feet as a man, and a man's heart was given to it." Verse 4. The lion, known as the "king of beasts," was a fitting emblem of "Babylon, the glory of kingdoms." Isaiah 13: 19. Modern excavations amid the ruins of that ancient city

24. THE KINGDOM OF THE STONE

LONG AGO, in the early days of the settlement of the western part of the United States, a traveler came to the edge of the mighty Mississippi River in the depth of winter. Never before had he seen the Father of Waters, either in winter or in summer. He was alone in a lonely land. Night was coming on, and wild animals, and wilder men made it dangerous for him to stay where he was. He must cross the river to safety on the other side, where there was a settlement.

He looked out across the surface of the great river, sheeted with ice. Being unaccustomed to the wilderness, he had no idea of its thickness. He hesitated a long time, then cautiously and with infinite care, crept out on his hands and knees, spreading his weight as much as possible. Every little while he heard a crackling sound in the ice, and sometimes a roar, as if it were ripping from shore to shore. The poor man trembled with every sound, expecting the ice to break through at any moment and plunge him into the icy waters below.

After he had crawled slowly almost halfway over the broad river, he was surprised to hear singing somewhere behind him. He could not believe his ears. Then he heard the hoof beats of horses trotting across the ice. He looked up and saw a man singing as he drove a team of four horses with their load of logs across upon the ice. The ice, which this poor traveler feared would not hold his weight, was holding this great load of logs as well as the horses pulling it.

With great relief and somewhat ashamed of himself, he got up and ran the rest of the way across the river.

So it is with many of us who step out tremblingly on the promises of God. Others stronger in faith go singing through life with the joy of the Lord in their hearts, fearing nothing, because they implicitly, fully, and completely believe the Word of God. As the Scripture says, "Who so puts his trust in the Lord shall be safe." Proverbs 29:25.

Jesus continually appealed to the promises of God in His Holy Word. He said, "The scripture cannot be broken." John 10:35. He also said, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God." Matthew 4:4. He spoke of those who build upon His own promises as building upon the solid rock. The winds might blow and the floods descend, but that house would not be moved, for, said He, it was founded upon a rock. (Matthew 7:24-27.) Jesus said that He built His church upon a rock, and He Himself, the living Word, is that Rock. (Matthew 16:18.)

Now let us consider God's preview of nations and the stone (or rock) kingdom in the second chapter of Daniel. This prophecy was written over five centuries before Christ was born, at a time when Jerusalem was overthrown by the Babylonians and many of the leading men were carried into captivity, among them Daniel.

This young man was a true servant of God and gifted with the Spirit of prophecy. Through him God revealed the future to the reigning monarch of the day, Nebuchadnezzar, ruler over most of the then-known world. To him, appropriately, the King of heaven revealed the secrets of the future in a vision.

Nebuchadnezzar was greatly disturbed by this dream, although he could neither remember nor understand it. All his officials were helpless in this matter. No one could bring the vision back to the king's mind or interpret it for him. This opened the way, by Divine interposition, for Daniel, one of God's captive children from Jerusalem, to come into the scene in the affairs of men. In answer to prayer God's vision was interpreted by God's man, Daniel. Read the whole story in the second chapter of Daniel.

We shall begin now with verse twenty-eight. After the complete failure of the wise men and philosophers of Babylon to bring back the dream to the king's memory and to interpret it, the captive Daniel, still in training for official work in the court, was brought in before the king. His direct declaration was, "There is a God in heaven that reveals secrets, and makes known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days." Daniel 2:28. God's prophet could boldly say this because, in answer to earnest prayer by himself and others, the vision and its meaning had been revealed to him. Daniel, a captive in the courts of royalty, had been faithful to God in the midst of corruption and idolatry; and now he was called before the world's greatest monarch to explain a vision depicting four great world powers, beginning with Babylon itself.

The vision which had been given to the king was simple. It portrayed a great metal man with head of gold, breast and arms of silver, sides of brass, legs of iron, and feet a mixture of iron and clay. Last of all, the king saw a stone, cut out of the mountain without any human effort, smite the image on its feet and grind it to powder. Then the stone became a great mountain and filled the whole earth. (Daniel 2:35.) This

last part of the vision was really a prophecy of the coming worldwide kingdom of Christ, the kingdom of the Stone.

Let us go back again now to the preview of history. "Thou, O king, saw, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible." Verse 31. This dream was immediately brought back to the king's mind by divine power, and he recognized it as the one that had disturbed him so greatly. The king had been thinking about the future, planning for his kingdom. He was a mighty ruler, and his nation was the greatest on earth. Babylon, its capital, was practically his own creation, since he had renewed and rebuilt it. While he was considering the future of his kingdom-as all good rulers should do--God gave him this dream, which greatly disturbed his spirit until its meaning was explained.

The vision which the king had, and which was revealed and interpreted by the prophet Daniel, referred to the future. In it God declared to "king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days." (Daniel 2:2S.) So we may expect, in the interpretation of this vision to the king, a message from God that reaches down to our own time. Indeed the history of the entire world from that time to the setting up of God's eternal kingdom is represented by the various parts of this strange image of prophecy.

After speaking respectfully to the king of his great work as ruler of Babylon, the prophet says plainly, "Thou, O king, art this head of gold." Daniel 2:37. That is, as the king representing the kingdom of Babylon, you are the head of gold. Or, in other words, Babylon is the head of gold. The king of metals represents the first world empire of the prophecy. No other metal could be more appropriate, for Babylon was literally a golden city in a golden age. In fact it was known all over the world of that time as the Golden City, "the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency." (Isaiah 13:19.) Nebuchadnezzar must have felt gratified that his kingdom was represented by gold.

But the prophet continued speaking, "And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth." Verse 39. Nebuchadnezzar's dream of having an endless kingdom was shattered. It was not in God's plan.

Did the golden kingdom go down? Does history tell us that God spoke the truth? Yes. Babylon went down, and another kingdom arose-Medo-Persia, represented by the breast and arms of silver of the great metal man of the vision. Babylon fell in 539 BC., and Medo-Persia ruled over Babylon's former territory and greatly increased the area by world conquests.

Not long ago I visited the ruins of ancient Babylon. Bouncing in and out of deep ruts and raising tremendous clouds of dust, our motorcar had forced its way about fifty miles southwest of Baghdad. Suddenly ahead of us, across the road at right angles, loomed what looked like a precipitous hill. As we drew nearer, it seemed to stretch away in a straight line to the east and west. The road passed through a notch cut in this great embankment. What was it? You can imagine my astonishment and delight when the driver assured me that I was looking at the wall of ancient Babylon. Since childhood I had longed to see the ruins of old Babylon, mentioned again and again in the Holy Scriptures, especially in this second chapter of Daniel. In fact we might almost call the Holy Bible The Tale of Two Cities, the story of Babylon and Jerusalem in their literal and spiritual conflicts down through the ages.

Soon our car pulled to a stop, and with our Arab guide and a well-known archaeologist, I spent several wonderful hours walking over the ruins of this mighty city. Here was the great hall built by Nebuchadnezzar. Here were the gates leading down to the Euphrates. Here was the ancient river bed, clearly visible. We could walk where ships once floated. The river itself has moved a number of miles west. One can now walk in the dry bed of what was once the great river that flowed through the heart of the city.

The archaeologist in our company with his maps, explanations, and diagrams-made everything most interesting and convincing. He made it clear that the Scripture prophecy had been fulfilled, for this ancient city of Babylon, mentioned by Isaiah in the thirteenth chapter of his prophecy, is not inhabited. It is just as Isaiah said it would be: "Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation: neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there. But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there. And the wild beasts of the islands shall cry in their desolate houses, and dragons in their pleasant palaces: and her time is near to come, and her days shall not be prolonged." Isaiah 13:19-22.

This prophecy indicates that the beautiful city would never again be inhabited, but would lie waste. The wild beasts of the desert would dwell there. This has all come true. We could see it with our own eyes. How wonderfully has the Word of God been fulfilled! Babylon, the mightiest city of the world at

that time, the capital of the nation that persecuted God's people Israel and took them captive, has gone down in oblivion. If we were offered a reward of a million dollars, we could not find one Babylonian today. The world's first great empire mentioned in Bible prophecy is remembered only by historians and archaeologists.

God's prophetic word through Daniel has been fulfilled. People do not live inside the area which was the city in Isaiah's time. The Arabian does not pitch his tent there; the ruins lie in solitude except for the presence of jackals, owls, and other creatures of the wilderness. Babylon has become like Sodom and Gomorrah, desolate and uninhabited, a wilderness of brick and stone—mostly brick, since all stone had to be brought many hundreds of miles down the river. Here are thou sands of bricks, each stamped with the name and titles of Nebuchadnezzar, the great builder.

As I stood looking over this prophetic desolation, all predicted in the Word of God, I seemed suddenly transported back, back through the centuries, to that day so long ago when God's prophet Daniel—a representative of defeated, captive Israel—stood before the mighty Nebuchadnezzar. Even at that time, when they hung their harps upon the willows along the waterways of Babylon and tried through tears to sing the songs of Zion (Psalm 137:2), their land lay in desolation far to the west. But through the strange dream and vision sent to him from God, Nebuchadnezzar had his attention drawn to the Creator; and, through his influence and decrees, a knowledge of the true God was spread over the world. What the wisdom and chicanery of the so called wise men of that age could not do, God's prophet did by divine inspiration. Through God's prophet the future was revealed.

The great yellow walls of Babylon, miles in circumference; the beautiful temples; the great tower, or ziggurat; the glorious gates covered with beautiful blue-colored tiles; the white temples; the famous hanging gardens, of which Herodotus speaks—all have sunk into the desert sands. Remember the words of the prophet, "And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee." Daniel 2:39. Nebuchadnezzar's empire was not to last forever, not even for a thousand years. Less than a century later Babylon went down in a night of blood, of which we read in the fifth chapter of Daniel.

That night, Belshazzar, who was king of Babylon at the time, was holding a drunken carousal with a thousand guests. Although the city was surrounded by enemies, he felt secure behind his mighty walls and defenses. Suddenly a bloodless hand from a sleeve of darkness wrote his fate upon the palace wall: "MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting.... Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians." Daniel 5:25-28. Thus the second world empire arose, represented by the silver breast and arms of the image.

But this was not the end of the story. Medo-Persia, the tyrannical power that ruled over 127 provinces from India to Ethiopia in the days of the lovely Queen Esther, was not to last forever. This nation—mentioned in the Bible in connection with the story of the rebuilding of the temple and the return of the Jewish exiles to the Holy Land, as recorded in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah—was to finish its course and be overthrown by a third nation. After Medo-Persia, the third kingdom of brass was to rise and "bear rule over all the earth." (Daniel 2:39.) This refers to the rule of Grecia under Alexander the Great and his successors. Just as silver was used for personal adornment by the Persian warriors, so brass was characteristic of the Greek soldiers. They used it not only for their body armor but also for shields, swords, battle-axes, and tips for their spears. Homer speaks of the brass-clad Greeks. This, of course, was not brass as we know it, but rather bronze, which is called by this name in the Bible.

Alexander, with his trained Greek phalanxes, overthrew the Medo-Persian army at the Battle of Arbela in 331 BC. By his rapid campaigns, his military victories, and civilizing influence, Alexander shot like a meteor over the earth. He went on conquering, pushing into India even to the Khyber Pass, where he won a great battle on the Indus River. But his men would go no farther. Having been away from home for years, they refused to penetrate the unknown lands to the Pacific Ocean and forced the great conqueror to turn back toward the west. Reaching the ruins of Babylon, he stopped and tried to rebuild it. His men did a great deal of work clearing out the debris in preparation for new buildings. There Alexander the Great, who seven years before, at twenty-five years of age had conquered the known world, died in a drunken debauch aggravated by a fever. Soon afterward his mighty empire dissolved into fragments and was destroyed by the Roman legions in the Battle of Pydna in 168 BC.

Then the iron monarchy of Rome ruled the world and continued her power for nearly six hundred years. In passing, we must not forget to note the preparation for the birth of Christ and for the spread of Christianity brought about by Alexander's invasions. The Greek language and the influence of Hellenic civilization and culture were spread over the earth by the conquerors, lasting long after Alexander and his

successors were gone. This did more, perhaps, to prepare the world for the coming of Christ and His gospel than any other single event except the rise of Rome itself, the fourth world empire.

Roman roads, postal system, government by law, and world peace also prepared the way for the ministers of Christ to go forth in the early days of the Christian faith. Not only was Jesus, the Prince of peace, born in this time of world peace under Roman rule but He was also crucified by Roman authority, as we read in Luke 2: 1: "And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed." We know what happened then. Down from Nazareth came Mary with Joseph; and there, in the humble place where animals of the stall were kept, was brought forth the Babe who is someday to rule all nations "with a rod of iron." (Revelation 2:27.) Despite His holy life, His miracles, His teaching, He was seized by the Jewish authorities and turned over to Pilate, the Roman governor, who authorized His crucifixion as a criminal-although he acknowledged His innocence.

The empire of the Caesars reached from the Rhine and the Danube on the north to the burning sands of the Sahara on the south. It was the world's greatest empire, bound together by its excellent system of roads and famous for its laws and justice. It was over these roads that the first apostles traveled, carrying the gospel of God's eternal kingdom to earth's remotest bounds. But Rome was not to last forever.

The prophet Daniel continued his interpretation of the king's dream, speaking of days far in the future. The mighty empire of the iron legs was itself to be divided. "And whereas thou saw the feet and toes [of the metal image], part of potters' clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided." Daniel 2:41. And so it was divided. The Roman Empire was broken into fragments by the barbarian invasions of the fourth and fifth centuries. These barbarians were the well-known Alamanni, Ostrogoths, Visigoths, Franks, Anglo-Saxons, etc.-ten of them-the progenitors of the nations of modern Europe. So today we find France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Belgium, England-nations which at one time were parts of the Roman Empire-some of them strong, some of them weak.

Thus the prophecy was fulfilled in history. "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. The prophecy made it clear that in spite of efforts to unite the nations, union would not be accomplished. In verse forty-three we read the words of the prophet: "They shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another." And history says, "How true, how true!"

Charlemagne, emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, tried to restore the original, to weld its fragments together. His empire was an effort in that direction, an empire which Voltaire, the witty infidel, said was neither holy nor Roman nor an empire.

Charles V tried it, without success, and wound up his life in a monastery trying to make a number of clocks run together.

Louis XIV of France tried it and deluged Europe in blood.

Napoleon the Great tried it, but his glory vanished at Waterloo. When someone protested to Napoleon that Providence would not permit him to rule the world, he is reported to have said, "Providence is on the side with the heaviest artillery." He had the heaviest artillery, but God's warm June rains came, and the heaviest artillery could not move. His fine cavalry fell in a sunken road. Blucher came to help Wellington-we all know the story of Napoleon's defeat at Waterloo. As Victor Hugo said, "God was bored with him." The real trouble was that the Little Corporal was smashing his fists against God's prophecy-"They shall not cleave one to another, ... the kingdom shall be divided." Verses 43, 41.

Then Kaiser Wilhelm II is said to have had a vision of a restored empire over all western Europe. Hitler followed, his new Reich to last for "a thousand years."

By marriage and intermarriage efforts have been made to strengthen and cement together the shattered empire of Rome. These attempts have always failed. At one time, in an effort to bring world peace, there was so much of this intermarriage among the ruling families of Europe that Queen Victoria was called the "Grandmother of Europe." Before World War I practically all the kings and rulers of Europe were related, yet family ties failed to prevent the outbreak of that terrible conflict.

Since that time, statesmen have endeavored to curb the menace of aggressive nationalism by international leagues, alliances, and treaties. The League of Nations was an attempt in this direction. Now the United Nations is a more ambitious scheme to keep the world together. Will it succeed? Time will tell. But we know that the prophecy of God's Word will be fulfilled.

We must remember that this remarkable prophetic dream of Daniel 2 is part of the Holy Scriptures. In briefest form, but with great clearness, it outlines the successive world empires from the time of Nebuchadnezzar, down to the setting up of Christ's everlasting kingdom. You ask, Are you sure of that last statement? Yes, because of verse forty-four, the words of the prophet as he continued speaking to the

king: "And in the days of these kings [or kingdoms; that is, the broken fragments of mighty Rome, now called the nations of western Europe) shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: . . . but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever."

This is the kingdom of the stone. In the vision this stone was cut out of a mountain without hands—that is, without human intervention. It was of divine origin. The stone smote the mighty metal image of prophecy on the feet. Then were the gold, the silver, the brass, the iron, and the clay ground to powder; and the wind carried them away as chaff from the threshing floor. "And the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth." Verse 35. The coming kingdom will be established by divine intervention.

We read in Lamentations 4:6 that when Sodom, the wicked city of the past, went down before the onslaught of heaven, "no hands stayed on her." And in 2 Corinthians 5: 1 we read the words of the apostle: "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." The inference is clear: "without hands" means "by divine intervention."

Other Old Testament prophets use this term, "the stone," to refer to the coming Messiah. In Genesis 49:24 He is called "the stone of Israel." In Isaiah 28:16 He is called the foundation stone; in Isaiah 8:14 He is called "a stone of stumbling." In fact when here on earth, Jesus, in referring to Himself, said, "The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner." Luke 20:17. The disciples were assured that the stone represented Christ, for we read in Acts 4,~ I 1, 12, "This is the stone which was set at nought 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."

Jesus was rejected by His own people. He who was the foundation stone of God's kingdom was unrecognized. This stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner, and there is salvation in none other.

In Nebuchadnezzar's dream the falling of this stone upon the feet of the image shows that it is identical with the second advent of the Messiah in power and glory, in other words, the second coming of Christ. This fits in exactly with the words of Jesus and of the apostles. We read first Matthew 25:31: "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." The Apostle Paul, speaking of this same great event, says: "I 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.

At the time of Christ's second coming the present kingdoms of this world will indeed become His. As the revelator puts it, "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever." Revelation 11: 15. The broken fragments of the Roman Empire will not then be welded together into a modern caricature of ancient Rome, but will become a part of the glorious, eternal kingdom of Christ, to which there will be no frontiers the kingdom of the Stone. Gold, silver, bronze, iron, clay—then the stone, the stone that grinds all. I like to call it the "Diamond Kingdom" because none of the other kingdoms can stand before it. "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: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth." Daniel 2:35.

Not only does the stone fill the whole earth but, as we read in verse forty-four, this kingdom "shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever." This means that the people of the coming kingdom of Christ will be immortal. One generation will not go down before another. There will be no change of kings and dynasties; it will be the kingdom of eternity, the kingdom of Christ, the kingdom of the Stone which the builders rejected, and which has become the head.

We might ask the question, What will be the extent of this kingdom of Christ? The answer is in Daniel 2:35: "The stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth." Notice, it fills the whole earth. Someone asks, Is this really likely to happen? Let us read verse forty-five, in which the prophet continues: "The dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure."

What a mighty confirmation of the Holy Scriptures is this simple but wonderful prophecy previewing the nations, of modern Europe! Babylon appears and goes down. Medo-Persia appears and fades into the mists of the past, leaving only records in its ruins and on the Behistun Rock, where her great kings recorded their names and deeds. The glory that was Greece comes upon the world's stage, then passes, leaving the marbled ruins of the Parthenon and the philosophy of Plato and Aristotle. Then Rome seizes the scepter of world power and tramples over the prostrate nations. She builds the great city of

Rome, sometimes called the Eternal City, only to prove that she is not eternal. The mighty fabric breaks up into various fragments of varying sizes, the nations of modern Europe. These nations, through their leaders, attempt to get together, to live in peace. They fail in both, thus fulfilling the prophecy to the letter.

Then just around the corner of tomorrow the King comes, the One who in divine prophecy is called "The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." (Isaiah 9:6.) And of His kingdom there shall be no end, no frontiers. It will be worldwide, glorious, eternal.

The real subject of this prophetic preview of nations is Jesus Christ Himself, "the stone which the builders rejected." History is His story. I believe it was George Bernard Shaw who, at the close of World War I, wrote: "The only man who came out of the war with an enhanced reputation for common sense was Jesus Christ." Frank Crane said that "Jesus was the only teacher tall enough to see over the fences that divide the human race into compartments." Why was this? Because He was the Son of God, the fulfiller of prophecy. Not only so, but He is the Redeemer of mankind.

Our attitude toward Him means everything. As we read this great prophecy made five hundred years before Jesus was born, we come face to face with the heart searching question, "What think you of Christ?" Matthew 22:42. Here is what Jesus Himself said, as we find it recorded in Luke 20:18: "Whosoever shall fall upon that stone shall he broken; but on whom so ever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder." Are you willing to fall upon that stone, the foundation of the church of the living God? Are you willing to be broken upon Jesus Christ? His kingdom at last will rule all and rule forever. We must know Him now in order to meet Him in peace then. Remember, He, the King of the ages, wants to be the King of your heart.

As a small boy was viewing Holman Hunt's famous painting "The Light of the World," he asked his father, "Daddy, why don't they let Jesus in?"

The father answered, "I don't know."

A moment later the little fellow said, "I know why they don't let Him in. They live in the basement and can't hear Him knock."

Friends, if we are living in the basement of life, let us move up. Let us open the door of our heart to Jesus Christ. It is He of whom all the prophets speak. "For there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Acts 4:12. Make Him your Savior today-yes, make Him your Savior now! Then you can pray: "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." Matthew 6:10.