

## 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:



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