












“The Beast Empire”

Part 6

SEVEN WORLD EMPIRES			
EGYPT (ca. 2100 B.C. to ca. 1400 B.C.)	REVELATION 13 and 17	DANIEL 7	DANIEL 8
<p>A son of Ham was the first king of Egypt. When Joseph went to Egypt, foreign “Shepherd Kings” may have been in control. The Hamites were back in power at the time of the Exodus.</p> <p>ASSYRIA (ca. 1100 B.C. to 606 B.C.) The ancient city of Nineveh finally rose to power over her rival Babylon. The Assyrians ruled the world with force and fear, and demanded great sums of tribute</p>	<p>1. Egypt 2. Assyria 3. Babylon 4. Medo-Persia 5. Greece 6. Rome 7. Antichrist</p>  <p>DANIEL 2</p>	<p>BABYLON</p>  <p>Lion with eagle's wings</p> <p>MEDO-PERSIA Bear raised up on one side. Ribs: three conquered kingdoms</p>	<p>MEDO-PERSIA</p>  <p>Ram with two horns (the Persian and Mede kingdoms). Persia, the stronger kingdom, was the higher horn.</p>
<p>BABYLON (606 B.C. to 538 B.C.) Babylon was even older than Nineveh. Daniel lived in this great, impregnable city and saw it fall to the Medes and Persians. (Daniel 2:37-38, 7:4, 5:1-31)</p>	<p>Head of Gold: BABYLON</p> 	<p>Breast & Arms of Silver: MEDO-PERSIA</p> 	
<p>MEDO-PERSIA (538 B.C. to 333 B.C.) Cyrus the Great freed the Jews to return and rebuild the Temple in 538 B.C. About 445 B.C. Artaxerxes allowed them to rebuild Jerusalem. (Dan 9:25)</p>	<p>Belly and Hips of Bronze: GREECE</p> 	<p>Leopard with 4 heads (Egypt, Assyria, Turkey, Greece), Wings: Speedy conquest</p>  <p>GREECE</p>	<p>Great Horn: Alexander the Great *** Little Horn: Antichrist *** Four Horns: Alexander's successors (Egypt, Assyria, Turkey, Greece)</p>  <p>ANTICHRIST</p>
<p>GREECE (333 B.C. to 146 B.C.) Alexander the Great conquered the world in only 10 years! The Greek culture and language later helped greatly to spread the Gospel. (Daniel 2:39, 7:6, 8:5-8)</p>	<p>Legs of Iron: ROME (divided into East and West)</p> 	<p>Ancient ROME + Modern ANTICHRIST</p> 	<p>ANTICHRIST BEAST</p> <p>With 10 horns/nations, 3 broken by the Antichrist “little horn”. The world shall worship him Mouth speaking blasphemies. World's worst warmonger (Daniel 7:7-8, 19-25, Rev 13:1-10)</p>
<p>ROME (44 B.C. to 455 A.D.) By the time Jesus was born, Augustus Caesar ruled the Mediterranean world with almost complete control. This period of world peace allowed the Gospel message to spread more easily.</p>	<p>The End!</p> <p>Feet of Iron and Clay!</p> <p>ROCK: Christ's Kingdom overthrows all world's governments!</p>	<p>FINAL WORLD POWERS!</p>	
<p>TODAY The feet of iron-clay symbolize two modern superpowers (EU? and Russia?) whose governments are a mixture of Militarism and Big Business. (Daniel 2:41-43)</p>	<p>WORLD'S LAST EMPIRE In the final days of this present age, the False Prophet and Antichrist with his ten-toes (nations that form his empire) will preside over the most terrible time in the history of creation, but it will also see the greatest finish with the return of Jesus Christ to rule the Earth with His saints for the next thousand years. (Daniel 2:44-45)</p>	<p>FALSE PROPHET BEAST 2 horns like a lamb Speaks like a dragon Master of deception Controls world's economy (Revelation 13:11-18)</p> 	

In Hebrew the word for “Beast” is **חַיָּוָה** “*chêwāh*”. It is a noun and is the equivalent of the New Testament “Beast” or Greek word “*Therion*”. “*Chewah*” is the cognate of the Hebrew word “*chayyah*” (“animal”, “wild animal”). It occurs twenty **20X** times in the Bible, ALL in the book of Daniel. The contexts are in the course of his interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream –(Daniel 2), the vision of the great tree –(an allegory of Nebuchadnezzar, chapter 4), the ensuing account of the madness of Nebuchadnezzar –(chapter 5), and a description of the creatures he saw in his allegorical vision of the four “beasts” –(chapter 7). Like its Hebrew cognate, this noun refers to all classes of non-human animate life.

The fact that we only find this word in the book of Daniel, and nowhere else helps to set our study of the mystery “**beast(s)**” apart from the rest of the Old Testament. It occurs in:

Daniel 2:38

Daniel 4:12, 14, 15, 16, 21, 23, 25, 32

Daniel 5:21

Daniel 7:3, 5, 6, 7 (2X), 11, 12, 17, 19, 23

The Book of Daniel lays the framework for the study of the Tribulation period. Daniel alone gives the two critical preconditions for the beginning of the period:

- 1) The existence of Israel as a national entity
- 2) The re-emergence of a future form of the Roman Empire under the leadership of a small group of ten leaders. The Antichrist will ultimately derive his authority to rule and emerge as a satanically empowered dictator -(Daniel 9:26-27), with the full knowledge and assistance of these ten leaders -(Revelation 17:12-13).

Since the period formally begins with the signing of a treaty between these two parties (Daniel 9:27), it is evident that the absence of either or both parties would preclude the start of the period. In order for the tribulation to unfold, both national Israel and a modern alliance of nations roughly corresponding to the nations of the old Roman Empire (or the people groups thereof) must be in place.

At the time Daniel wrote, the nation of Israel was in captivity to Babylon (later to Persia, after the fall of Babylon). It would have been apparent to Daniel that in order for the prophecies he was given to be fulfilled, the nation would have to be re-gathered from captivity. In fact, it would even have been possible for Daniel to discern a second dispersion and re-gathering, based on information supplied by the angel in the prophecy of the seventy “weeks” - (Dan 9:24-27). Nevertheless, the Book of Daniel is very clear on this point: the Tribulation involves the nation of Israel. Failure to acknowledge this key point has led to many false interpretations of both Scripture and history. One error that must be avoided is incorrectly identifying the Church with Israel. These two are distinct in the prophetic program. It is impossible that the Church could fulfill Israel’s role in the coming Tribulation. Both the Old and New Testaments are clear on this point: the Church is not Israel, and Israel is not the Church (confirmed in Romans 11)—though they are both key elements in God’s unified program for history.

Daniel himself was born sometime around 620 B.C. and was therefore probably already a teenager when Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem for the first time in early 605 B.C. Daniel, along with other Jews of Royal blood, was carried to Babylon.--Daniel 1:1-3, 6. There he spent three years studying "the learning and the tongue of the Chaldeans".--Daniel 1:4. He and his three friends were made wise men and counsellors of the King.--Daniel 1:19, 20; 2:13.

Daniel lived at least 72 years in Babylon and his life there extended from the first year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar through the reigns of the succeeding five Babylonian kings, past

the Fall of Babylon into the Persian Empire, and through the reign of Darius the Mede, and even unto the third year of Cyrus the Persian! --Daniel 10:1.

Daniel Chapter 2 is the briefest and most concise overall picture of the history and future of the World in the entire Bible. The prophetic dream in this chapter describes five of the great Empires of Man from ancient Babylon to the final World Empire of the Antichrist, which is destroyed by the Kingdom of God. This dream was originally given to Nebuchadnezzar and was interpreted for him by Daniel during his reign; therefore the prophecy starts with the King of Babylon and with the great World Government of Babylon itself, and does not include the previous World Governments of Egypt and Assyria which had already passed on at the time of this dream.

We learn from Daniel that the nation of Israel not only must be in existence prior to the beginning of the tribulation, and also we learn of an alliance of nations that will be in existence during this period and through whose rulers the Antichrist will derive his political authority. The details of the emergence of this kingdom are laid out in Daniel 2:1-45 and 7:1-28. In order to understand the place this alliance of nations occupies in God's plan for the future, we must understand Daniel 2:1-45, the account of Nebuchadnezzar's "dream", and Daniel 7:1-28, the account of Daniel's prophetic "vision" (see illustration below).

The first information regarding the empire over which Satan's prince will rule is revealed in Daniel 2:1-45. The revelation is in two parts:

- a dream given by God to Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon (vs.29-35)
- the interpretation of the dream given through Daniel (vs.36-45)

Since Daniel's interpretation includes the content of the dream itself, we need only quote the interpretation found in Daniel 2:27-45.



In his dream Nebuchadnezzar saw a great statue with a head of gold, chest and arms of silver, belly and thighs of bronze, legs of iron, and feet partly of iron and partly of clay. As Nebuchadnezzar continued to watch, a rock was cut out, but not by human hands. This rock then struck the statue on its feet and toes and crushed them. At the same time the entire statue crumbled and was swept away by the wind, but the rock that struck the statue became a great mountain, filling the whole earth.

Perhaps no other book of the Bible has been so much attacked as the book of

Daniel. It is a veritable battlefield between faith and unbelief. Wicked men, heathen philosophers and infidels have hammered away against it for 2,000 years but the book has proved to be the anvil upon which the critics' hammer has broken into pieces. The book has survived all attacks, and we need not fear. The weak and immature critic nor the most subtle infidels of Christendom can harm the book. It has been denied that Daniel wrote the book during the Babylonian captivity. Kuenen and Wellhausen with their imitating disciples like Canon Farrar, Driver and others of inferior caliber claim that the work was not written in the 'Exile', but centuries later. They contend Daniel had nothing to do with the book at all. Instead a holy and gifted Jew wrote it, and it is avowed fiction. Such are a few of the dissenting statements made against this sublime book. These critics follow the wicked assailant of Christianity, Porphyry of the third century who contended that the book of Daniel is a forgery. He claimed Daniel was written during the time of the Maccabees after Antiochus Epiphanes had appeared and who was so clearly foretold in this book. The whole reasoning method in the destructive Bible-criticism may be reduced to the following: Prophecy is an impossibility! There is no such thing as foretelling events to come. Therefore a book which contains predictions must have been written after the events which are predicted. But how could the man who committed such a forgery be a pious Jew?

The book of Daniel is either divine or it is the most colossal forgery and fraud. No middle ground is possible. We give a few of the evidences which answer the unbelieving attacks upon this great fundamental prophetic book. It should be enough for every Christian that our Lord, the infallible Son of God, mentions Daniel by name when Jesus delivered His great prophetic Olivet discourse -(Matthew 24:15). There can be no question that our Lord referred to the book of Daniel at least twice more. When He speaks of Himself and His coming again in the clouds of heaven as the Son of Man, He confirms Daniel's vision in Daniel 7:13, and when He speaks of the stone to fall in Matthew 21:44, He confirms Daniel 2:44-45. How do critics meet this argument? They tell us that our Lord acquiesced to the Jewish views current in His day. They say, perhaps He knew better. Some say that He did not know. In other words, they deny the infallibility of our Lord with this invention that He spoke against His better knowledge while covertly accusing our Lord of something worse. When the Lord uttered the words, "Daniel the prophet", at once He put His unimpeachable seal on both the person and the book of Daniel. But there are other evidences.

The heathen, Porphyry declared that the book was written during the days of the Maccabees. As stated above the modern critics have echoed the opinion of that lost heathen soul. But the Septuagint version of the Old Testament, which was made before the time of the Maccabees, contains the book of Daniel. It was in the hands of the learned Hebrews, who translated the Hebrew Scriptures into the Greek in the third century before Christ. The book therefore antedates the time of Antiochus Epiphanes. Furthermore a book was written during the days of the Maccabees, a historical account of those eventful days is the first book of the Maccabees. This Maccabean work not only presupposes the existence of the book of Daniel, but shows actual acquaintance with it, and therefore gives proof that the book must have been written long before that period (1 Macc. 1:54, compare with Daniel 9:27; 2:49 and Daniel 3).

The reliable Jewish historian, Josephus historically furnishes an evidence for Daniel. He tells us that when Alexander the Great, who is mentioned in Daniel's prophecy (chapter 8), came to Jerusalem in the year 332 B.C., Jaddua the high priest, showed him the prophecies of Daniel, and Alexander was greatly impressed with them. Then we have the testimony of another prophet of the exile, the prophet Ezekiel. He speaks twice in the highest terms of Daniel, contemporary of Ezekiel. (See Ezekiel 14:14-20 and 28:3.)

Daniel also reveals such an intimate acquaintance with Chaldean customs and history, as well as their religion. Only one who lived there and was an eye-witness could have possessed such understanding and knowledge. For instance, the description of the Chaldean magicians perfectly agrees with accounts found in other sources. The account of the insanity of Nebuchadnezzar is confirmed by the ancient historian Berosus. Then there has been a most striking vindication of this book through the Babylonian excavations, tablets, cylinders and monuments that have been discovered. Into this we cannot fully enter, but we cite but one of the most striking: For a long time, the name of Belshazzar furnished material to the unbeliever and thus provided a reason to reject the historical accuracy of the book. The father of Belshazzar was Nabonaid, who was not a son of Nebuchadnezzar at all. How then could Belshazzar be a grandson of Nebuchadnezzar? This objection is seemingly strengthened by the fact that no ancient historian includes the name of Belshazzar in the list of Babylonian kings. Berosus, who lived about 250 years after the Persian invasion, gives the following list of Babylonian monarchs:

- Nabuchodonosar (Nebuchadnezzar)
- Evil Marudak, who is the Evil Merodach of the Bible
- Neriglissar
- Laborosoarchod
- Nabonaid
- Cyrus, the Persian conqueror

Different attempts were made to clear up this difficulty, but they failed. Now, if Daniel wrote his book he must be correct. But the critics are ever ready to place the doubt on the side of the Bible rather than on the side of history. So they concluded Berosus was not mistaken and that if Daniel really had written the book which bears his name, he would have been historically correct. This is how matters stood up to 1854 A.D. In that year, Sir Rawlinson translated a number of tablets from the ruins of the Babylonian civilization that were brought to light by the spade. These contained the memorials of Nabonaid. In these the name of Bil-shar-uzzar appeared frequently, is mentioned as the son of Nabonaid and that he shared the government with him. The existence of Belshazzar and the accuracy of the book of Daniel were at once established beyond the shadow of a doubt. Daniel was promised by Belshazzar to become the third ruler in the kingdom -(Dan. 5:16). Why the third and not the second? Because Nabonaid was the first, Belshazzar his son was the second and vice-regent. The wife of Nabonaid, a daughter of Nebuchadnezzar. Therefore, (from his mother's side) Belshazzar was the grandson of Nebuchadnezzar. But have the critics learned by this complete defeat? Have they profited by this experience and will they leave the Bible alone? Not by any means. They will continue to look for flaws in this infallible Book. Some day they will discover the gravity of their accusations.

God revealed the meaning of Nebuchadnezzar's dream to Daniel, and Daniel explained it to Nebuchadnezzar -(2:27-45). According to Daniel's prophetic interpretation, each of the parts of the statue (the head, the chest and arms, the belly and thighs, the legs and feet) represents a world empire, four in all -(vs.37-40). Nebuchadnezzar—representing Babylon—is the head of gold. Afterward there are to be three more world empires (prophetically corresponding to Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome). Interestingly, the fourth empire is different from all the rest in that it is described as having two forms:

- The first form being the legs of iron
- The second being the feet partly of iron and partly of clay

As we proceed from the head to the feet, we move forward in time; thus it is that the form represented by the feet and toes is to be the final form of the fourth empire—Rome. God also revealed through Daniel the meaning of the rock, cut out, not by human hands, which crushed the feet and toes and caused the entire statue to crumble and be blown away. The rock represents the kingdom of God that will replace all the previous world empires and which will never be destroyed, but will endure forever -(vs. 44).

There are several important observations to be made from this passage, all of which will be confirmed subsequently in Daniel's vision -(7:1-28):

- **First**, it would seem that the dream relates to that period of time elsewhere referred to as *"the times of the Gentiles"* (Luke 21:24) - representing the time during which Israel is to be dominated by Gentile powers, beginning with Babylon and extending through the Tribulation up to the point at which Christ releases Israel from their bondage to foreign powers at His Second Advent.
- **Second**, the dream relates to the future since it pictures the inauguration of the eternal kingdom to be set up on earth by God (confirmed 7:13-14, 26-27; 12:9).
- **Third**, some form of the fourth world empire (Rome) will be present at the time God sets up His eternal kingdom. It will be different from the original form of the Roman Empire in that as the feet and toes of the statue were composed of iron and clay (which do not adhere), so this "kingdom" will be an alliance of nations (some weak, some strong), each with its own national characteristics -(vs.42-44). It will begin as an alliance of ten world rulers. But we learn later from Daniel's prophetic vision that three of these will be eliminated by one individual (not one of the ten) who is eventually to be installed as the supreme dictator. In destroying that alliance, or "kingdom," God will end the period of Gentile world domination pictured in Nebuchadnezzar's dream. Now to the verse by verse exegesis of Daniel 2.

"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)

(2:1) - Daniel now moves to the second year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign. (Since the Babylonian kings took the throne, the first year was called the accession year and was not numbered, this was in reality the third year of his reign.) Soon after their successful examination, Daniel and his friends had another test that challenged their faith. An ominous dream woke the king up and filled him with dread and anxiety. This is one of the most important prophecies in the Bible. It is impossible to understand human history properly apart from this prophecy.

"Then the king commanded to call the magicians, and the astrologers, and the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans, for to shew the king his dreams. So they came and stood before the king. And the king said unto them, I have dreamed a dream, and my spirit was troubled to know the dream." -(Daniel 2:2-3)

(2:2-3) - Like most pagans, the king probably believed the gods were trying to tell him something. So he called for the magicians and scribes who understood and wrote hieroglyphics and who probably specialized in ancient mystical writings and magical formulas so that they became soothsayer priests, enchanters, conjurers, fortune tellers (who did such things as throw a handful of arrows down and predict the future by the way they fell), sorcerers, and astrologers. Ancient pagan kings used people who claimed to be conversant with the occult to give them guidance. Nebuchadnezzar expected them to be able to tell him what his dream meant.

"Then spake the Chaldeans to the king in Syriack, O king, live forever: tell thy servants the dream, and we will shew the interpretation" -(Daniel 2:4)

(2:4) - The answer to the king is in the Aramaic language. From this point on through chapter 7 Daniel was written in Aramaic, the language of commerce and government communication. The rest of the Book was written in Hebrew. The fact that chapter 7 is written in Aramaic helps to tie Daniel's vision to Nebuchadnezzar's dream in this chapter.

The address to the king came with a phrase implying he was worthy to live forever. It was probably unusual for them to have to ask the king to tell them the dream. They assured him that once they knew the dream they would be able to interpret it for him.

"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. But if ye shew the dream, and the interpretation thereof, ye shall receive of me gifts and rewards and great honour: therefore shew me the dream, and the interpretation thereof." -(Daniel 2:5-6)

(2:5-6) - Because the dream disturbed the king and he felt its importance, he wanted to put these purveyors of the occult to the test. He made a firm decision (promulgated with certainty so that it would not be changed) that they must not only tell him the dream but its interpretation as well. If they did not, he would have their bodies dismembered, torn limb from

limb, and their houses torn down and turned into a garbage heap (though some scholars think the Aramaic word means a public privy). On the other hand, if they were successful in telling him both the dream and its interpretation, by his order they would receive gifts, rewards and great honor (demonstrated by costly things). The king thought this would be incentive enough for them to tell him both the dream and its interpretation.

“They answered again and said, Let the king tell his servants the dream, and we will shew the interpretation of it.” –(Daniel 2:7)

(2:7) - Responding again, they emphatically demanded that the king tell them the dream so they could give the interpretation. They were in a hard place. They knew that making demands on an absolute ruler was dangerous. But they had no clue concerning the content of the dream to help them deliver an interpretation.

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

(2:8) - The king recognized that they were trying to stall for time because they knew that the king’s word was certain. Some take the KJV’s reading, “The thing is gone from me,” to mean the king had forgotten the dream. However, “the thing” that was gone from the king was the decree, not the dream. He knew perfectly well what the dream was, and the decree to tell both the dream and the interpretation would not be changed. Since he was an absolute ruler, they could not expect him to do so.

“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 shew me the interpretation thereof.” –(Daniel 2:9)

(2:9) - As the wise men kept repeating their request that Nebuchadnezzar tell them the dream, the king became more convinced that he needed to confirm his test of their abilities. He warned them that if they did not tell him the dream they would all suffer the penalty, or judgment, he had just described. He had sense enough to realize that if he told them the dream they could get together and agree on a lie, a corrupted interpretation that they concocted. Then they would hope that time would go by and the situation would change, so they could explain away any wrong interpretation they gave. So the king again demanded that they make known the dream. If they could tell him the dream, then he would know he could depend on their correct interpretation.

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

(2:10) - Out of desperation, they did another dangerous thing: they dared to question the king's good judgment by saying his request was unreasonable, claiming that no one could do what he asked. Further, no king, chief or powerful ruler had ever asked a thing like this from any purveyor of the occult. They implied that surely the king was too great a ruler to expect such a thing from them.

"And it is a rare thing that the king requireth, and there is none other that can shew it before the king, except the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh." -(Daniel 2:11)

(2:11) - The added words "that the king's request was too difficult" indicates that only the gods would be able to tell him his dream - and they did not live among humankind. What an admission this was on the part of those men who claimed to be able to tell the future and have contact with the occult! They had always tried to give the king and the people the impression that they were in touch with the supernatural, with the gods they believed in. Now they were admitting they did not know those gods and they were not able to communicate with any god. All their predictions, all their astrological forecasts, all their fortune telling was nothing but fantasy. They were also admitting that their mythology, which claimed that their gods came among humankind, was wrong and without any evidence. We know from the New Testament that their predictions were also prompted by demons -(Acts 16:16; 19:15). The failure of these wise men is a powerful reminder when we consider our unique relationship with the One True God! We can commune with Him. We can take every need to Him and be assured that He hears and answers. Sometimes even before we ask for His help, we receive His guidance!

"For this cause the king was angry and very furious, and commanded to destroy all the wise men of Babylon. And the decree went forth that the wise men should be slain; and they sought Daniel and his fellows to be slain." -(Daniel 2:12-13)

(2:12-13) - The answer of these advisers so infuriated the king that in a rage he made a decree to kill all the wise men of Babylon, including all those with advanced education. So Daniel and his friends were included—even though they had not been invited by the king to tell the dream.

"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: 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." -(Daniel 2:14-15)

(2:14-15) - When Daniel heard that he was at the point of being killed, he did not panic. Because of his faith and courage, Daniel sought out Arioch, the king's chief executioner (who was also the captain of the king's bodyguard), recognized his authority, and with calmness, discretion and tact asked him why the king's decree was so severe and so urgent. The officer then let Daniel know what had happened.

“Then Daniel went in, and desired of the king that he would give him time, and that he would shew the king the interpretation. Then Daniel went to his house, and made the thing known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions:” -(Daniel 2:16-17)

(2:16-17) - With confidence in God and with God-given wisdom, Daniel boldly went to the king and requested a specified time to come again and show the king the interpretation. This shows that Daniel had not the slightest doubt that God would give him the interpretation. The king agreed, showing that God was already working on his behalf. So Daniel went to his house and explained the situation to his three friends (note that they are called by their God-fearing Hebrew names in verse 17. They needed to come before God with their confidence in his covenant love for his people.

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. -(Daniel 2:18)

(2:18) - Daniel’s first thought was to seek God in earnest, sincere prayer. Since he knew the importance of united prayer (cf. Matt. 18:19f), he then urged his faithful three friends to join him in humbly requesting compassion from “the God of heaven” (implying He is the one and only true God), asking him to show them the king’s dream and the interpretation (a secret that only God knew). God alone could keep Daniel and his three friends from being killed with the rest of the wise men. The prayer indicated a concern for all those wise men as well.

“Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a night vision. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven.” -(Daniel 2:19)

(2:19) - As Daniel and his friends continued praying into the night, God revealed the secret of both the dream and the interpretation to Daniel in a “night vision,” a supernatural revelation that occurred while he was awake. His immediate response was humbly to bless God. Daniel was in touch with God and knew how to honor Him. A truly wise person does not fail to thank God when He answers prayer (cf. Luke 17:15-18). Our primary response to God ought always to be that of gratitude in situations.

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

(2:20) - The praise Daniel broke out with was in the rhythm of poetry. Poetry among these ancient people was the language of intense thought and feeling. The Book of Psalms is full of such poetry. Daniel began by recognizing that the name (including the eternal character and nature) of God deserves eternal praise, for God has wisdom and strength (shown by his mighty acts).

“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:” -(Daniel 2:21)

(2:21) - After praising God for Who He is, Daniel honored God for what He does: He is the One Who is in control; He alters times (including prophetic periods) as well as specific appointed times that people might consider fixed; He removes and appoints kings. The governments of this world can only go as far as He allows. All true wisdom that comes to the wise is really from Him, as is the knowledge that comes to those with intelligence and discernment, for He knows all things.

“He revealeth the deep and secret things: he knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him.” -(Daniel 2:22)

(2:22) - Things that are deep and impenetrable, things hidden from human understanding, He knows and reveals. Nothing is hidden in such darkness that He cannot see it. But He lives in unapproachable light, and there is no darkness in Him. Because Jesus is God, He can say, ***“I am the light of the world.”***

“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.” -(Daniel 2:23)

(2:23) - Daniel further recognizes God as the God of his fathers, just as God let Moses know He is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the fathers of the nation of Israel -(Exodus 3:6). This God keeps his covenants and promises. He gave Daniel a portion of wisdom and strength. He also gave him the knowledge he requested (in the visions of verse 19), for he showed him the king's dream.

There is an underlying joy and buoyancy in Daniel's praise. It was offered in faith. He did not doubt the correctness of the interpretation. He had touched God. We can learn from this. In the natural, Daniel was up against unbeatable odds. Nebuchadnezzar had supreme power, and he had passed a death sentence that was considered irrevocable. But Daniel looked beyond the circumstances and reached out in faith, trusting God's control of the situation. He knew he could place his life in God's hands and trust Him regardless of what men might do.

“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 shew unto the king the interpretation.” -(Daniel 2:24)

(2:24) - With this knowledge, Daniel went to Arioch, the king's chief executioner who was in charge of carrying out the death penalty, and asked him not to kill the wise men of Babylon. Though the king's wise men had failed and did nothing to deserve to be saved, Daniel

wanted their lives preserved also, even though they were pagans. He then asked Arioch to bring him to the king, so he could show the king the interpretation (and the dream, of course). Again, Daniel did not rush in. He showed wisdom by going through proper channels.

“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. 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?” -(Daniel 2:25-26)

(2:25-26) - Arioch did not hesitate. He was probably not anxious to kill all the wise men of Babylon, for he knew this would cause a great outcry against him. But when he brought Daniel into the palace for an audience with the king, he introduced him as a man of the exiles from Judah who could make known the interpretation.

The mention of the name “Belteshazzar” shows that Daniel was introduced to the king by his Babylonian name to remind the king that Daniel was not only an exile from Judah, he was a citizen of Babylon that the king should listen to. So, with what must have been a look of surprise, the king asked him if he was able to make known both the dream he had seen and its interpretation.

“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, shew 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. Thy dream, and the visions of thy head upon thy bed, are these;” -(Daniel 2:27-28)

(2:27-28) - Daniel began by reminding the king that none of the enchanters (conjurers), magicians (sorcerers) or diviners (Aramaic, **gazrin**, including those who consulted the position of livers in slain animals to foretell the future, and perhaps including exorcists) could show the king his dream. Then Daniel gave all the credit to God. He declared to the king that there is One True God in heaven Who is the Revealer of secrets. This God gave Nebuchadnezzar this dream in order to reveal a vision of what would happen in the future. As we look ahead in later chapters, we see this includes the Messianic Age, the Millennium. God wants us to focus our attention on that. Unfortunately, the church has chosen not to be focused on the prophetic future but rather to link its destiny in the here and now. This term **“the latter days”** occurs **14X** in the Old Testament. The reader is being focused towards future events.

“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. 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 2:29-30)

(2:29-30) - Most people wonder about the future at times. So it is not strange that before he went to sleep the king was thinking about what the future held. Then the God Who knows the future and Who reveals secrets gave him a dream to let him know what would be. Daniel did not take any credit to himself. He was humbly conscious that he knew nothing but what he had received from the gracious hand of God. So he declared that God revealed these mysteries of the future, not because of any wisdom Daniel had, but so that the king might know the truth of what he was thinking about.

“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.” –(Daniel 2:31)

(2:31) - What the king saw was a great, tall statue of extraordinary size and dazzling brightness. Its appearance was awesome, almost frightening to the king. From this point to the end of the chapter the prophecy focuses on five great empires or world kingdoms.

“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)

(2:32-33) - Daniel briefly described the figure as having a head of pure gold, chest and arms of silver, belly and upper thighs of copper (the Aramaic includes both copper and copper alloys such as bronze, but since the other metals mentioned in the passage are pure, copper is probably meant here), legs of iron and feet partly of iron and partly of ceramic pottery.

“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.” – (Daniel 2:34-35)

(2:34-35) - Then the king saw a rock that had been supernaturally cut out from a quarry. The rock struck the image not in the head, as Goliath had been struck, but in the feet, and smashed them. The result was that the entire statue was pulverized and swept away by the wind as easily as the wind drives chaff from a threshing floor. Thus every trace of the image disappeared. It went completely out of existence. The rock that struck the statue, however, immediately grew into a great mountain filling the whole earth. This is hard to imagine literally, but it has a symbolic meaning, as the interpretation shows. One interpretation of this passage is that a meteorite strikes the earth causing global destruction of the headquarters of the global One-World Order, namely the United Nations in New York City.

“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 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.” -(Daniel 2:36-38)

(2:36-38) - Daniel proceeded to interpret the dream. He was humble as he did so, careful to give the king his imperial title of “king of kings,” but also giving God the credit for Nebuchadnezzar’s glory and honor. He began by identifying King Nebuchadnezzar as the head of gold. The neo-Babylonian Empire was personified in him as the absolute ruler over other kings he had conquered. But Nebuchadnezzar did not gain these victories on his own. God was the One Who gave him kingship (and a kingdom), wealth, power, honor and majesty. God made him ruler over humankind, wild animals and birds. Then Daniel repeated his emphasis that God had made Nebuchadnezzar ruler over them all. For about seventy years the magnificent Babylonian Empire dominated the known world with Babylon as a center of pagan religion, commerce, education and culture.

“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 breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things: and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise.” -(Daniel 2:39-40)

(2:39-40) - The rest of the image represents a sequence of deteriorating world empires that we can identify as extending from Daniel’s time to the end of this age. Thus, the image covers symbolically what Luke 21:24 calls ***“the times of the Gentiles.”*** The kingdom of silver, inferior to the gold of Nebuchadnezzar, was the Medo-Persian Empire founded by Cyrus, who started out as the king of Anshan in Persia, welded the Iranian tribes into a great military machine, married the daughter of the king of Media and added Media to his empire. Then, in 539 B.C., the Medo-Persian army under Cyrus defeated the Babylonian army outside the city of Babylon. According to both Babylonian and Persian records, the people of Babylon threw open the gates of the city, welcoming the Persian army as deliverers from the misrule of Nabonidus and Belshazzar. They gave Cyrus a triumphant entry complete with palm branches. Most of the Persian kings were good-natured but weak, even though most of them considered themselves gods. Most imitated the corruption of Babylon. They all found that “pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall” (Prov. 16:18). Daniel 8:3f, 20 describes this empire further using the figure of a ram and recognizes the Medes and Persians as constituting one empire, not two. For over 200 years it controlled the Middle East.

The kingdom of copper was the Greek Empire of Alexander the Great that spread rapidly and ruled over the known world of that time. He began to rule in Macedonia in 336 B.C. He defeated the Persians and made many conquests, spreading Greek culture, literature and language throughout his empire. Alexander also tried to follow the Babylonian example, but his imitation of eastern grandeur led to wild debauchery and an early death in Babylon in 323 B.C. at the age of thirty-three. The succession shows definite deterioration, not progress. These

kingdoms were truly inferior to Babylon. Daniel 8:5-8, 21f describes Alexander's empire further under the figure of a rough he-goat, with a big horn representing Alexander. That horn was followed by four horns representing the four generals who divided the empire after Alexander died.

The kingdom of iron that shatters, crushes and pulverizes refers to the ruthless Roman Empire. It shattered more kingdoms and brought them into greater subjection than any of them had known. Some modern interpreters try to identify the sequence as Babylon, Media, Persia, Greece and the divided Greek Empire under Alexander's generals. They do this to try to fit the Book into their view that Daniel was written during the persecution of the Jews by Antiochus Epiphanes (175-164 B.C.). However, when we look at Daniel 8:20, we see that Daniel identified Media and Persia as a single empire represented by a single animal (the ram). This confirms our interpretation that the second empire is Medo-Persia. Furthermore, history does not show a sequence of a Median Empire followed by a Persian Empire. Conservative scholars who uphold the early date of Daniel include Edward Young, H. C. Leupold, Kenneth Kitchen, R. D. Wilson, John H. Raven, Carl F. Keil, George W. Westlake, Jr., Gleason L. Archer, Jr., R. K. Harrison, Desmond Ford, Eugene H. Merrill and John F. Walvoord.

In 65 B.C., Rome's general Pompey overthrew Syria, and by 30 B.C. Augustus had overthrown Egypt, taken authority over Jerusalem and established himself as the first emperor of Rome. Rome deserved its representation as the "iron empire." It subdued and destroyed the remnants of the preceding empires as well as many other nations. Yet Rome's empire and civilization were still part of the same image. They imbibed much of the Greek culture and even identified their gods with those of the Greeks. Persian and Babylonian cults and customs spread throughout the empire, and the Greek language became the language of trade, commerce and government communication in the eastern half of the Roman Empire, and even in Rome itself. Indeed, for the first two centuries, the Christian churches in Rome conducted their services in Greek.

Like Darius, the Roman emperors began to demand that the people worship them as gods. Thus, for all the iron-like destructive power of Rome, there was a sense that the previous kingdoms had not yet been destroyed. Their influence was still felt in the world through Rome; the image in Nebuchadnezzar's dream was still standing.

"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 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." –(Daniel 2:41-43)

(2:41-43) - In spite of all its strength, the Roman Empire finally broke down. Just as the feet were partly of ceramic pottery and partly of iron, so some of the nations that would follow the Roman Empire would be strong while others would be brittle, always breaking up. The

Romans would be the last to unite the known world of that day into one great empire, though many have since tried: Charlemagne, Napoleon, Kaiser Wilhelm, Hitler and Mussolini, who dreamed of it when he said he would make the Mediterranean Sea a Roman lake. All failed. The world is still partly strong and partly breaking up.

Do not be deceived by those attempting to divert the public toward an Islamic Antichrist. It was Rome that conquered the Greek Empire. Macedon was annexed by Rome in 168 B.C, and Greece was totally subdued in 146 B.C. The Selucid domains west of the Tigris were annexed by Pompey the Great in 63 B.C. Egypt was reduced to a Roman province at the Battle of Actium in 31 B.C.

Others have made attempts to unite the world, like the World Court and the League of Nations. The United Nations is trying, but it too is far from being truly united. Today's world is still Babylon, even though the gold has given way to iron and ceramic pottery. In spite of all our inventions and gadgets, human nature is still the same.

When "The" Antichrist comes, he will try to unite the world, but in the end he will not succeed either. His kingdom will not be a unified world empire like the four represented by the gold, silver, copper and iron. Rather, it will be a coalition or confederation of nations each delegating powers to the Antichrist. But the kingdom itself will still be part iron and part ceramic pottery, partly strong and partly brittle. Even if his power gives the appearance of external unity, there will be no internal unity among the selfish, godless nations who will be deceived at that time.

This fourth kingdom of Daniel's interpretation receives the greatest attention by Daniel 2:40-43. It begins as the strongest kingdom but gradually weakens in power (from iron to miry clay). This is precisely what occurred with the Roman Empire. Between 58 B.C., Julius Caesar expanded Rome's territory by conquering Germany, France, and Spain; and by the subjugation of Britannia. In 45 B.C., Julius Caesar became Rome's first dictator.

Between 27 B.C. and 19 A.D., Augustus Caesar created an empire called *Pax Romana* (Roman Peace) that lasted 200 years. He extended and secured the empire's borders and posted legions to maintain peace. He pushed the border north to the Rhine and Danube Rivers, advanced east to Syria and Egypt. He initiated vast capital growth in building projects, expanded the highway system across the empire. He built magnificent cities with theaters, race courses, libraries, public buildings, and temples. In 284 A.D., the Empire reached its zenith with the reign of Diocletian. It was at the height of its territorial extent, wealth, and political power.

From 376-382 A.D., Rome fought a series of battles against invading Goths from the north, and the empire steadily became weaker. Its armies could no longer protect the borders. Its economy was in shambles. Current day historians and scholars often note the resemblance between Rome's decline and that of the United States. In 395 A.D., Theodosius permanently divided the empire into east and west before his death. His son Arcadius was emperor in the east and his son Honorius was emperor in the west.

Between 410 and 476 A.D. the western empire was conquered by the Goths. The Goths were tribes to the northeast of Italy that had been kept at bay by the Roman legions. In 476 A.D., the last emperor of the Western Empire, Romulus Augustulus, was deposed by a Hun or a Goth named Odoacer (433-493), Romulus was sent into exile and disappeared from history.

The Roman Empire continues until Christ Jesus' return. The vision describes only four world empires represented by the image. Therefore, the legs of iron and feet of iron mixed with clay signify the same kingdom. In God's eyes, the Roman Empire continues to exist through the church age until the time of the Antichrist. The church age is invisible to the Old Testament prophets, as it was a mystery not yet revealed –(Colossians 1:25-27).

The Roman Empire continued in the west until 476 A.D. It then existed as the kingdom of the Franks and the Holy Roman Empire, which continued until 1806, when it was dismantled by Napoleon. The Roman Empire existed in the east as the Byzantium Empire headquartered in Constantinople (Istanbul today), which continued until the city was conquered by the Muslims in 1453 A.D.

It continued to exist in the unified European nations. In 1957, six nations signed the Treaty of Rome, pledging unity (France, Germany, Italy, Belgium, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands). In 1958, the European Economic Community was born (often called the Common Market). In 1979, an election was held for the first European Parliament. In 1993, the European Union was formed. It encompasses 500 million people, and in 2014 owned about 24% of the world's gross domestic product. In 2002, the Euro was adopted as a common currency. One of the symbols of the European Union is the ancient tower of Babel. The Tower was featured on a European Union poster in 1992, and the Union's headquarters in Strasbourg, France, is shaped like an unfinished tower. Another symbol of the Union is the ancient goddess Europa riding a bull, which is a woman riding a beast! See Revelation 17:3. Europa is on the Euro coin, and a statute of her is outside the Union's headquarters in Brussels, Belgium.

As the ten toes of Daniel's prophecy signify, eventually there will be ten kingdoms within the old Roman Empire, and the Antichrist will assume control and use that base to build his short-lived world kingdom. Though there have been other kingdoms, they did not pertain to Israel and therefore are not within the perspective of Bible prophecy. The British and American empires are mere extensions of the Roman Empire in God's eyes, as they arose from the same people.

What about Islam and the Ottoman Empire? I deal with this issue in different segments but a renewed Ottoman Empire and a Muslim Antichrist simply does not fit with Daniel's prophecies.

1. First, the chronology of the image in Daniel 2 points to the Roman Empire. The four kingdoms of Daniel 2 follow one another chronologically. The image is one, and each subsequent aspect connects with the previous one. We are given the names or identity of the first three (Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece), and they followed one another chronologically. The reasonable conclusion is that the fourth kingdom is the Roman Empire,

since it conquered Greece. The earliest Muslim empires were founded in the eighth and ninth centuries A.D., a full millennium after the fall of Greece to Rome. The Ottoman Empire was found by Osman I in the early 1300's A.D., nearly 1,400 years after Greece was conquered by Rome.

2. Second, in the Prophecy of the 70 weeks, Daniel identified the Antichrist as the prince of the people that ***"shall destroy the city and sanctuary"***. –(Daniel 9:26) "That" people was most definitely the Romans who in 70 A.D. destroyed Jerusalem and the Jewish Temple under the leadership of Titus, who soon became the Roman emperor. This key prophecy tells us that the Antichrist will arise from Europe and the old Roman Empire and not from one of the Muslim countries. Though the Muslims captured Jerusalem in 637 A.D. from the Byzantines, they never destroyed a Jewish Temple. It had ceased to exist more than 550 years earlier. The Roman Empire fits the prophecy of Daniel perfectly. It is the kingdom that conquered Greece and was divided into two major portions (the two legs of Daniel 2). It has continued in the Byzantine Empire, the Holy Roman Empire, and in modern European unions.

The iron signifies Rome's power and severity toward those who refused to submit to her. It is a kingdom that ***"breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things"*** -(Daniel 2:40). Consider how Rome treated Israel by destroying her temple, attempting to remove every vestige of the Jewish religion from Jerusalem and replacing it with pagan temples, enslaving, robbing, and evicting the people even giving the country a new name, *Syria Palestina*, and its capital the name *Aelia Capitolina*.

The two legs depict the division of the Roman Empire into east and west. The first occurred in 285 A.D. when the empire was divided by Diocletian into two parts: western with the capital in Rome and the eastern with the capital in Byzantium. The western spoke Latin and the eastern spoke Greek. Emperor Constantine I (272- 337 A.D.) built Constantinople in the east to rival Rome in the west. In 395 A.D. Emperor Theodosius I permanently divided the empire into the east and west. Theodosius was the last emperor to rule over a united Roman Empire.

The feet of iron mixed with clay signify the continuation of the Roman Empire in a weakened state, divided corrupted state. The iron mixed with clay signifies division. –(Daniel 2:41). It also signifies strength combined with weakness –(Daniel 2:42). This characterized the last centuries of the Western Roman Empire. There was civil war between Roman emperors and revolt by the conquered peoples. Division and strength mixed with weakness also identifies much of the history of the eastern empire. This has represented Europe for the last 1,000 years. It describes the Holy Roman Empire, which was a weak unity of kingdoms. And it characterized the modern European nations with their attempt to mix a centralized government with democracy. The "metal" represents the monarchies, and the "clay" stands for the democratic rule, or rule by the people. This is what we see today. There is a strong current towards democratic rule by the people but with Socialism and an element of Anarchism.

The old Roman Empire has never been successfully reunited under a central command. Some have tried, Charlemagne, Napoleon, and Hitler to name a few. No one will do so until the Antichrist reveals himself, particularly as the invasion of Muslim refugees destroy the European culture. My suspicion is that it will be this refugee influx that leads to the timely appearance of Antichrist.

The mingling ***“with the seed of men”*** –(Daniel 2:43) might refer to the attempt to create unity by erasing tribal boundaries and uniting people of various ethnic backgrounds. The invasion of Muslim refugees has created a massive backlash from all the countries that accepted the demands of the Europe Union without reservation to greet the refugees openly. Many of the EU states displaced indigenous citizens by taking over homes and apartment complexes to make room for the refugees. Such social disruption is taxing the economies of all the recipient nations. Leadership sees unemployment among the refugees lasting for years and further undermining the socialist economies of the Euro States. There is no internal cohesion and that cannot cement any union that is divided as the EU. The ten toes of the image represent the final form of the kingdom of iron, which become the Antichrist kingdom.

The ten toes represent 10 kingdoms that will exist during the days of the Antichrist. Ten European rulers will give their power to the man of sin, who will revive the ancient kingdom form of government. This same picture is given in Daniel 7:7-8. Here the 10 divisions are represented by the 10 horns of the fourth beast. Daniel 7:24 explains these 10 horns are 10 kings who will rule when the Antichrist rises to power. Revelation 13:1-5 depicts the same thing. The “Beast” represents the Antichrist. The 10 horns represent the 10 divisions of his kingdom –(Revelation 17:12-13). I may be out on a limb here but I believe it may represent the United Nations in its final form of 10 regions (kingdoms) of government. I’m not quite ready to suggest it is a “dual” prophecy but I lean in that direction. The parallel between Daniel and Revelation are strikingly similar if not identical.

The end-time Rome is also “Mystery Babylon”, who’s religious and commercial aspects are described in Revelation 17-18. “Mystery Babylon” will be as Catholic Europe that goes into complete apostasy, as we see evidenced today. Europe has a semblance of “Christianity”, but is in complete rebellion and has long moved away from God’s Word. All of Europe’s principles are opposed to God’s Laws, including humanism, evolution, abortion rights, homosexual rights, feminism, and socialism.

The Antichrist Empire will encompass the characteristics of the fifth empire of Daniel 2:34-35. It will be the gold, silver, brass and iron kingdoms wrapped into one. For a short time its wealth and power will exceed all of the others.

Daniel 2:34-35 describes this forthcoming fifth empire. It destroys the pagan empires suddenly and violently. God’s kingdom will be established when Christ Jesus returns. It does not come about gradually by “kingdom building”. A popular heresy today is that the kingdom of Christ is being built by the churches. It is impossible for the church to build the kingdom, because we

have not been given the authority to destroy the existing pagan kingdoms. That will happen at the time of Christ Jesus' return and it will occur by Divine judgment.

“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 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.” – (Daniel 2:44-45)

(2:44-45) - There is a better kingdom coming under a better King. This is not the natural sequence of history, but the working out of the plan of God. The rock cut out without hands represents the kingdom that God will set up - a kingdom that will last forever. That it is cut out of the mountain without hands shows it is a supernatural kingdom. In order for it to be set up, all the previous and present kingdoms represented by the entire statue must be crushed and obliterated. That is, the entire present world order must be judged and pass away before the millennial kingdom of Christ can be established. It will come suddenly, not gradually as postmillennialists, “Kingdom now” and dominion theologians teach (see 2nd Thessalonians 1:7-10; Revelation 19:11-16). The rock is personified in Christ. We become part of his kingdom by accepting Him as Lord and Savior and becoming part of His Body, the Church.

Note too that the rock hits the great statue in the feet, that is, in the iron and brittle pottery condition the world is presently in. This does not call for a rebuilding of Babylon or a restoration of the Medo-Persian, Greek or Roman empires as such. Some take Isaiah 13:19f to mean that Babylon must be rebuilt in order to have sudden destruction. However, Sennacherib destroyed Babylon suddenly in 689 B.C., leveling it to the ground and making a swamp out of it -(Isaiah. 14:23). His son Esarhaddon rebuilt it. But Isaiah 13:20 does not mean Babylon would not be rebuilt. The Hebrew verbs in that verse are actives, not passives. It should be translated, ***“She will not sit endlessly and she will not live on unto generation and generation.”*** Then verse 22 gives the reason, ***“Her time is at hand, and her days will not be prolonged.”*** Isaiah’s prophesy was fulfilled while he was still alive.

Nebuchadnezzar saw the statue as still standing even though one empire had given way to another and the world was disunited and partly strong, partly weak when the rock struck it in the feet. In our present world, we still have Babylonian astrology, the Medo-Persian idea that if a person’s good deeds outbalance his bad deeds he is a good person, Greek philosophy and the glorification of the Roman ideas that “might makes right.” In that sense, the statue is still standing. There never has been a truly new world order. But if we belong to the Rock, we must create a subculture with a Christian worldview and lifestyle. Though we are in this world, we are not to be of it. Let us remember that what God showed Nebuchadnezzar in his dream is indeed true, and we can trust the interpretation Daniel gave—an interpretation that fits with the further revelation given by Jesus in the Gospels and to John in the Book of Revelation.

Note too that the stone kingdom here represented cannot be either the Church or the present spiritual rule of Christ, because the image is hit in the feet, that is, in the end of this present age, long after the fall of the Roman Empire which felt the first impact of Christianity's spiritual power. Furthermore, the stone filling the earth (verse 35) cannot represent the growth of the Church in this age of iron and ceramic pottery, but rather speaks of the completeness of Christ's triumph over the kingdoms of this world when the Antichrist gathers his armies against Him in the end time -(see Joel 3:9-15; Rev. 14:7f, 14-20; 19:19ff).

The world is not getting better and better. Acts 3:19, especially in the Greek, indicates we can have times of refreshing and revival until Jesus comes. The gospel is indeed powerful. We have the power of the Holy Spirit. We have the promise that people from every language, tribe and nation will gather around the throne of God. But we cannot expect the Church to take over the kingdoms of this world and Christianize them. Evil men and seducers will increase in number and wickedness until Jesus comes. The millennial kingdom can only be brought in through judgment. Then it will fill the earth. This is parallel to Psalm 72:8, ***"He will have dominion from sea to sea, and from the [Euphrates] river to the ends of the earth."*** This is confirmed also in Zechariah 9:10.

Once Christ's earthly kingdom is established, it will never end. The term "kingdom", as used in the Bible, is not primarily a reference to territory or subjects, but to the king's power and rule. The king makes the kingdom. Christ will personally rule his kingdom from the time of the Second Coming onward. True, at the end of the Millennium there will be a brief interlude where Satan will be released and some will follow him, but he will not prevail against the saints, nor will he be able to touch or harm in any way those who received glorified, incorruptible, immortal bodies at the time of the resurrection and rapture of the saints. Jesus will triumph, and his rule will continue forever—into the new heavens and the new earth.

Then the king Nebuchadnezzar fell upon his face, and worshipped Daniel, and commanded that they should offer an oblation and sweet odours unto him. 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. -(Daniel 2:46-47)

(2:46-47) - King Nebuchadnezzar was so impressed by the interpretation, and probably by the anointing of the Holy Spirit that moved Daniel, that he fell full length before Daniel, gave him homage and commanded that the Babylonian priests offer an offering and incense on his behalf. Verse 47 indicates that Nebuchadnezzar recognized that Daniel's God is "the God of gods and the Lord of kings and a revealer of mysteries". This was a first step in his recognition of the true God: though it implies he was still recognizing other gods, it also indicates that the offering and incense were dedicated to Daniel's God.

"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." -(Daniel 2:48)

(2:48) - The king then exalted Daniel to a high position, gave him gifts and made him governor over the province of Babylon, the central province in his empire. He made him chief governor over all the wise men of Babylon as well.

“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.” –(Daniel 2:49)

(2:49) - Daniel, however, knew that his three friends had joined him in seeking God for the answer of the king’s dream and its interpretation. Because he wanted them to share in the rewards, he asked the king to make them governors or administrators over the province of Babylon. Daniel remained in the king’s court probably as the chief of the wise men; thus, he had no political office and did not take part in the governing of the province of Babylon, which is important in light of chapter 3.

Pastor Bob