

BOOK OF DANIEL
DANIEL'S PROPHECIES
PART 1-THE TIMES OF THE GENTILES
DANIEL 2

Introduction

Now that we have looked at the historical setting and we have considered the young man Daniel, through whom God spoke, I want us to take a look at the Prophecies that God gave Daniel about the end times—We'll divide them into four categories:

1. The Times of the Gentiles
2. The Terror of the Antichrist
3. The Triumph of Jesus Christ
4. The Timing of the Lord's Return

Tonight let's begin to look at the first of these—**The Times of the Gentiles!**

I. KING NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S DREAM CONCEALED!
(Daniel 2:1-13)

A. The Nightmare Of The King! (Vs 1)

Here we see that sometime in the second year after Daniel arrived in Babylon, when he was about 17 years old, God gave Nebuchadnezzar a dream that greatly disturbed him and woke him up from his sleep. This was of God!

B. The Demand Of The King! (Vs 2-6)

We see the king call a variety of individuals considered to be wise:

The king demanded that these wise men tell him two things—

- 1) What he had dreamed...(because the dream had left him) and,
- 2) The meaning of the dream.

C. The Confounding Of The Wise Men! (Vs 7-12)

Needless to say, the wise men were confounded!

D. The Decree Regarding The Wise Men! (Vs 13)

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E. Daniel's Answer And Request To The King! (Vs 14-16)

1) Daniel Answered With Counsel And Wisdom!

2) Daniel's Request For Time!

F. Daniel's Wise Use Of His Time! (Vs 17-18)

When Daniel heard of the king's unusual request, he turned to God in prayer and got the three Hebrew children to pray too! They were seeking for a revelation from the LORD of both the king's dream and its meaning.

G. Daniel's Psalm Of Praise And Thanksgiving! (Vs 19-23)

God responded by revealing these mysteries to Daniel. And Daniel, in turn, responded to the Lord with a psalm of praise and thanksgiving.

This psalm is very important because it summarizes the **theme of the whole book of Daniel** — namely, **that God is sovereign, that He has a purpose in history, and that He has the wisdom and the power to orchestrate the affairs of men and nations to the triumph of His divine will!**

Later in the book, Nebuchadnezzar makes a similar proclamation about the sovereignty of God after he has experienced the chastisement of God's discipline!
(Daniel 4:34b-35):

II. KING NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S DREAM REVEALED!

A. Daniel Requests An Audience With The King! (2:24-25)

B. The King's Question For Daniel! (2:26)

C. Daniel Answers The King Wisely! (2:27-28a)

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- D. The Purpose Of The Dream! (Vs 28)**
- E. The Prompting Of The Dream! (Vs 29)**
- F. The Purpose Of The Revelation Of The Dream! (Vs 30)**
1. To save the LORD's servants.
 2. To enlighten the King.

- G. The Details Of The Dream Revealed! (Vs 31-35)**
Daniel begins to reveal to Nebuchadnezzar both his dream and its meaning.

He tells the king that in his dream he saw a magnificent and awesome statue with a head of gold, breast and arms of silver, belly and thighs of brass, and legs of iron. The feet of the statue were made of a mixture of iron and clay.

He reminded the king that as he was admiring the statue, a large stone suddenly appeared — a stone that had not been cut by human hands.

This supernatural stone suddenly struck the feet of the statue and the entire statue was destroyed. The stone then quickly grew into a great mountain that "*filled the whole earth.*" vs 35

- H. The Interpretation Of The Dream! (Vs 36-45)**
Daniel began to explain the meaning of this mysterious dream—**It is an overview of the Gentile empires from the time of Nebuchadnezzar to what we call the Second Coming of the Messiah!**
1. **Daniel Revealed That The Parts Of The Statue Represent A Succession Of Empires:**

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- a. **Head of Gold**—Nebuchadnezzar and his Babylonian Empire.
- b. **Breast and Arms of Silver**—The kingdom that would replace Babylon, which Daniel later identifies in *chapter 8* as the Medo-Persian Empire.
- c. **Belly and Thighs of Brass**—The next kingdom in the series of world Empires, which Daniel identifies in *chapter 8* as Greece.
- d. **Legs of Iron**—The fourth kingdom in the series which we know from history was the Roman Empire which ultimately split into two parts.
- e. **Feet of Clay and Iron**—The last Gentile empire of history. The unstable combination of clay with iron (which do not cling to each other) is believed to suggest a loose confederation of nations that will exist as a revival of the old Roman Empire.
- f. **The Supernatural Stone**—Symbolic of the return of the Messiah who will destroy the last Gentile kingdom and will put an end to Gentile rule by establishing the kingdom of God on earth.

2. **Consider Makeup Of The Last Gentile Empire.**
 - a. **The Iron-Clay Mixture. (Vs 41-43)**

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This is a mixture of two non-binding materials.

The diverse nature—partly strong and partly broken—different from the other empires.

b. The Iron Part Definitely Represents The Roman Empire Influence Or Roman Power Structure.

Understand that the Roman Empire was not limited to a city...nor to the country of Italy...nor to just the European Continent!

(e.g. Consider how that in our day, the United States is a product of Europe, its form of government and laws find their roots in the old Roman Empire system and therefore qualifies as being a part of the Roman Empire influence in this mixture!)

In fact, we can see how widespread that the Roman Empire influence is in our day...it is GLOBAL!

c. The Clay Part—What Does The Clay Represent? Consider the clay in Scripture: Vs 43—“...*they* shall mingle themselves with the seed of men...” The “*they*” in this verse is the clay!

Isaiah 64:8—“But now, O LORD, thou art our father; we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we all are the work of thy hand.”
(Here the **clay** refers to Israel!)

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Jeremiah 18:6—“O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? saith the LORD. Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye in mine hand, O house of Israel.”
(Again, the **clay** refers to Israel!)

Israel's history bears out how they are able to adapt themselves to any country in which they reside! (Beginning with Egypt)

Although the Jews have been discriminated against and often persecuted and even killed, they have lived among other people without becoming a part of them.
(i.e. They retain their Jewish identity!)

“They shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay.”

d. Consider One Of Israel's Greatest Tragedies! (1 Samuel 8:4-9; 19-20)

She has constantly rejected her special calling to be separate from the nations of the world and to be holy unto the LORD!

In **John 19:14-15**, when Pilate put forth the Lord Jesus Christ to the Jews and said, “Behold your King!” The Jews ultimately said there :“We have no king but Caesar!” They expressed their desire to be subject to the Roman Empire!

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In Israel's declaration of independence:

"It is moreover the self-evident right of the Jewish people to be a nation as all other nations in its own sovereign state."

"We appeal to the United Nations to assist the Jewish people in the building of its state to admit Israel into the family of nations."

This will eventually lead to Israel being deceived by the Antichrist just as prophesied, not because of any outside force but because it knowingly and intentionally made that choice:

John 5:43—"I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive."

- e. **Consider Israel's Destiny. (Daniel 2:44-45)**
The entire global system of over 200 countries has no future, but the kingdom that God has established will stand forever and ever!

III. THE AGE OF GENTILE RULE!

We can see how this prophecy is amazing in its scope, stretching thousands of years from the time of the Babylonian Empire to the establishment of the Millennial reign of Jesus upon this earth.

It is a period of time that the Bible refers to as *"the times of the Gentiles"* (Luke 21:24).

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It begins with the fall of the last king of Judah, Zedekiah (586 B.C.), and continues until Jesus returns and re-establishes the throne of David in Jerusalem.

It is very interesting to note that this period of Gentile domination of the world is emphasized in the very language that the book of Daniel is written in.

In chapter 2, verse 4, the language shifts from *Hebrew* to *Aramaic*, which was the language of the Gentile nations at that time. And the text continues in *Aramaic* until the end of chapter 7.

It switches back to *Hebrew* at chapter 8 because the focus shifts at that point from the *"times of the Gentiles"* to the ultimate fate of the Jews.

IV. THE TIME GAP!

Another interesting thing to note is that from our historical perspective, we can clearly see that the prophecy has a major time gap in it, something that is often characteristic of Bible prophecy.

The gap comes between the fourth and fifth empires — between the legs of iron and the feet of clay mixed with iron.

The gap is obvious because there is no Gentile empire in history that corresponds to the empire of iron and clay, which Daniel tells us in chapter 7 will be a confederation of ten kings or powers that will come together as a revived Roman Empire.

The Roman Empire ceased to exist in 476 A.D. The eastern branch of it continued as the Byzantine Empire until the year 1453.

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Over the centuries there have been many attempts to restore the Roman Empire, the two most notable efforts being those of Napoleon and Hitler.

But all efforts failed until the aftermath of World War II when it became obvious to European leaders that their only hope for rebuilding Europe was to reach across national boundaries and begin cooperating to build a European superpower.

That effort produced the European Union, a revival of the old Roman Empire which presently consists of 27 member states.

I believe it will ultimately be divided into ten administrative regions.

Conclusion

This prophecy about the succession of world empires was reconfirmed to Daniel about 48 years later when the Lord gave him a dream. (Daniel 7)

We will look at that when we get to Daniel 7!