

Daniel 02 - Nebuchadnezzar's Prophetic Dream; God Reveals Interpretation to Daniel; Daniel Interprets Dream; Daniel & Friends Promoted

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(2) Aramaic chiasm (Dan 2:1—7:28)

(A) Nebuchadnezzar's dream (2:1-49)

(a) Nebuchadnezzar's dream (2:1)

1 Now in the **second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar**, Nebuchadnezzar had **dreams**; and **his spirit was troubled** and his sleep left him.

1 Now in the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuchadnezzar had dreams; and his spirit was troubled and his sleep left him.

1 During the second year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign, Nebuchadnezzar had dreams that troubled him. As a result, he couldn't sleep.

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.

- The dreams of Nebuchadnezzar record the broadest sweep of world history that God gave to any prophet

- "...second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar" - 603 BC; this seems to be a contradiction of the "three year" indoctrination course (1:5)

— The reason is that the Babylonians did not count the first year of a king's reign (their "accession year")...they counted that year as part of the reign of the previous king.

According to several reliable scholars, Nebuchadnezzar officially became king on Sept 7, 605 BC. On the 1st of Nisan 604 BC, the following spring, the first official year of his reign began.

— The intervening months constituted his "accession year" and were credited to his father's reign (see notes on 1:1). Thus, the first year of his reign ended on the first of Nisan the following year, 603 BC. The second year of his reign began in 603 BC and ended in 602 BC.

— So the events of Dan 2 occurred at the end of a three-year course of study (1:5). Shortly after Daniel entered the king's service was officially the second year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign. Thus, the "second year" of his reign was actually the 3rd year when you calculate king's reigns as we do today.

- Daniel's interest in this book was in the progress of events and their relationship to one another. As the book unfolds, chronology plays an important part in what God revealed.

- "...dreams" - plural; evidently he had a recurring dream or similar dreams (later described as one dream, v3). We're not given the details of these dreams until v31.

- "...his spirit was troubled" - because these dreams were being induced by God. God has a way of getting the attention of pagan Gentile kings who have no knowledge of Him (Cf. Pharaoh, Gen 41; Ahasuerus, Esther 6).

The second chapter of Daniel has been justly called "the alphabet of prophecy." Whoever wishes to understand the prophetic Scriptures must come to this chapter for the broad

outline of God's future program for the nations, for Israel, and for the glorious kingdom of Messiah. This outline is a simple but comprehensive framework of a multitude of future events. No political document can compare with it and its importance cannot be overstated.

Daniel's Age		
CHAPTER	EVENTS	AGE
1	Taken to Babylonian captivity	15
2	Interpreting Nebuchadnezzar's 1 st dream (huge image)	17
3	Daniel's 3 friends cast into the fiery furnace	19 or 20
4	Interpreting Nebuchadnezzar's 2nd dream (huge tree)	45-50
5	Interpreting handwriting of the wall at Belshazzar's feast	Early 80's
6	Delivered from the den of lions	c.83
7-8	Daniel's visions and dreams	Mid-60's
9	Daniel's seventy "sevens" prophecy	Early-80's
10-12	Final dreams and visions	Mid-80's

(b) Nebuchadnezzar's demand for revelation and interpretation (2:2-13)

(i) Command and response (2:2-4)

2 Then the king gave orders to call in the **soothsayerpriests**, the **conjurers**, the **sorcerers**, and the **Chaldeans**, to **tell the king his dreams**. So they came in and stood before the king.

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

2 So the king gave orders to summon diviners, enchanters, sorcerers, and Chaldeans to reveal to the king what he had dreamed. When they came and stood before him,

2 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.

- Nebuchadnezzar assembled his "wise men" (v12) to interpret the meaning of his dream
— These are four generic job descriptions for Nebuchadnezzar's advisory staff; all are occultic descriptions:

- "...soothsayer priests" - *chartummim*, also translated as magicians, but not the same as we think of today; they were scholars who could write

- "...conjurers" - *ashshaphim*, could evidently communicate with the dead

- "...sorcerers" - *mekhashshephim*, practiced sorcery, divination and astrology

- "...Chaldeans" - *kasdim*, refers to the priestly caste that studied the heavens to determine the future (astrologers); they believed that the patterns of stars can tell you about your future

— It can also be a term referring to origin (Californian), as well as a job description because the Chaldeans were heavy into occult (Cf. 1:4; Gen 11:28)

3 The king said to them, "I had a dream, and my spirit is anxious to understand the dream."

3 The king said to them, "I had a dream and my spirit is anxious to understand the dream."

3 the king told them, "I have dreamed a dream and I will remain troubled until I can understand it."

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

- This wasn't an ordinary dream...it troubled him because he knew it had a meaning to it that he didn't understand

4 Then the Chaldeans spoke to the king in **Aramaic**: *"O king, live forever! **Tell the dream to your servants**, and we will declare the interpretation."

4 Then the Chaldeans spoke to the king in Aramaic: *"O king, live forever! Tell the dream to your servants, and we will declare the interpretation."

4 The Chaldeans responded to the king in Aramaic: *"May the king live forever. Tell the dream to your servants, and we'll reveal its meaning."

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

- The Chaldeans took the lead in replying to the king (in Aramaic)

- "...Aramaic" - the language that Daniel was written in switches from Hebrew to Aramaic here (through 7:28) because God isn't only communicating only to the Jews, but also to the entire Gentile world

— This literary change provides a clue that this part is a distinct section of the book that concerns the future history of the Gentiles during the "Times of the Gentiles" (Luke 21:24)

— Aramaic was the common language of the world during Daniel's life. It was natural that he would have recorded what concerns the world as a whole in the language of the Gentiles.

— This is the beginning of the "Aramaic chiasm":

(1) Gentile history (Dream of four kingdoms, Dan 2:4b-49)

(2) Protection (3 Friends in the furnace, Dan 3)

(3) Daniel interprets Nebuchadnezzar's dream (Dan 4)

(3) Daniel interprets handwriting for Belshazzar (Dan 5)

(2) Protection (Daniel in the lion's den, Dan 6)

(1) Gentile history (Vision of four world kingdoms replaced by a fifth, Dan 7)

- "...Tell the dream to your servants" - the staff was happy to provide the interpretation, but needed to know what the dream was first

— The "dreams" of v1 are now a "dream" (singular). Evidently the king had many dreams, but one specific dream was really bothering him.

— It was customary for Babylonian kings to reveal their dreams to their advisers, who would then provide an interpretation that would satisfy the king. However, Nebuchadnezzar wanted his wise men not only to give him an interpretation, but also to tell him what he had dreamed.

Daniel 2 and 7 explain the succession of four gentile empires that would exert control over Jerusalem and the Jews until God's kingdom is established. Daniel 3 and 6 warned the Jews of the persecution they would face during this period and exhorted them to remain faithful to God. Daniel 4 and 5 encouraged the Jewish remnant by reminding them that a time would come when even the Gentile rulers would acknowledge that the God of Israel rules over the nations.

(ii) Command and response (2:5-7)

5 The king replied to the Chaldeans, "**The command from me is firm**: if you do not make known to me the dream and its interpretation, you will be **torn limb from limb** and your houses will be turned into a **rubbish heap**."

5 The king replied to the Chaldeans, "The command from me is firm: if you do not make known to me the dream and its interpretation, you will be torn limb from limb and your houses will be made a rubbish heap."

5 In reply the king told the Chaldeans, "Here is what I have commanded: If you don't tell me both the dream and its meaning, you'll be destroyed and your houses will be reduced to rubble."

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.

- "...The command from me is firm" - Nebuchadnezzar stood firm...he wanted to know both the dream he had as well as its interpretation

- Why did Nebuchadnezzar want his staff to tell him the dream? We don't know and there is much speculation...maybe he forgot the dream (we all do that) and needed to be reminded, or maybe he was testing his staff in order to "clean out" the current staff and bring in some of these new graduates that he had trained for three years.

- Perhaps he knew his staff was a bunch of frauds...???

- "...torn limb from limb" - if his advisors failed, they would suffer excruciating dismemberment and humiliation (Cf. 2 Kings 10:27). If they succeeded, they would receive gifts, a special reward, and great honor (Cf. Joseph, Mordecai, Daniel).

- This punishment was common for that culture and time period

- "...rubbish heap" - a public toilet (Cf. 3:29; Ezra 6:11)

6 But if you declare the dream and its interpretation, you will receive from me gifts and a reward and great honor; therefore declare to me the dream and its interpretation."

6 But if you declare the dream and its interpretation, you will receive from me gifts and a reward and great honor; therefore declare to me the dream and its interpretation."

6 But if you do relate the dream to me as well as its meaning, you'll receive gifts, rewards, and great honor from me. Therefore reveal the dream to me, along with its meaning."

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

- This was Nebuchadnezzar's professional development program

- He wasn't a guy who made idle threats—he was a despot. He wanted to understand their information sources...how good were they?

- Anyone could just conjecture about the interpretation, but Nebuchadnezzar was serious that he wanted to understand it. If his staff, or anyone else, could do that, they would be handsomely rewarded.

7 They answered a second time and said, "Let the king tell the dream to his servants, and we will declare the interpretation."

7 They answered a second time and said, "Let the king tell the dream to his servants, and we will declare the interpretation."

7 They replied again, "Let the king tell his servants the dream, and we'll disclose its meaning."

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

- The repetition of the wise men's request for Nebuchadnezzar to repeat the dream before they interpreted it reveals the inability in interpreting the dream accurately

(iii) Command and response (2:8-11)

8 The king replied, "I know for certain that you are trying to buy time, because you have perceived that the command from me is firm,

8 The king replied, "I know for certain that you are bargaining for time, inasmuch as you have seen that the command from me is firm,

8 The king responded, "I'm convinced that you're stalling for time because you're aware of what I've commanded.

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.

- Nebuchadnezzar is accusing them to trying to buy time, hoping that he would forget about the dream

9 that if you do not make the dream known to me, **there is only one decree for you**. For you have agreed together to speak lying and corrupt words before me until the situation is changed; therefore tell me the dream, so that I may know that you can declare to me its interpretation."

9 that if you do not make the dream known to me, there is only one decree for you. For you have agreed together to speak lying and corrupt words before me until the situation is changed; therefore tell me the dream, that I may know that you can declare to me its interpretation."

9 So if you don't disclose the dream to me, there will be only one sentence for all of you. You have conspired together to present lies and corrupt interpretations until the situation changes. Now tell me the dream and I'll know that you can reveal its true meaning."

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 shew me the interpretation thereof.

- "...there is only one decree for you" - he gives the result of not giving him the dream to them straight (dismemberment and humiliation, v5)

— He's using the dream to qualify the interpretation, and he's not budging...and he's getting impatient

10 The Chaldeans answered the king and said, "There is no person on earth who could declare the matter to the king, because no great king or ruler has ever asked anything like this of any soothsayer priest, sorcerer, or Chaldean.

10 The Chaldeans answered the king and said, "There is not a man on earth who could declare the matter for the king, inasmuch as no great king or ruler has ever asked anything like this of any magician, conjurer or Chaldean.

10 The Chaldeans answered the king directly, "There's not a single man on earth who can do what the king has commanded. No king, lord, or ruler has ever asked such a thing from any diviner, enchanter, or Chaldean.

10 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.

- The Chaldeans proceeded to explain, in all courtesy and flattery, that what the king requested was humanly impossible...which was the truth

— Sometimes you hear truth out of the mouth of pagans...remember Caiaphas - "it's expedient for one man to die for the people"

— In addition, no king had ever asked his counselors to do such a thing

11 Moreover, the thing which the king demands is difficult, and there is no one else who could declare it to the king except gods, whose dwelling place is not with *mortal* flesh."

11 Moreover, the thing which the king demands is difficult, and there is no one else who could declare it to the king except gods, whose dwelling place is not with *mortal* flesh."

11 Furthermore, what the king is asking is so difficult that no one can reveal it except the gods—and they don't live with human beings."

11 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.

- Only the immortal gods could provide this information, and the implication was that even these men could not get information from the gods

— However, this was precisely what they claimed to be able to provide: supernatural information

— Their confession sets the stage for Daniel to do precisely what the Chaldeans said no person could do

(iv) Command for destruction (2:12-13)

12 Because of this, the king became angry and extremely furious, and he gave orders to kill all the wise men of Babylon.

12 Because of this the king became indignant and very furious and gave orders to destroy all the wise men of Babylon.

12 At this point, the king flew into a rage and issued an order to destroy all the advisors of Babylon.

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

- Their confession of their inability to do what they said they were able to do, namely receive information from immortal gods, threw Nebuchadnezzar into a rage

13 So the decree was issued that the wise men be killed; and they looked for Daniel and his friends, to kill *them*.

13 So the decree went forth that the wise men should be slain; and they looked for Daniel and his friends to kill *them*.

13 When the order went out to kill the advisors, they searched for Daniel and his friends to kill them, too.

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

- Nebuchadnezzar just eliminated a job description...actually four of them (soothsayer priests, conjurers, sorcerers, and the Chaldeans, Cf. v2)

— He decided that the advisors he inherited from his father weren't worth much, so he reduced headcount

— Daniel was in that job category, so he was a peer with these soothsayers, conjurers and Chaldeans. Thus, this order meant Daniel's head.

— For the second time, Daniel's life is in jeopardy (Cf. 1:8-10). God prepared Daniel (Dan 1) that God knew were coming in Dan 2. God used the trials Daniel endured in Dan 1 to prepare him for events and circumstances that only omniscient God knew about that would occur in Dan 2 (Cf. 1 Cor 10:13).

— God doesn't put us into circumstances if we don't have the ability to deal with them...if we look at the trial we're in now, we can always look and see other trials that God used to prepare us for the current one.

(c) God reveals the dream to Nebuchadnezzar (2:14-30)

(i) Daniel requests more time (2:14-16)

14 Then Daniel replied **with discretion and discernment** to Arioch, the captain of the king's bodyguard, who had gone out to kill the wise men of Babylon;

14 Then Daniel replied with discretion and discernment to Arioch, the captain of the king's bodyguard, who had gone forth to slay the wise men of Babylon;

14 Daniel responded with wisdom and discretion to Arioch, the king's executioner, who had gone out to execute the advisors of Babylon.

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:

- "...with discretion and discernment" - instructive of how we're to act when the pressure hits

— Going through a trial is like tipping over a cup...whatever is in that cup spills out. When you get knocked in life and have difficulty, the true you naturally comes out.

— You don't evaluate your spiritual maturity when things are good; you evaluate your level of spiritual maturity when all hell breaks loose

— In that situation, most believers would immediately doubt God, they'd hit the panic button; Daniel is cool and collected, as a 17-year-old

— Daniel went directly to the man who was charged with killing him. That the official (Arioch) would take the time to explain the king's rationale to someone condemned to death speaks well of Daniel's reputation and approach and Daniel's regard for him.

— Because Daniel did not compromise as a 15-year-old, the stage was set for him not to compromise as a 17-year-old. If Daniel would've compromised on God's law (vegetables) in Dan 1, he would've never had the chance to stand for God in Dan 2. He would have been lost to history like so many others, but instead he will be exalted to a place of great power and authority...all because he stood for God when he was 15.

— Compromise has a way of disqualifying us from future opportunities...

15 he said to Arioch, the king's officer, "For what reason is the decree from the king so harsh?" Then Arioch informed Daniel of the matter.

15 he said to Arioch, the king's commander, "For what reason is the decree from the king so urgent?" Then Arioch informed Daniel about the matter.

15 He asked him, "Why such a harsh decree from the king?" Then Arioch informed Daniel,

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.

- Arioch explained to Daniel what had just happened

- Clearly the court officials, including the king himself, had come to respect Daniel highly, since they listened to him and granted his requests

16 So Daniel went in and requested of the king that he would give him a grace period, so that he might declare the interpretation to the king.

16 So Daniel went in and requested of the king that he would give him time, in order that he might declare the interpretation to the king.

16 so Daniel went to ask Nebuchadnezzar for an appointment to see him, and it was granted him so that he could reveal the meaning to the king.

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

- The fact that Daniel and friends needed time shows that they were no different than Nebuchadnezzar's advisors...they just had a better God
- There is no other record of God having given knowledge of a dream that another person had—without the dreamer telling him about it
 - Joseph only interpreted the dreams of Pharaoh and his servants after they told him what they were
 - However, Daniel believed that God could do anything, even reveal the dream itself to him, as well as its interpretation

(ii) Daniel's prayer to God (2:17-18)

17 Then Daniel went to his house and informed his friends, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah, about the matter,

17 Then Daniel went to his house and informed his friends, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah, about the matter,

17 Then Daniel went home and told his friends Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah about the king's command.

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

- "Hey guys, we're going to have a prayer meeting tonight."

— This is the first instance of united prayer in Scripture

— The fact that these young men, taken into exile from their homeland, resorted to prayer helps us understand the secret of their holy and separate walk with the Lord

— We often use God as a last resort...Daniel used Him as a first option. We need to be in the spiritual habit of taking trials *immediately* to the Lord.

— We often underestimate the power of prayer, especially in times of trial

Luke 18:1 [KJV]: And he spake a parable unto them *to this end*, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint;

18 so that they might request **compassion** from the **God of heaven** concerning this **secret**, so that Daniel and his friends would not be killed with the rest of the wise men of Babylon.

18 so that they might request compassion from the God of heaven concerning this mystery, so that Daniel and his friends would not be destroyed with the rest of the wise men of Babylon.

18 Daniel was seeking mercy, in order to ask about this mystery in the presence of the God of heaven, so that Daniel and his friends might not be executed along with the rest of the advisors of Babylon.

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.

- Since Nebuchadnezzar's death decree affected Daniel and his three friends, they joined in interceding to "the God of heaven"

- "...compassion" - they requested compassion from God because they weren't receiving any compassion from Nebuchadnezzar

- If others are not treating you with grace or compassion, go to the Lord, who sits on the throne of grace (Cf. Heb 4:16). It's not a throne of judgment, justice, or retribution for the child of God...it's a throne of grace so we may receive mercy in times of need.

- "...God of heaven" - the Babylonians worshiped the heavens and the stars; Daniel prayed to the Creator of the heavens

- "...secret" - Aramaic: *rāz*; LXX: *musterion*, a "mystery"; something previously hidden by God but now revealed by Him; used 6x in this chapter (Cf. v19,27-30)

- A "mystery" is something previously hidden, but now revealed. It's the opposite of the English definition of the word, which is something that can be known if sought out by great diligence.

- *musterion* is a full disclosure...God is taking something hidden, that the human mind could not comprehend or even contemplate, and He pulls it right out into the open for all to see (Cf. Eph 3:3-6)

- The use of *mustērion* (Greek [LXX] translation from original Aramaic) provides a great example of the use of this word for NT interpretation of both the "mystery age" (Church Age, Matt 13:11), and the Church itself (Eph 3:9)

- It's not, as progressive dispensationalists like to think, something that is revealed but unrealized. It's something totally unrevealed. If God would not have revealed the dream and the interpretation to Daniel, he would've known nothing about it.

- So when Paul uses "mystery" over and over again to describe the Church, he's referring back to Daniel. A mystery is not something revealed but unrealized, but rather something completely unrevealed and unknowable by human beings outside of revelation from God.

- Nebuchadnezzar asked his wise men to tell him the dream and give him the interpretation; the wise men wanted Nebuchadnezzar to give them the dream so they could interpret it, but he refused. This is what the word "mystery" means...something that is completely unknown, undisclosed, and only understandable or attainable by revelation from God.

- The "secret" is the Times of the Gentiles, a time when there is no Jewish king sitting on David's Throne. This is the interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream and what Daniel will interpret for him through the rest of this chapter.

- Why did God reveal this mystery to Daniel? — Because Daniel asked.

— When Daniel learned of the order to kill him and his friends, he immediately asked for more time so he could pray. Once the time was given, he got his friends and held a prayer meeting.

Daniel's Prayer Life

Four times in the book of Daniel do we find Daniel praying. In each instance, we learn one of the many values that prayer brings to the believer:

1. The value of United Prayer: At the beginning of his career, as a teenager, when Nebuchadnezzar had the dream of the great image. Daniel and his three friends prayed that God would reveal the mystery of the content of his dream, as well as the interpretation (2:17-18).
2. The value of Private Prayer: Daniel was threatened to be thrown into the lion's den for praying to God. The regularity of Daniel's prayer life was so constant that all who knew Daniel also knew that he faithfully prayed three times a day (6:10).
3. The value of Intercessory Prayer: Daniel understood from his study of Scripture that the captivity of Israel was coming to a close. He prayed for Israel's soon deliverance and return to its homeland. This prayer was answered quickly, as the Jewish exiles began their return to Israel within the next year (Dan 9:3-23).
4. The value of Persistent Prayer: Daniel desired to more fully understand the revelations already given to him, so he fasted and prayed for three weeks (21 days) as he waited upon God for His answer (10:2-3). From this prayer we learn of the spiritual warfare that takes place in the unseen world. The success of the angel reaching Daniel with his answer from God shows us the value and need for persistent prayer (10:12-13).

The Results of Daniel's Prayers

Three of Daniel's prayers yielded revelations of future events, demonstrating that through prayer, we can expect a fresh understanding of God's Word. In Dan 2 he was given the overall picture of the "Times of the Gentiles" beginning with King Nebuchadnezzar until the time of the Antichrist. In Dan 9 he was given the revelation of the "seventy weeks" which foretold the cutting off of the Messiah and the troubles of Israel, along with a time schedule for the most important events to happen to Israel during the "Times of the Gentiles." In Dan 10-12, Daniel was given a fuller account of some of the events to happen during the 70 weeks, namely the events following Alexander the Great until Antiochus Epiphanes and how they affected Israel. He was also given a much fuller account of the events to happen during the 70th week, also known as the Tribulation.

(iii) God reveals the dream to Daniel (2:19)

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

19 Then the mystery was revealed to Daniel in a night vision. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven;

19 When the mystery was revealed to Daniel in a vision later that night, Daniel blessed the God of heaven

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

- "...the secret was revealed to Daniel" - God revealed the piece of the jigsaw puzzle that would enlighten and amaze future generations who understood it

- Daniel prayed expecting an answer

- "...vision" - the person receiving the revelation is awake; in a "dream" the person is asleep

- God revealed the mystery as a response to the prayers of the four men

- Daniel waited until later to reveal what God had revealed; here, he focuses the attention on the response to receiving this revelation

- "...Daniel blessed the God of heaven" - Daniel immediately praised the Lord for His answer (Phil 4:6)

- Oftentimes we move on to crisis B, C or D once God has resolved crisis A, without stopping to give thanks to God

- Worship is a response to truth...we hear truth from God's Word and are so blown away by it that we can't wait to praise God

(iv) Daniel praises God (2:20-23)

20 Daniel said, "May the **name** of God be blessed forever and ever, For **wisdom and power** belong to Him.

20 Daniel said, "Let the name of God be blessed forever and ever, For wisdom and power belong to Him.

20 and said, "May the name of God be blessed forever and ever; wisdom and power are his for evermore.

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

- First thing Daniel always does is thanksgiving to God...God gets the glory

- Another thing Daniel always does, before God does something great, is pray

- Daniel was a man of prayer; prayer characterized his life

- We'll learn in Dan 9-10 about Daniel's prayer life, and the amazing things God did as a result

- "...name" - refers to the nature or revealed character of God, not just a label or title

- "...wisdom and power" - Daniel mentions God's wisdom and power at the beginning and end of his praise (v20,23, and in between he illustrated both characteristics
— The evidence of His "power" is His control of events. He alone determines when in history events will happen and how long each process or phase of history will last.

21 "It is He who changes the times and the periods; He removes kings and appoints kings; **He gives wisdom to wise men**, And knowledge to people of understanding.

21 "It is He who changes the times and the epochs; He removes kings and establishes kings; He gives wisdom to wise men And knowledge to men of understanding.

21 It is God who alters the times and seasons, and he removes kings and promotes kings. He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to the discerning.

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:

- The second evidence of God's "power" is that He controls the destiny of nations; He sets up kings and deposes them

- Two evidences of God's wisdom:

- "...He gives wisdom to wise men" - He is the source of all wisdom

— The Babylonians set the times and seasons by watching the stars; Daniel in contrast says that God is the One who sets the times and seasons

God, who "controls the course of world events," loves change. Why? Because it makes us trust Him. You can't get rooted in any particular year because another year is on its way. Leadership changes, our needs change, and the availability of resources changes. But if we are fixed to the unchanging One who controls all change, we can live lives of trust and praise. [Swindoll]

Perhaps the greatest evidence of Yahweh's lordship in Daniel's own experience lay...in his unswerving conviction that his God was the one who appointed and deposed the monarchs of human kingdoms. Because these kings and their subjects thought they were called to their office and given its privileges and responsibilities by their own gods, Daniel's assertion that the God of Israel was in fact the originator and grantor of human authority was a tacit denial of any perceived role for the gods of the nations. [Merrill]

22 "It is He who reveals the profound and hidden things; He knows what is in the darkness, And the light dwells with Him.

22 "It is He who reveals the profound and hidden things; He knows what is in the darkness, And the light dwells with Him.

22 He reveals what is profoundly mysterious and knows what is in the darkness; with him dwells light.

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

- The second evidence of God's wisdom is that He reveals things that would be unknown to humans otherwise

- He can do this because He knows what is unknown to people, and the "light" of knowledge dwells with Him

23 "To You, **God** of my fathers, I give thanks and praise, For You have given me wisdom and power; Even now You have made known to me what we requested of You, For You have made known to us the king's matter."

23 "To You, O God of my fathers, I give thanks and praise, For You have given me wisdom and power; Even now You have made known to me what we requested of You, For You have made known to us the king's matter."

23 To you, God of my ancestors, I give thanks and praise, because you have given me wisdom and power; you have now revealed to me what we asked of you by making known to us what the king commanded."

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.

- "...God" - *Elohim*, not *Yahweh*

- Generally the Jews when referring to the "God of my fathers" used the term *Yahweh*, the covenant keeping God

- Here, Daniel uses the term *Elohim* (Gen 1:1), the all-powerful Creator, because it took power to reveal to Daniel what he received

- Daniel gave credit for the wisdom, and the resulting power he received, to its proper Source

- Daniel did not originate these revelations but received them from God and communicated them to others (Cf. 2 Peter 1:21)

- He viewed the vision as an answer to the prayers of himself and his three friends

- How many things did Daniel detail? Seven.

- There are so many applications to this story...

- In a foreign land, taken hostage as a teenager...he didn't forsake God. In fact, it strengthened his walk, his faith and his prayer life; what an example.

- If we, in humility, put ourselves so in the center of what God is doing that when He does something He gets all the glory, there is nothing that He won't do through us.

(v) Daniel reports the dream to Nebuchadnezzar (2:24-30)

24 Thereupon, Daniel went to Arioch, whom the king had appointed to kill the wise men of Babylon; he went and said this to him: "Do not kill the wise men of Babylon! Take me into the king's presence, and I will declare the interpretation to the king."

24 Therefore, Daniel went in to Arioch, whom the king had appointed to destroy the wise men of Babylon; he went and spoke to him as follows: "Do not destroy the wise men of Babylon! Take me into the king's presence, and I will declare the interpretation to the king."

24 After this, Daniel went to Arioch, whom the king had appointed to execute the advisors of Babylon. He told him, "Don't destroy the advisors of Babylon. Bring me before the king and I'll explain the meaning to him."

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 shew unto the king the interpretation.

- Daniel took the initiative to go to Arioch and urge him to confront the king and Daniel would give the interpretation

- He had to go through Arioch to get to the king since the king authorized Arioch to execute all the wise men

- He was confident that the information God had given him would save their lives (Daniel and his three friends), along with all of the seers

- Daniel did not need to contrive an answer that he hoped would satisfy the king, as the Babylonian seers needed to do. He simply needed to declare the revelation given to him by God.

We should bear this testimony of Daniel in mind when we read the later revelations God gave him in this book. They are as reliable as this one was, because they too came from the God of wisdom and power.

25 Then Arioch hurriedly brought Daniel into the king's presence and spoke to him as follows: "**I have found a man** among the exiles from Judah who can make the interpretation known to the king!"

25 Then Arioch hurriedly brought Daniel into the king's presence and spoke to him as follows: "I have found a man among the exiles from Judah who can make the interpretation known to the king!"

25 Then Arioch quickly brought Daniel into the king's presence and informed him: "I've found a man from the Judean captives who will make known the meaning to the king."

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.

- "...I have found a man" - Arioch, a pagan Gentile, credits Daniel with understanding the content of the dream and giving the interpretation
— Daniel, in v27-28, sets the record straight that it was God who provided both the insight into the content of the dream as well as the interpretation
— It actually shows great confidence in Daniel; if Daniel failed, Arioch would suffer the king's wrath

26 The king said to Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, "Are you able to make known to me the dream which I have seen and its interpretation?"

26 The king said to Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, "Are you able to make known to me the dream which I have seen and its interpretation?"

26 King Nebuchadnezzar replied by saying to Daniel (whose Babylonian name is Belteshazzar), "Are you able to tell me about the dream and its meaning?"

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 before the king and said, "As for the secret about which the king has inquired, neither wise men, sorcerers, soothsayer priests, *nor* diviners are able to declare *it* to the king.

27 Daniel answered before the king and said, "As for the mystery about which the king has inquired, neither wise men, conjurers, magicians *nor* diviners are able to declare *it* to the king.

27 By way of answer, Daniel addressed the king: "None of the advisors, enchanters, diviners, or astrologers can explain the secret that the king has requested to be made known.

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, shew unto the king;

28 However, there is **a God in heaven** who reveals **secrets**, and He has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what will take place **in the latter days**. This was your dream and the visions in your mind *while* on your bed.

28 However, there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries, and He has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what will take place in the latter days. This was your dream and the visions in your mind *while* on your bed.

28 But there is a God in heaven who reveals secrets, and he is making known to King Nebuchadnezzar what will happen in the latter days. "While you were in bed, the dream and the visions that came to your head were as follows:

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;

- "...a God in heaven" - notice how precise Daniel is in his reply..."I" does not enter into his answer...it was "a God in heaven" who revealed secrets made known to the king.

- Arioch focused on Daniel as the solution to the king's dilemma; Nebuchadnezzar viewed Daniel in the same way. However, Daniel quickly redirected the king's attention from himself and placed it where it belonged: God Himself

- No human being, neither Babylonian wise men or himself, could provide what the king required

- "...secrets" - "mysteries"; Gr. *mysterion*

- "...in the latter days" - Daniel is categorizing this interpretation as a latter days prophecy. It will be a time period in which God has revealed a tough time for national Israel (Cf. Dan 10:14; 11:35).

- This phrase first occurs in Gen 49:1, and always refers to the future. The context determines how far into the future is in view, but it usually focuses on the appearance of the Messiah.

- It technically refers to the future of God's dealings with mankind as to be consummated and concluded historically in the times of the Messiah

- In the context here, it includes all visions of Nebuchadnezzar received and stretches from 600 BC to the Second Coming of Christ. This dream was not something that involved Nebuchadnezzar exclusively; he was involved, but only on the front end. This prophecy spans the millennia until Christ would return to rule the world from David's Throne for 1000 years.

- Amillennialists typically take "the last days" to refer to the time we are now in (Cf. Acts 2:16-17; 1 Tim 4:1; 2 Tim 3:1; Heb 1:1; 1 John 2:18). However, this interpretation runs counter to the context of the passage and the content of what the dream revealed.

29 As for you, O king, *while* on your bed your thoughts turned to what would take place in the future; and He who reveals secrets has made known to you what will take place.

29 As for you, O king, *while* on your bed your thoughts turned to what would take place in the future; and He who reveals mysteries has made known to you what will take place.

29 Your majesty, when you were in bed, thoughts came to your mind about what would happen in the future, and the Revealer of Secrets has made known to you what will take place.

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.

- Daniel now related the king's dream and its interpretation
- He reminds Nebuchadnezzar that before he had fallen asleep, he had been thinking about the future
- The dream that God had given him was a divine revelation of what the future will hold

30 But as for me, this secret has not been revealed to me for any wisdom residing in me more than *in any other* living person, but **for the purpose** of making the interpretation known to the king, and that you may understand the thoughts of your mind.

30 But as for me, this mystery has not been revealed to me for any wisdom residing in me more than *in any other* living man, but for the purpose of making the interpretation known to the king, and that you may understand the thoughts of your mind.

30 As for me, this secret was made known to me, not because my own wisdom is greater than anyone else alive, but in order that the meaning may be made known to the king, and that you might understand the thoughts of your heart.

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 did not do or merit anything in order to receive the dream and interpretation; it wasn't due to his education, upbringing, or anything other than grace from God.

- "...for the purpose" - God gave the dream to Nebuchadnezzar for a specific purpose; God targeted this dream for Nebuchadnezzar because he was the first Gentile king during the Times of the Gentiles

- It was important for Nebuchadnezzar to understand the role of God in Daniel's words because he was to be the first Gentile king in a significant period of history, namely "The Times of the Gentiles," a period during which Gentile nations would dominate Israel, that would last until the Messiah would subjugate Gentile power under His reign.

(d) Dream and interpretation (2:31-45)

(i) Dream (2:31-35)

31 "You, O king, were watching and behold, there was a single great statue; that statue, which was large and of extraordinary radiance, was standing in front of you, and its appearance was awesome.

31 "You, O king, were looking and behold, there was a single great statue; that statue, which was large and of extraordinary splendor, was standing in front of you, and its appearance was awesome.

31 "Your majesty, while you were watching, you observed an enormous statue. This magnificent statue stood before you with extraordinary brilliance. Its appearance was terrifying.

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.

Six Empires

1. Babylon (v36-38) - 605-539 BC
2. Media-Persia (v39a) - 539-331 BC
3. Greece (v39b) - 331-63 BC
4. Rome I (v40) - 322 BC - 476 AD
5. Rome II (v41-43) - Tribulation
6. Kingdom (v44-45) - After Second Coming

(1) Babylon (v36-38) - 605-539 BC

32 The **head** of that statue *was made of fine gold*, its **chest and its arms of silver**, its **belly and its thighs of bronze**,

32 The head of that statue *was made of fine gold*, its breast and its arms of silver, its belly and its thighs of bronze,

32 That statue had a head made of pure gold, with its chest and arms made of silver, its abdomen and thighs made of bronze,

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

- "...head...of fine gold" - describes Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonian Empire

- "...chest and its arms of silver" - describes Cyrus and the Medo-Persian Empire

— Medo-Persia is described as a bear, raised up on one side, with three ribs in its mouth

— In Dan 8, Medo-Persia is described as a ram with two horns, one higher than the other; the ram went to the west, north and south, and no animal could confront it (8:3-4)

- "...belly and its thighs made of bronze" - describes the Greek/Hellenist Empire and Alexander the Great

33 its **legs of iron**, *and* its **feet partly of iron and partly of clay**.

33 its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay.

33 its legs made of iron, and its feet made partly of iron and partly of clay.

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

- "...legs of iron" - the Roman Empire, in two parts, and "eastern" leg and a "western" leg

— The eastern leg began first (133 BC), and was already in place when the formal beginning of the Roman Empire occurred in 31 BC. By that time, Rome had extended its eastern leg to the Euphrates, and later into Assyria.

— The Battle of Actium (31 BC) resulted in the *formal* beginning of the Roman Empire (east and west), with Augustus becoming the sole ruler, but the eastern leg had already been in

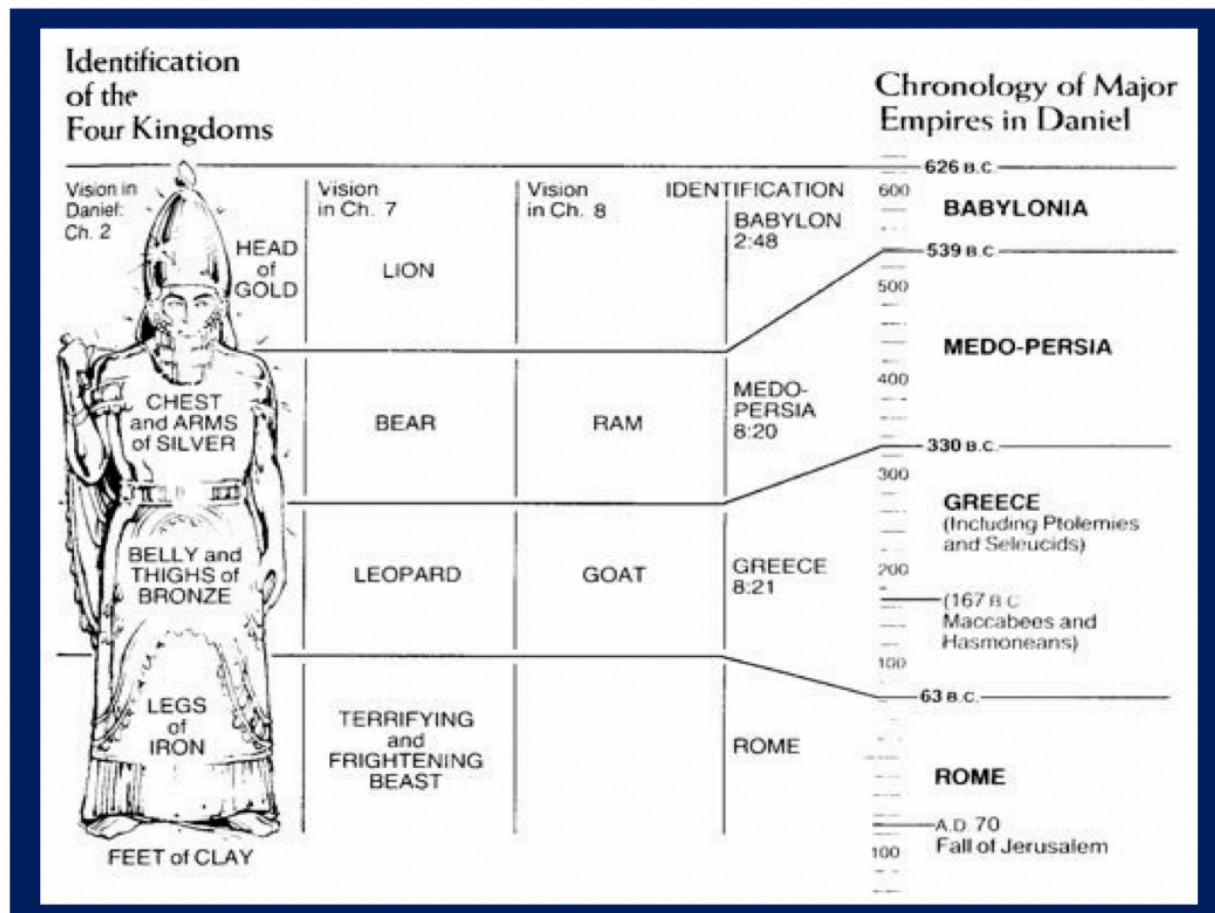
existence for 102 years.

- "...feet partly of iron and partly of clay" - this is Rome "phase 2" or the "revived Roman Empire"; it includes both eastern and western legs, but the iron has clay mixed in

— The feet are differentiated from the legs; the legs represent the east and west "legs" of the original Roman Empire. The feet, composed of iron mixed with clay, represent the east and west "legs" of the revived Roman Empire, which is future.

The metal increase in strength (silver is stronger than gold; bronze is stronger than silver; iron is stronger than bronze) while the decrease in value (gold is more valuable than silver; silver more valuable than bronze; bronze more valuable than iron). The character of the metals, in value, weight and hardness, speaks to the degeneration of mankind through the ages, as introduced in Gen 4. This sentiment is not echoed in humanistic anthropology and the theory of evolution; in fact, it teaches just the opposite.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S DREAM STATUE					
Head	Gold	Valuable	Soft	Self-contained unit	Heavy
Chest and arms	Silver	Less valuable	Harder	1 unit & 2 parts	Lighter
Abdomen	Bronze	Even less valuable	Even harder	1 unit & 2 different parts	Even lighter
Lower legs	Iron	Still less valuable	Still harder	2 parts	Still lighter
Feet and toes	Iron & clay	Least valuable	Very hard and very soft	2 parts & 10 segments	Lightest



The fulfillment will be in the decrease of the character of authority and rule. Babylon was an absolute monarchy with the monarch above the law. In the Medo-Persian Empire, the monarch was not above the law; he did not have the authority to change his own decrees. The Hellenic kings had no dynastic or royal right to rule; they ruled by force of conquest and personal gifts. Imperial Rome was a republic which degenerated into mob rule; Rome ruled by force merging with the imperial form of government. Yet there will be an increase in strength of one empire over the other.

34 You continued watching until a stone was **broken off without hands**, and it struck the statue on its **feet** of iron and clay, and crushed them.

34 You continued looking until a stone was cut out without hands, and it struck the statue on its feet of iron and clay and crushed them.

34 "As you were watching, a rock was quarried—but not with human hands—and it struck the iron and clay feet of the statue, breaking them to pieces.

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.

- "...without hands" - not of human origin; it will not be human manipulation or strategy that will bring this kingdom into existence...it will be the Word of God (Cf. v45)
- "...feet" - the stone strikes the image at the feet, or the latter stage of its existence, not on the upper legs (thighs)
— This implies that the stone wipes out the revived Roman Empire, represented by the two feet

35 Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold were crushed to pieces all at the same time, and they were like chaff from the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away so that not a trace of them was found. But the stone that struck the statue became a great mountain and filled the entire earth.

35 Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver and the gold were crushed all at the same time and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away so that not a trace of them was found. But the stone that struck the statue became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.

35 Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold were broken in pieces together and became like chaff from a summer threshing floor that the breeze carries away without leaving a trace. Then the rock that struck the statue grew into a huge mountain and filled the entire earth.

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.

Post-millennialists and some amilenialist interpreters regard the stone as representing Jesus Christ in His first coming who, by introducing the Christian gospel, assured the ultimate victory of the saints over the evil powers of Gentile political rule. In amillennialism this is fulfilled in the second coming of Christ and the eternal state. In post-millennialism it is consummated in the thousand-year glorious period of spiritual triumph, which they view as culminating in the second coming of Christ. Both the amillennial and post-millennial interpretations, of course, require considerable spiritualization. Nothing is more clear from history than that the Roman Empire fell apart from internal decay and from invasion of Barbarian hosts from the north rather than from Christian influences. There is little evidence that the church as such constituted any decisive factor in the downfall of the Roman Empire, and it is certainly not true that the church grew and filled the whole earth as the imagery of the interpretation requires. This interpretation, therefore, requires considerable imagination and elasticity and a non-literal interpretation of the prophecy.
[Walvoord]

Nebuchadnezzar's Dream

Daniel 2

Gold

Silver

Brass

Iron

Iron + Clay

Babylon

606 BC – 539 BC

Persia

539 BC – 332 BC

Greece

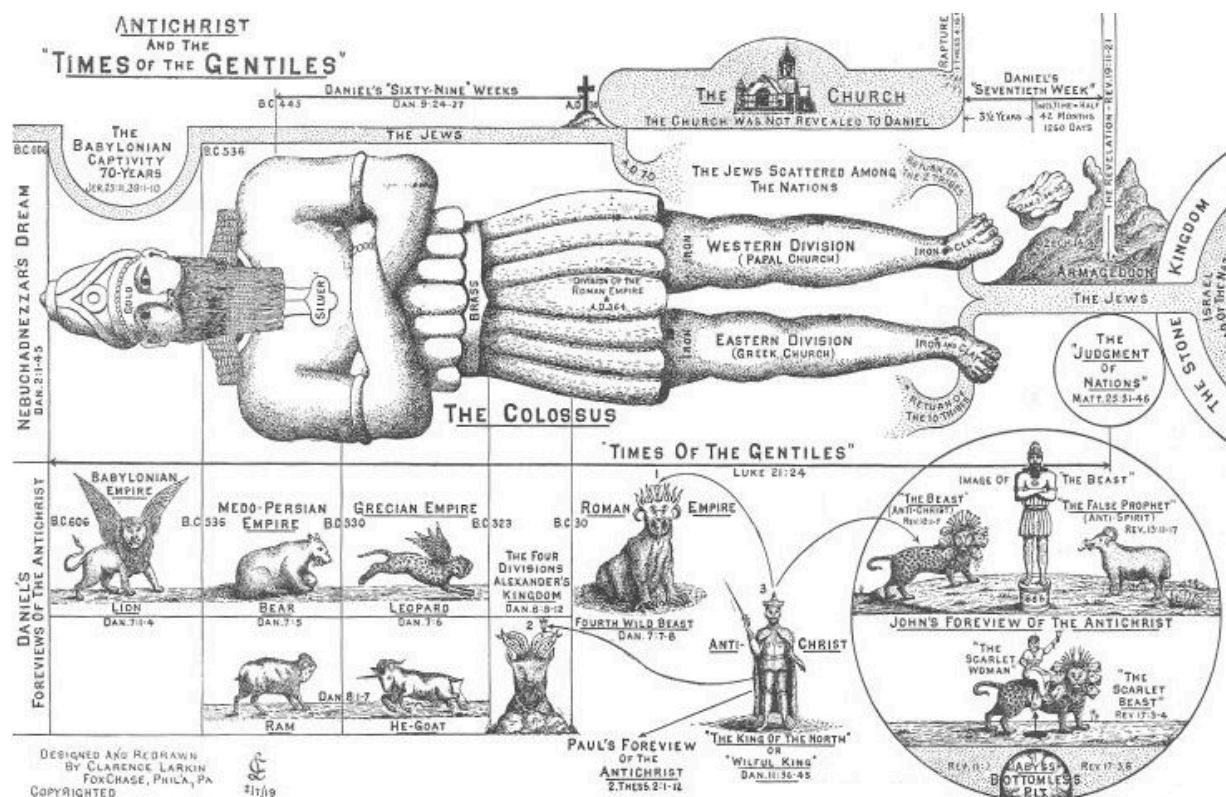
332 BC – 68 BC

Rome I

68 BC – ?

“Rome II”





(ii) Interpretation (2:36-45)

The 1st Gentile Empire: Babylon (v36-38) - 605-539 BC

36 "This was the dream; and *now* we will tell its **interpretation** before the king.

36 "This was the dream; now we will tell its interpretation before the king.

36 "This was the dream, and we'll now relate its meaning to the king.

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

- Daniel carefully distinguishes the dream (v31-35) from its interpretation (v36-45)

- Through his interpretation of the dream, God will lay out (through Daniel) a time period called the Times of the Gentiles

— It's a time period between Zedekiah (the last king of Israel/Judah) and the Second Coming, when there is no king reigning on David's Throne in Jerusalem (Luke 21:24)

- "...interpretation" - Daniel told the king his dream, and now is going to tell him the interpretation

— The Bible is a self-interpreting book; if there is something in the Bible that puzzles you, be patient because in the course of time, the Bible will interpret itself.

— Many Christians are impatient while reading Scripture, and because they want an answer to their question right now, they use their unsanctified imaginations, their carnal minds, to come up with their own interpretation or opinion.

37 You, O king, are the **king of kings**, to whom **the God of heaven has given** the **kingdom**, the **power**, the **strength**, and the **honor**;

37 You, O king, are the king of kings, to whom the God of heaven has given the kingdom, the power, the strength and the glory;

37 You, your majesty, king of kings—to whom the God of heaven has given the kingdom, the power, the strength, and the glory,

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

- "...king of kings" - Nebuchadnezzar was the supreme authority in the world in his day (Cf. Ezek 26:7)

— Earlier, Jeremiah had warned the kings of Edom, Moab, Ammon, Tyre, and Sidon that God had given Nebuchadnezzar sovereignty over the entire earth, including the animals (Jer 27:6-7,14)

— While the extent of his empire was not as great as those that followed him, he exercised absolute control as no one did after him

- "...the God of heaven has given" - who gave Nebuchadnezzar his kingdom, power, strength and glory? — God. He is only king of Babylon because God put him into that position.

— "the God of heavens" (v18,28) had given this mighty monarch his position. The king ruled under the authority of a higher, infinitely more powerful, Ruler.

— One of the points Daniel is making to Nebuchadnezzar is that all that he has (kingdom, power, strength, glory) was given to him by God

— Nebuchadnezzar doesn't heed this lesson and goes on an ego trip; then God judges his pride (Cf. Dan 4). After his seven-year hiatus, Nebuchadnezzar writes Daniel 4 and posts it throughout the world.

- "...kingdom" - sovereignty, symbolized by the head on the statue

- "...power" - symbolized by the weight of the head

- "...strength" - the head as head of the body

- "...honor" - its value as gold

38 and wherever the sons of mankind live, *or* the animals of the field, *or* the birds of the sky, **He has handed *them* over to you and has made you ruler over them all. You are the head of gold.**

38 and wherever the sons of men dwell, *or* the beasts of the field, *or* the birds of the sky, He has given *them* into your hand and has caused you to rule over them all. You are the head of gold.

38 so that wherever people, wild animals, *or* birds of the sky live, he has placed them under your control, giving you dominion over them all—you're that head of gold.

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.

- "...He has handed *them* over to you and has made you ruler over them all" - God had given Nebuchadnezzar everything that he had...his power, his authority and his position

— At the time of Creation, the right to rule over the earth was given man, who was to have dominion over it and all the creatures in it (Gen 1:26)

— Here Nebuchadnezzar, by divine appointment, was helping fulfill what God had planned for man

— The actual grant given to Nebuchadnezzar included the whole inhabited earth, but he did not chose to exercise this rule (Jer 27:5-8; Ezek 26:7-14)

- "...You are the head of gold" - we don't have to use our unsanctified imaginations to interpret who the head of gold is because Daniel tells us directly (Cf. 4:22)

— It was with this empire that the Times of the Gentiles began, when Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Jerusalem and the Solomonic Temple in 586 BC. Thus Babylon was the first of four Gentile empires to dominate Jerusalem.

— In Dan 7, Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonian Empire are symbolized by a lion with eagle's wings. The wings were plucked, it was lifted from the earth and made to stand on feet as a man.

The "head of gold" aptly described Nebuchadnezzar. It also symbolized the kingdom over which he ruled (v39). Nebuchadnezzar ruled about 45 years (605-560 BC), and his empire only lasted another 21 years. Nebuchadnezzar's father, Nabopolassar, founded the Neo-Babylon Empire in 627 BC, and it fell to the Persians in 539 BC. So it existed for only 88 years, though the Old Babylonian Empire had its roots in Babel (Gen 11:1-9).

The Babylonian Empire 606-539 BC



(2) Media-Persia (v39a) - 539-331 BC

(3) Greece (v39b) - 331-63 BC

39 And after you **anotherkingdom** will arise **inferior** to you, then another **thirdkingdom** of bronze, which will rule over all the earth.

39 After you there will arise another kingdom inferior to you, then another third kingdom of bronze, which will rule over all the earth.

39 "After you, another kingdom will arise that is inferior to yours, and then a third kingdom of bronze will arise to rule all the earth.

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.

- "...another kingdom" - the Media-Persian Empire, led by Cyrus the Great (Cf. 5:28; 8:20; 10:13)

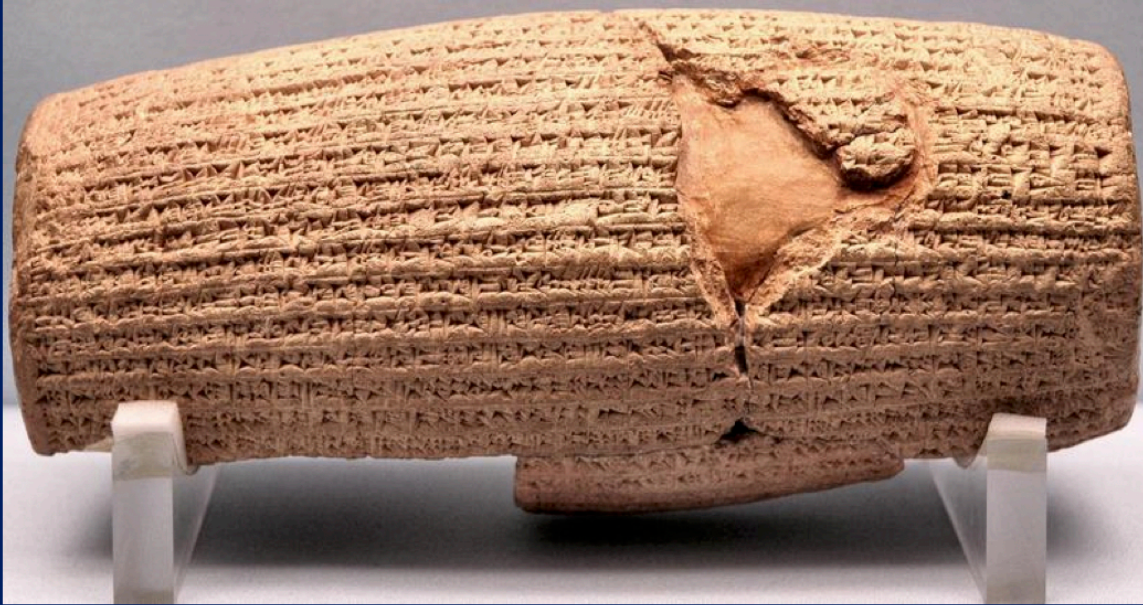
— The two arms of silver, united into the breast of silver, represents the two nations of the Medes and the Persians, who established the Media-Persian Empire

— It covered a larger geographical area than the Babylonian Empire, and it lasted longer (539-331 BC, 208 years)

- "...inferior" - this puzzles people because Persia conquered more territory than Babylon
- Babylon was centrally controlled by one man (Nebuchadnezzar); Media-Persia decentralized authority among other kings/rulers
- It is under the Persian empire that Israel's Babylonian captivity would end.
- Media-Persia is declared to be inferior to the Babylonian Empire, and actually was (Cf. 5:28,31).
- It lacked the inner unity of Babylon because the Medes and the Persians, though united, never fused into one people, and the government was not above the mistakes of law
- The Media-Persian monarchs could not annul a law once it went into effect (Cf. 6:8,12; Book of Esther); this restricted the absolute authority of the king

Three Returns							
	Date	Duration	Persian king	Jewish leader	Scripture	Purpose	Number of returnees
1 st return	538–515 BC	23 years	Cyrus (Is 44:28–45:1)	<u>Zerubbabel</u>	Ezra 1–6; Is 44:28	Rebuilding the temple	50,000
2 nd return	458–457 BC	2 years	Artaxerxes	Ezra	Ezra 7–10	Adorning of the temple and reforming the people	2,000
3 rd return	444–432 BC	8 years	Artaxerxes	Nehemiah	Nehemiah	Rebuilding the wall	

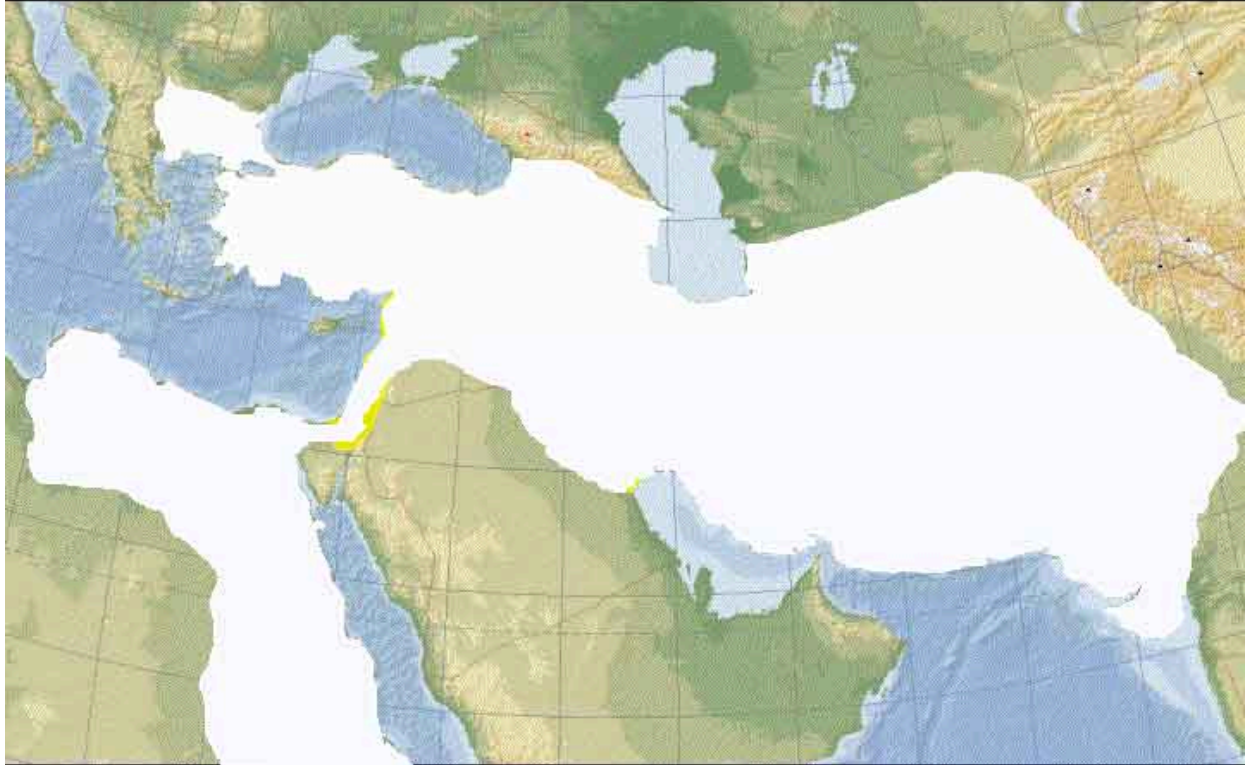
Cyrus Cylinder



- "...third kingdom" - the Greek Empire under Alexander the Great (Cf. 8:20-21; 10:20); this empire wouldn't come into power until long after Daniel was dead
 - The Media-Persian Empire was followed by the Greek (or Hellenist) Empire, symbolized by the belly and two thighs of brass, that territorially embraced both East and West.
 - Its territory was even larger than Media-Persia, and it also lasted longer (331-31 BC, 300 years)
- After Alexander the Great died in 323 BC, the empire split into four parts, and each of Alexander's generals took one piece.
 - Antipater ruled Macedon-Greece
 - Lysimachus governed Thrace-Asia Minor
 - Seleucus headed Asia
 - Ptolemy reigned over Egypt, Cyrenaica, and Palestine
- Greece lacked the unified strength of Persia and Babylonia
 - Its democratic form of government gave more power to the people and less to the rulers
 - The two thighs may also represent Syria and Egypt, which arose out of the Hellenistic Empire and controlled Jewish territory and Jerusalem. Its grant was the same as that of Babylon, but unlike Babylon, it did choose to take the grant.

The Persian Empire

539-332 BC



The Greek Empire 332 – 68 BC



The Interpretation of the Fourth Beast

As in Dan 7, the Fourth Empire is seen as going through several stages, though not always the same stages found in Dan 7. The Fourth Empire is first seen in its "United Stage" (2:40; 7:23a), the first stage that its diverseness from the other three empires is seen. This is followed by a second stage, the "Two Division Stage" (2:41).

This will be followed by the "One World Government" stage (7:23), then the "Ten-Division Stage" (2:42-43; 7:24) which will be followed by the final stage, the "Antichrist Stage" (7:25-26; Rev 13:3-10). These verses state that he will arise after the Ten-Division Stage (2:42-43; 7:24). While the Fourth Empire is diverse from the previous three, the little horn is diverse from the other ten (7:24c). He eventually puts down three of these kings (7:24d). See notes at the end of Dan 7 for a full explanation or chronology of the five stages.

4. The Fourth Empire, The Empire of Imperialism
 - a. The United Stage, The Roman Empire
 - b. The Two-Division Stage, The East-West Balance of Power
 - c. The One-World Government Stage

- d. The Ten-Division Stage, The Ten Kingdoms
- e. The Antichrist Stage, Absolute Imperialism

(4) Rome I (v40) - 63 BC - 70 AD (Cf. Dan 2:40; 7:23)

40 Then there will be a **fourth kingdom** as **strong** as iron; just as iron **smashes** and **crushes** everything, so, like iron that **crushes**, it will **smash** and **crush** all these things.

40 Then there will be a fourth kingdom as strong as iron; inasmuch as iron crushes and shatters all things, so, like iron that breaks in pieces, it will crush and break all these in pieces.

40 Then there will be a fourth kingdom, as strong as iron. Just as all things are broken to pieces and shattered by iron, so it will shatter and crush everything.

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.

- "...fourth kingdom" - Rome (phase 1); historical Rome; Rome defeated the last vestige of the Greek Empire in 31 BC

— There is no reference to Rome elsewhere in Daniel; we understand the fourth kingdom to be Rome because of history. It's a matter of historical fact that Greece was replaced by Rome.

— Rome moved into Israel around 63 BC and destroyed Jerusalem and pushed the Jews out of the land of Israel in 70 AD

— Rome (legs of iron) are represented by an eastern division and western division

- "...strong...smashes...crushes...crushes...smash...crush" - the descriptors here in Daniel accurately describe what we know about Rome from history

— Rome did not invent crucifixion (the Assyrians did), but they perfected it

— It lasted longer than any other empire—the western leg until 476 AD and the eastern leg until 1453 AD

— Both legs crushed all opposition with brutal strength greater than all its predecessors

Even though each succeeding empire controlled more territory than the preceding one, deterioration from one to the next is obvious. This can be seen in the quality of the metals used to describe each kingdom, the specific gravity of these metals, the relative position of each part of the image (the head having more honor than the feet), the division of sovereignty (one man and kingdom, to two kingdoms, Media-Persia, to four parts, following Alexander the Great's death, to ten toes), and the statement of Scripture (v39).

The Roman Empire 68 BC – 476 AD



(5) The Kingdom of the Antichrist (v41-43) - Tribulation

"Two Division Stage": 364 AD-present

41 And in that you saw the feet and toes, partly of potter's clay and partly of iron, it will be a **divided** kingdom; but it will have within it some of the toughness of iron, since you saw the iron mixed with common clay.

41 In that you saw the feet and toes, partly of potter's clay and partly of iron, it will be a divided kingdom; but it will have in it the toughness of iron, inasmuch as you saw the iron mixed with common clay.

41 "The feet and toes that you saw, made partly of potter's clay and partly of iron, represent a divided kingdom. It will still have the strength of iron, in that you saw iron mixed with clay.

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 "Two-Division Stage" of the Roman Empire still has the strength of iron
- "...divided" - fragmented

- We know from history that many of the countries have had their day ruling...England, French, Dutch, etc.
- The last empire (Roman) disintegrated in 476 AD and has never been an empire again

The “One World Government Stage” fits here chronologically (Cf. Dan 7:23); see notes at the end of Dan 7.

“The Ten Division Stage” (Dan 2:42-43; Dan 7:24)

42 And *just as* the **toes** of the feet *were* **partly of iron and partly of pottery**, so some of the kingdom will be strong, and part of it will be fragile.

42 As the toes of the feet *were* partly of iron and partly of pottery, so some of the kingdom will be strong and part of it will be brittle.

42 Just as their toes and feet are part iron and part clay, so will the kingdom be both strong and brittle.

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” - same as the ten horns (Dan 7:24; Rev 17:12-18)

- “...partly of iron and partly of pottery” - this part of the image is composed of iron and clay.

— Part of this Ten-Division Stage will be strong, and part will be brittle and weak. This lack of cohesiveness is especially evident in the toes. Unity is impossible and the 10 divisions take place because the different elements will not coalesce.

The Fourth Gentile Empire is unique from all the previous ones. It totally subdues and crushes all that precedes it. It is the Fourth Gentile Empire that is particularly emphasized by the text dealing with the Times of the Gentiles.

43 In that you saw the iron mixed with **common clay**, **they** will combine with one another in their descendants; but **they will not adhere to one another**, just as iron does not combine with pottery.

43 And in that you saw the iron mixed with common clay, they will combine with one another in the seed of men; but they will not adhere to one another, even as iron does not combine with pottery.

43 Just as you saw iron mixed with clay, so they will mix themselves with human offspring. Furthermore, they won't remain together, just as iron doesn't mix with clay.

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.

- "...common clay" - clay generally refers to people; clay that is made from mire or dust
- The "common clay" mingles themselves with the seed of men
- "...they" - personal pronoun that refers to the clay; "they" has to refer to something/someone other than the seed of men
- The context of the dream seems to imply that "they" constitute a significant *political* constituency
- This constituency is meaningful enough that they keep this empire from gaining the strength that it's seeking
- The identity of the fourth empire is not given in this passage; rather, we need to look at Dan 7 to understand its identity (remember Dan 2-7 is arranged in a chiasm)
- Based on Dan 7:23, this empire is something much larger than Rome or the Roman Empire ("whole earth"; this empire will be the future kingdom of the Antichrist.
- The 10 toes are interpreted for us in Dan 7:24; Rev 17:12 as a 10-king confederacy that somehow manages to rule over the entire world.
- "...they will not adhere to one another" - this refers to people groups with totally different cultures and backgrounds who will be thrown together into a common bond. The bond of people will not be cohesive.
- The final form of the Antichrist's kingdom will include diverse elements, whether it refers to race, political idealism, or sectional interests. This will prevent the final form of the kingdom to have any sort of real unity.
- This is why the empire will break up in a huge civil war where forces from the south, east and north contend with the ruler of the Mediterranean region for supremacy (Cf. Dan 11:36-45)

Dan 7:23-24:

23 "This is what he said: 'The fourth beast will be a fourth kingdom on the earth which will be different from all the *other* kingdoms, and will devour the whole earth and trample it down and crush it.

24 As for the ten horns, out of this kingdom ten kings will arise; and another will arise after them, and he will be different from the previous ones and will humble three kings.

Verse 42 deals with a later phase or outgrowth of this fourth empire, symbolized by the feet and 10 toes—made up of iron and clay, a fragile base for the huge monument. The text clearly implies that this final phase will be marked by some sort of federation rather than by a powerful single realm. The iron may possibly represent the influence of the old Roman culture and tradition, and the pottery may represent the inherent weakness in a socialist society based on relativism in morality and philosophy. Out of this mixture of iron and clay come weakness and confusion, pointing to the approaching day of doom. Within the scope

of v43 are disunity, class struggle, and even civil war, resulting from the failure of a hopelessly divided society to achieve an integrated world-order. The iron and pottery may coexist, but they cannot combine into a strong and durable world-order. [Archer, "Daniel", pp 47-48]

When Christ returns to the earth, He will "strike down the nations" (Rev 19:15). The Lord's own eternal and universal kingdom then follows (Rev 20-22). Thus the same general sequence of events delineated in Dan 2; 7; 11; 12 is found also in Revelation. Additionally, the same sequence is found in Jer 30-31; Zech 12-14; Matt 24.

(6) The Kingdom of the King (v44-45) - After Second Coming

44 And in the days of **those kings** the God of heaven will set up **a kingdom** which will never be destroyed, and *that* kingdom will **not be left for another people**; it will crush and **put an end to all these kingdoms**, but it will itself endure **forever**.

44 In the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which will never be destroyed, and *that* kingdom will not be left for another people; it will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, but it will itself endure forever.

44 "During the reigns of those kings, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed, nor its sovereignty left in the hands of another people. It will shatter and crush all of these kingdoms, and it will stand forever.

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.

- Daniel is now talking here about the stone that will come and destroy the statue. He explains what the "rock" (v34-35), that crushed the feet and toes of the statue and completely destroyed it, signifies.

— The fifth kingdom will be established by God Himself, following the final phase of the fourth kingdom (Cf. Ps 2:7-9; Rev 11:15)

— It seems inconsistent to view this kingdom as beginning with Christ's first coming. Rather, it fits better to Christ's Second Coming. This is the view of normative dispensationalists, in contrast to progressive dispensationalists and historic premillennialists. These latter two groups see the Church as the first stage in the kingdom of God, the second stage being the millennial reign of Christ.

- "...those kings" - the 10-king confederacy of the Antichrist

- "...a kingdom" - this is the same kingdom offered up to Israel on a silver platter during Jesus' ministry

- "...not be left for another people" - the fifth kingdom will not be Gentile, but Jewish. A Jewish kingdom will destroy and rule the world after millennia of Gentile rule.

- "...put an end to all these kingdoms" - though the differing metals within the image represent four chronologically successive kingdoms, the single statue suggests that these kingdoms, though diverse in their identity, actually comprise one entity, a world empire opposed to God

— This explains why the entire statue is depicted as destroyed by the rock with a single blow delivered to the feet (v34-35,44b) and why this event is said to occur "in the days of these kings," that is, the kings of the four kingdoms symbolized in the vision (v44a).

- "...forever" - for 1,000 years? No, forever. Satan will just be bound for 1,000 years.

— This kingdom will never suffer destruction or be succeeded by another kingdom, as all the preceding kingdoms had. It will begin with the Millennium and continue forever into the Eternal State.

— Some say we're in this period now. Really? If so, then Satan's chain is too long.

45 Just as you saw that a **stone** was broken off from the **mountain without hands**, and that it crushed the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold, the great God has made known to the king what will take place in the future; so the dream is certain and its interpretation is trustworthy."

45 Inasmuch as you saw that a stone was cut out of the mountain without hands and that it crushed the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver and the gold, the great God has made known to the king what will take place in the future; so the dream is true and its interpretation is trustworthy."

45 Now, just as you saw that the stone was cut out of the mountain without human hands—and that it crushed the iron, bronze, clay, silver, and gold to pieces—so also the great God has revealed to the king what will take place after this. Your dream will come true, and its meaning will prove trustworthy."

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.

- God will one day intervene and triumph over evil in world history.

- "...stone" - stone or rock used throughout Scripture as an idiom of Jesus Christ (Cf. Ps 18:2; Is 8:14; 28:16; Zech 3:9; Matt 21:44; 1 Peter 2:6-8)

— The "Rock" that followed them was Christ (1 Cor 10:4)

- "...mountain" - the Chaldean form of the Hebrew word is translated "mountain"; it should be translated "rock" as in Hab 1:12

— The "Rock" represents both the King and the kingdom

— Whenever "mountain" is used symbolically, it is always a symbol of a king, kingdom or throne; government (Cf. Is 2:2; 27:13; Jer 51:25; Micah 4:1)

- "...without hands" - a supernatural stone, not from human origin (Cf. v34)
 - Daniel clearly underscores that this dream and interpretation is prophetic
 - We learned earlier that the dream was from God and the interpretation was from God.
- This isn't just some type of moral lesson.

Dan 2:44-45 is Future

- Christianity did not suddenly fill the whole earth
- Christ did not destroy Rome
- There were not 10 simultaneous kings at the time of Christ
- Christ was not the smiting stone
- Christ did not destroy all the kingdoms of the world
- The Church is not a political kingdom



Merill F. Unger

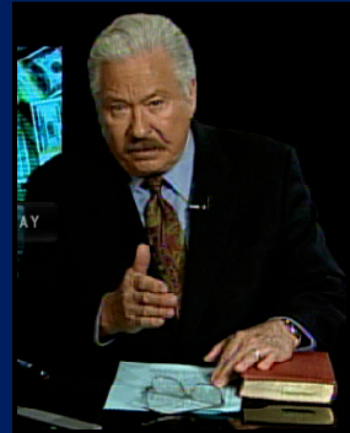
Unger's Commentary on the Old Testament (Chicago: Moody, 1981; reprint, Chatanooga, TN: AMG, 2002), 1643.

"Hence, the iron kingdom with its feet of iron and clay (cf. 3:33-35, 40, 44) and the nondescript beast of 7:7-8 envision...the form in which it will exist *after the church period*, when God will resume His dealing with the *nation* Israel. How futile for conservative scholars to ignore that fact and to seek to find literal fulfillment of those prophecies in history or in the church, when those predictions refer to events yet future and have no application whatever to the church."

Hal Lindsey

The Road to Holocaust, 269

Bestselling author Hal Lindsey warned what could happen to the church in the last days if she began to see herself as the establisher of God's kingdom: "The last days of the church on the earth may be largely wasted seeking to accomplish a task that only the LORD Himself can and will do directly."



This passage predicts a time called the Times of the Gentiles, a time when the nation of Israel will be trampled down by various Gentile powers. We are still in the Times of the Gentiles today. It's final form will be the empire of the Antichrist, which is yet future. Only after the Times of the Gentiles have run its course will the kingdom come. It is after the Times of the Gentiles that the "stone cut without human hands" will crush the Antichrist's empire, then the stone (the kingdom) will grow and grow until it fills the entire earth.

So Daniel is saying that we should not expect the kingdom, represented as the stone cut without human hands, to manifest itself on the earth until after the Times of the Gentiles are completed. We can't expect the Davidic kingdom to be established until the Antichrist's kingdom (New World Order) has come and runs its course, and the Tribulation period (70th Week of Daniel) to run its course. We're currently living in a time period before the Antichrist's empire has been established, and before the Tribulation period. We can see how the Antichrist's empire will be established through the current push toward globalism, but it isn't here yet.

Dan 2 is the Times of the Gentiles from a Gentile point of view; Dan 7 is the Jewish perspective of the Times of the Gentiles.

If you ask a Kingdom Now theologian about this passage, here are the answers you'll get.
Mr. Kingdom Now theologian...

- Is the Head of Gold a literal empire, with literal land, and a literal king who reigned on the earth? — Yes.
- Are the Chest/Arms of Silver a literal empire, with literal land, and a literal king who reigned on the earth? — Yes.
- Are the Belly/Thighs of Bronze a literal empire, with literal land, and a literal king who reigned on the earth? — Yes.
- Are the Legs of Iron a literal empire, with literal land, and a literal king who reigned on the earth? — Yes.
- Is the Stone Cut Without Human Hands a literal empire, with literal land, and a literal king who reigned on the earth? — Nope.

See [The Coming Kingdom 59 Is Jesus Reigning on David's Throne? - Part 6 \(Dan 2:44-45\)](#) for more details on the Times of the Gentiles and the timing of the kingdom.

They take everything in the statue in a literal sense, but then when it comes to the stone cut without human hands, they switch their method of interpretation right in the middle of the passage, to make it say that Jesus setup an invisible kingdom at His first advent. This is how you recognize how something doesn't work...when you don't interpret verses in the same passage in the same manner.

There are four implications of this vision [Wiersbe]:

1. God is in control of history
2. Human enterprises decline as time goes by
3. It will be difficult for things to hold together at the end of the age
4. Jesus Christ will return, destroy His enemies, and establish His kingdom

Following the Fourth Gentile Kingdom, God will set up His own Kingdom. The Kingdom is set up during the Ten-Division Stage (v44a) and this brings to an end the domination of other kingdoms (v44b). In the end, the image of Gentile domination will be smashed at the Second Coming. Once Gentile domination (Times of the Gentiles) is smashed by the Stone, the Kingdom of God is set up by this Stone.

1. The Babylonian Empire
2. The Medo-Persian Empire
3. The Hellenist Empire
4. The Fourth Gentile (Roman) Empire
 - a. The United Stage
 - b. The Two-Division Stage
 - c. The Ten-Division Stage

5. The Messianic Kingdom

The "stone cut without human hands" IS NOT Christ's first advent:

1. The stone will become a mountain suddenly, not gradually
 - Christianity did not suddenly fill "the whole earth" at Christ's First Advent
2. Though Christ came in the days of the Roman Empire, He did not destroy it
3. During Christ's time on earth, the Roman Empire did not have 10 kings at once
 - Nebuchadnezzar's statue suggests that when Christ comes to establish His kingdom, 10 rulers will be in existence and will be destroyed by Him.
4. Though Christ is now the chief Cornerstone to the church (Eph 2:20) and "a stone that causes [unbelievers] to stumble" (1 Peter 2:8), He is not yet a smiting Stone as He will be when He comes again.
5. The Stone (Messiah) will crush and end all the kingdoms of the world.
 - But the Church has not and will not conquer the world's kingdoms
6. The Church is not a kingdom with a political realm, but the future Millennium will be.

(e) Nebuchadnezzar's reaction (2:46-49)

(i) Homage (2:46-47)

(a) To Daniel (2:46)

46 Then King Nebuchadnezzar fell on his face and paid humble respect to Daniel, and gave orders to present to him an offering and incense.

46 Then King Nebuchadnezzar fell on his face and did homage to Daniel, and gave orders to present to him an offering and fragrant incense.

46 Then King Nebuchadnezzar fell on his face before Daniel, paid honor to him, and commanded that an offering and incense be presented on his behalf.

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.

- Daniel faithfully communicated the vision and interpretation that God gave him, so God rewarded and elevated him through Nebuchadnezzar

— Over and over in Scripture, God promotes, enriches, and favors people with a mindset and lifestyle of faithfulness in things, that at first glance, seen very insignificant (Cf. Luke 16:10).

— When Samuel was anointing Jesse's sons to be the next king of Israel, Jesse didn't even bring David along because he was so insignificant in terms of his size and his occupation (tending sheep). David was faithful in something very small, and God rewarded him.

— Joseph, the same pattern. Everywhere he went he encountered adversity, but everywhere he went, he was faithful to where God put him. Finally the day came for

promotion and through his faithfulness through adversity, God elevated him to second in command in Egypt.

— You might be involved in something that isn't promoted or popular, but God has called you to do it. Whether or not God will expand your boundaries in that area has everything to do with how faithful you are to execute what you're doing, however small it may be.

— In Daniel's case, it was obedience in the face of death and God blessed him with prominence throughout his entire life, even into his very old age

— The Bible teaches "pay day some day" — maybe your promotion or prominence will be in this life, like Daniel, maybe it will be in the next life...that is up to the sovereignty of God (Gal 6:9; Heb 6:10).

(b) To God (2:47)

47 The king responded to Daniel and said, "**Your God** truly is a God of gods and a Lord of kings and a revealer of secrets, since you have been able to reveal this secret."

47 The king answered Daniel and said, "Surely your God is a God of gods and a Lord of kings and a revealer of mysteries, since you have been able to reveal this mystery."

47 The king told Daniel, "Truly your God is the God of gods, the Lord of kings, and the Revealer of Secrets, because you were able to reveal this mystery."

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.

- "...Your God" - Nebuchadnezzar recognizes the fact that God was involved in providing Daniel with the content of the dream and the interpretation, but he has not yet come to full knowledge of God (not yet "my God")

— Nebuchadnezzar (likely) becomes a believer by the time the story gets to the end of Dan 4, but his conversion is a *process*

— Daniel planted a seed in Nebuchadnezzar's life in Dan 1-2, culminating with the dream and interpretation

— Evangelism is usually a process, which is why it is analogized to farming (Cf. John 4:35-38; 1 Cor 3:6)

- After Daniel revealed the dream and interpretation to Nebuchadnezzar, he praises and blesses Daniel for the revelation

— Then here (v47), Nebuchadnezzar pivots and begins to direct praise to God

— Notice that he gives no credit to the Babylonian educational system (that Daniel attended for 3 years) or to his magicians and sorcerers, who failed to understand the dream or the interpretation.

(ii) Promotion (2:48-49)

(a) Of Daniel (2:48)

48 Then the king promoted Daniel and gave him many great gifts, and he made him ruler over the entire province of Babylon, and chief prefect over all the **wise men of Babylon**.

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

48 Then the king promoted Daniel to a high position and lavished many great gifts on him, including making him ruler over the entire province of Babylon and chief administrator over the advisors of Babylon.

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.

- God is in the promotion business for His faithful servants (Cf. Gen 41:37f). There's no need for believers to promote themselves (Cf. 1 Peter 5:6).

- "...the wise men of Babylon" - forerunners of the Magi, who came to seek the Messiah (see note: Why Were the Magi Seeking Jesus? below)

— Normally this position would have been given to a Chaldean. The fact that Nebuchadnezzar gave it to a Jewish captive shows the tremendous respect that Daniel had earned with this revelation

— The team Daniel would now lead previously had a death sentence from the king; Daniel saved their bacon

— Imagine the conflict of envy and thankfulness of the former advisors...their lives were saved, but they were exposed as frauds at the same time

- We have no idea what God is doing in our lives. If God showed us what He's going to do because of your obedience this week, it would fill us with so much pride that we'd think much higher of ourselves than we should.

— The movement of God through the life of an obedient believer becomes so obvious. God wants to use our lives for eternal purposes.

Why Were the Magi Seeking Jesus?

Back during the wilderness wanderings, Balak, the king of Moab, hired Balaam to curse Israel as the Israelites were making their way from Sinai through Moab, toward the Promised Land. Balak didn't like all these Israelites coming through his territory, so he hired a prophet named Balaam to curse Israel.

So Balaam attempted to curse Israel seven times, but every time he opened his mouth, he would speak blessings and not curses. The fourth oracle that Balaam gives (Num 24:17) says, "...A star shall appear from Jacob, A scepter shall rise from Israel...". This is a messianic prophecy.

Balaam was from Mesopotamia (Deut 23:4), where the wise men came from. This connection of the Messiah to a star was passed down through the generations for 1500 years. Daniel is now promoted into the ranks of the Magi (v48). Later, Daniel will receive a messianic prophecy that will provide the exact date that the Messiah will present Himself to the nation (Dan 9:24-27).

God knew that He would need someone to honor the birth of the Messiah, because He knew Israel would not do so. So He used pagan Magi from 350 miles away, who learned of the birth of the Messiah 1500 years before it happened, to pay homage to the birth of His Son.

(b) Of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego (2:49)

49 And Daniel made a request of the king, and he appointed Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego over the administration of the province of Babylon, while Daniel was at the king's court.

49 And Daniel made request of the king, and he appointed Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego over the administration of the province of Babylon, while Daniel was at the king's court.

49 Moreover, Daniel requested that the king appoint Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego administrators over the province of Babylon, while Daniel himself remained in the royal court.

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.

- Daniel's three friends were involved in this event as much as Daniel (Cf. v17-18)

— Daniel remembered his "team"; he remembered his friends just like God does (Prov 18:24)

— Daniel's team was rewarded with authority in the kingdom, just like we will be someday (Rev 5:10)

- Daniel's friends were placed into authoritative positions in administering the province of Babylon; Daniel was in the king's court (a cabinet level position)

— God was preparing for the arrival of thousands of exiled Judahites (in 597 and later in 586 BC) by placing men in authority who were sympathetic to their needs (Cf. Joseph in Egypt)

Takeaways from Daniel 2

- The Mosaic Law taught Israel how to live inside the land
- The examples of the four Hebrew youths taught them how to live outside the land
 - Consecrate themselves to God
 - Live by faith from crisis to crisis entrusting the results to God

- Allow God to promote us in His due time rather than seeking self-serving promotion