

PROPHECIES OF THE BIBLE

2 DANIEL



 The King's Dream



A TERRIBLE NIGHT IN BABYLON

The alarm startled all the king's noblemen that night. The mighty counsellors of the empire were being rounded up for execution. All because of a mysterious dream . . .



Come back in time with us to the 6th century BC. The king of the great Babylonian empire, Nebuchadnezzar, has had a dream (see Daniel, chapter 2). Perceived as a token from the gods, the message was surely one of life and death. The king woke up very distressed from his troubled sleep only to find that he couldn't recall the dream . . . (You know the feeling: dreaming of something so real, so relevant and yet, upon waking, you remember . . . nothing!)

The mighty king felt frustrated, and even fearful. Instantly he summons his go-to guys – the wise men, as per Babylonian protocol, to interpret the dream. Magicians and astrologers appear before him enquiring as to the content of the dream.

King Nebuchadnezzar quickly becomes sceptical of their abilities and pushes them to the next level.

Allow us to use today's language:

If you really are in touch with the realm above, tell me the dream. 'Interpretations' can be made up by anyone . . .

'Humanly impossible!' is their resounding answer! Frustrated, disappointed, and angry, King Nebuchadnezzar promptly orders their immediate execution . . .

The story could have ended here. But enter the young Hebrew, Daniel, junior wise man and prophet of God. Watch as history takes an extraordinary twist.

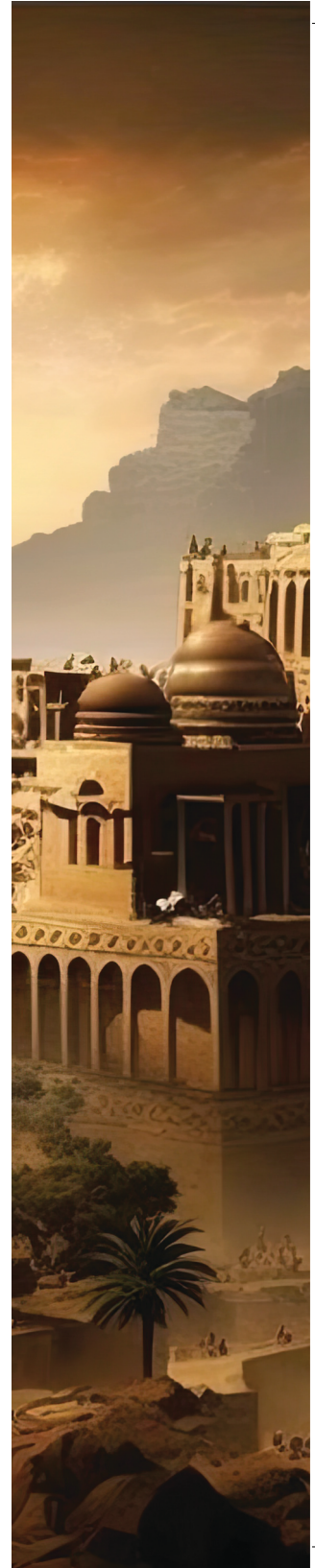
Not initially summoned, yet rounded up for execution too, Daniel boldly asks the king's executioner for a chance to request a reprieve from the king. Permission granted, he turns in prayer to the God of heaven and is given a vision of the exact dream Nebuchadnezzar had.

Daniel understands – the dream is about changing times and seasons, removing kings, and setting up kings (Daniel 2:21). It is a timeline of the world empires from his time (600 BC) until the end of time!

A DREAM OF FUTURE EMPIRES

Going before the king, Daniel introduces the dream, emphasizing that it is all about the future – God revealing to the king:

'what will be in the latter days.'
(Daniel 2:28)





"You, O king, were watching; and behold, a great image! This great image [statue], whose splendor was excellent, stood before you; and its form was awesome.

"This image's head was of fine gold, its chest and arms of silver, its belly and thighs of bronze, its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay.

"You watched while a stone was cut out without hands, which struck the image on its feet of iron and clay, and broke them in pieces.

"Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold were crushed together, and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; the wind carried them away so that no trace of them was found.

"And the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth."

(Daniel 2:31-35)

Wide-eyed, Nebuchadnezzar sits astonished.

Indeed, that was the dream! Described in the finest detail – from the glorious golden head down to those plain iron and clay toes – gold, silver, bronze, iron, clay. And that disturbing stone . . .

'Mighty prophet, what's the interpretation?'

Excited as he now recalls the dream, King Nebuchadnezzar is eager to hear it.





HEAD OF GOLD

Daniel begins his interpretation with the clearest statement: 'You are this head of gold' (Daniel 2:38).

This is music to Nebuchadnezzar's ears! And it is also an indication to us of the starting point of this prophecy that spans over centuries:

BABYLON (605–539 BC).

History confirms that Nebuchadnezzar was the greatest of his dynasty in Babylonia:

'Nebuchadnezzar II, also spelled Nebuchadnezzar II, (born c. 630 – died c. 561 BCE), second and greatest king of the Chaldean dynasty of Babylonia (reigned c. 605 – c. 561 BCE).

*He was known for his military might, the splendour of his capital, Babylon, and his important part in Jewish history.'*¹

Sadly for Nebuchadnezzar, what follows is bad news for him:

'But after you shall arise another kingdom inferior to yours' (Daniel 2:38).

1. *Encyclopædia Britannica*, article 'Nebuchadnezzar-II'.



CHEST AND ARMS OF SILVER

Indeed, Babylon was conquered later by the next empire in the series.

In fact, the fall of Babylon is presented in the fifth chapter of Daniel's writing, as the prophet was serving again with his visionary spiritual gift, this time for the last king of the great empire. On that fateful night Babylon gave way to:

MEDO-PERSIA (539–331 BC).

History confirms the Persian Empire to be the world's first superpower:

'The first Persian Empire, founded by Cyrus the Great around 550 B.C., became one of the largest empires in history . . . was a global hub of culture, religion, science, art and technology for more than 200 years before it fell to the invading armies of Alexander the Great.

...

The first Persian Empire under Cyrus the Great soon became the world's first superpower.¹²

2. History.com, article 'Persian Empire'.





BELLY AND THIGHS OF BRONZE

Daniel boldly continues:

‘Then another, a third kingdom of bronze, which shall rule over all the earth’ (Daniel 2:38).

This third empire in the series, led by the well-known commander-in-chief Alexander the Great, was:

GREECE (331–168 BC).

History confirms again, moving from the world’s first superpower to ‘the Hellenistic world’.

‘Alexander the Great, also known as Alexander III or Alexander of Macedonia . . . king of Macedonia (336–323 BCE), who overthrew the Persian empire, carried Macedonian arms to India, and laid the foundations for the Hellenistic world of territorial kingdoms.’³

3. Encyclopædia Britannica, article ‘Alexander the Great’.



LEGS OF IRON

‘And the fourth kingdom shall be as strong as iron, inasmuch as iron breaks in pieces and shatters everything; and like iron that crushes, that kingdom will break in pieces and crush all the others’ (Daniel 2:40).

The fourth kingdom in Nebuchadnezzar’s dream was an iron-like empire, which can only be:

ROME (168 BC–AD 476).



The Roman Empire had an increasingly absolute dominance over the then-known world. Jesus Christ was even crucified under the Roman rule.

History confirms the key date of moving from bronze to iron, recording the Battle of Pydna (June 22, 168 BCE), as being the ‘decisive military engagement in the Roman victory over Macedonia . . .’⁴

The Roman influence over the entire world is also confirmed, being noted as:

‘the greatest and most influential multicultural empire in world history to date.’⁵

‘The Roman impact on Western and Eastern civilizations lives on. . . . The Western world today derives its intellectual history from the Greeks, but it derives its methods of living, ruling and governing from the Romans.’⁶

THE STATUE'S FINAL STAGE

Now all these empires lie mostly in ruins with their artefacts displayed in the museums of the world. But note – the final part of the statue is currently very much alive. The legs extend to feet and toes with a strange composition: iron and clay.

The prophet explains the symbolism of this mixture: ‘the kingdom shall be divided’ (Daniel 2:41); and its meaning: ‘the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly fragile’ (verse 42).

When Rome fell in AD 476, its territories were divided between different tribes.

4. *Encyclopædia Britannica*, article ‘Battle of Pydna’.

5. *Encyclopedia.com*, article ‘Roman Empire’.

6. *New World Encyclopedia*, article ‘Roman Empire’.





History confirms once more:

'The empire was wracked by internal conflict as well as threats from abroad – particularly from the Germanic tribes now established within the empire's frontiers like the Vandals (their sack of Rome originated the phrase "vandalism").

*Rome eventually collapsed under the weight of its own bloated empire, losing its provinces one by one: Britain around 410; Spain and northern Africa by 430. Attila and his brutal Huns invaded Gaul and Italy around 450, further shaking the foundations of the empire. In September 476, a Germanic prince named Odovacar won control of the Roman army in Italy. After deposing the last western emperor, Romulus Augustus, Odovacar's troops proclaimed him king of Italy, bringing an ignoble end to the long, tumultuous history of ancient Rome. The fall of the Roman Empire was complete.'*⁷

7. History.com, article 'Ancient Rome'.



These tribes later not only became the ruling nations of Europe (England, Germany, France, Spain etc.), but conquerors and/or colonial powers of the globe.

*'Western colonialism [is] a political-economic phenomenon whereby various European nations explored, conquered, settled, and exploited large areas of the world. The age of modern colonialism began about 1500 . . . the emerging nation-states of Portugal, Spain, the Dutch Republic, France, and England. By discovery, conquest, and settlement, these nations expanded and colonized throughout the world, spreading European institutions and culture.'*⁸

No other single empire ruled the whole world after Rome. Stanford historian Walter Scheidel says:

*'Nothing like the Roman Empire ever emerged again. When the end of empire removed centralized control, rival political, military, economic and religious constituencies began to fight, bargain and compromise and – in the process – rebuilt society along different lines. Those 1,500 years (all the way up to World War II) were full of conflicts as Europe splintered into a violently competitive state system. . . . all later attempts to restore universal empire on European soil failed.'*⁹

8. Encyclopædia Britannica, article 'Western Colonialism'.
9. 'The fall of Rome was Europe's lucky break', Stanford News, 23 October 2019.



THE NEW WORLD ORDER

Let's return to our days! We see the world torn by war, pandemics and economic struggles.

A century or more ago, the practice of intermarriage of the world's monarchies attempted to achieve unity. Today, groups such as the UN, EU, NATO, G7, IMF, WB, etc. are all striving for unity through military alliances, economic unions, and global organisations and networks. Treaties and partnerships have become the new practice. Yet, despite all these attempts, a lack of unity extends to our time.

Currently it seems that a new world disorder is to be in place for the coming decades.

Contemporary analysis confirms:

'Our present epoch seems to be increasingly characterized by fear of the future with growing insecurity, social fragmentation and polarization ...

The forces of disintegration are reflected in growing evidence of the failing institutions of governance, with often discredited leadership, widespread corruption, loss of public confidence, and the recent rise of populist, reactionary and autocratic movements rejecting multilateralism and diversity.

*Contributing to all this is a generalized loss of moral responsibility, higher ethics or values, even spirituality, able to fill the vacuum of any higher human purpose in a materialistic society.'*¹⁰

10. *Global Governance and the Emergence of Global Institutions for the 21st Century*, Cambridge University Press (Chapter 1 – Challenges for the 21st Century).





Apart from all agreements in the political realm, one should not overlook the concerning alliance that is developing between church and state, both powers taking turns in claiming the symbols of 'iron' and 'clay'.

The 1992 cover of *Time* magazine labelled an investigative report in some religious terms, although it explicitly mentioned 'alliance' and 'conspiring', definitely involving combined efforts of intelligence, finances, political pressures and other forms of support:

*'Reagan and the Pope agreed to undertake a clandestine campaign to hasten the dissolution of the communist empire. Declares Richard Allen, Reagan's first National Security Adviser: "This was one of the great secret alliances of all time."'*¹¹

The goals of world powers, whether political or religious (even atheistic), are never *entirely* reached! The prophecy is crystal clear on this matter:

'They will not adhere to one another, just as iron does not mix with clay.' (Daniel 2:42)

That is why the dictatorial Third Reich of Hitler never materialised, and why the dream of a democratic united Europe has proved so elusive (we only need to note Brexit and the war in Ukraine).

The God of heaven assured king Nebuchadnezzar that he was the head of gold. *Where are we?* Some twenty-six centuries later we can confidently say that we are living in the final era of the unmixed iron and clay toes.

11. 'The Holy Alliance: Ronald Reagan and John Paul II', *Time*, 24 February 1992.

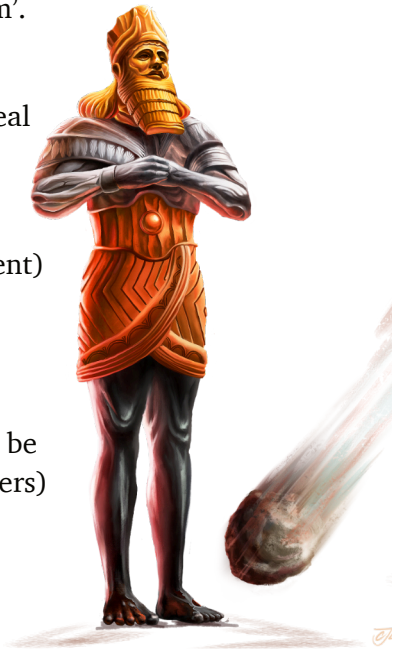


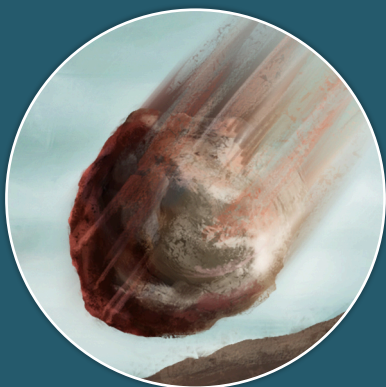
THE IMPACT

The final and most significant part of the king’s dream deals with one item only – a terrible impact. The stone coming down to destroy the entire structure is identified as another ‘kingdom’.

It is the final one, destroying them all, replacing them all. What does Daniel reveal about this kingdom? (Daniel 2:44)

- WHEN?** ‘In the days of these kings’ (modern nations, it is imminent)
- WHO?** ‘The God of heaven’ (a divine power)
- WHAT?** ‘A kingdom which shall never be destroyed’ (no more challengers)
- HOW LONG?** ‘It shall stand forever’ (everlasting)





WHICH KINGDOM FITS?

The Bible answers: God's kingdom.

It is the coming kingdom of Jesus Christ. He will return on the clouds of heaven. And His second coming will signal the end of this world.

Let's see this truth as reflected in the Bible (we've only selected seven key texts, yet there are many others).

Hebrews 9:28

'Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many; and **he will appear a second time**, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him.'

John 14:1-3

'Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me. My Father's house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, **I will come back** and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.'

Revelation 1:7

'Look, **he is coming** with the clouds, and every eye will see him.'

Matthew 24:30, 31

'Then will appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven. And then all the peoples of the earth will mourn when **they see the Son of Man coming** on the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory. And he will send his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect.'



Acts 1:9-11

'After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight.

They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them.

"Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, **will come back** in the same way you have seen him go into heaven."

1 Thessalonians 4:16

'For **the Lord himself will come** down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God.'

Philippians 3:20, 21

'Our citizenship is **in heaven. And we eagerly await a Saviour from there**, the Lord Jesus Christ, who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.'



HEAD OF GOLD
BABYLON
605 – 539 BC

CHEST AND ARMS OF SILVER
MEDO-PERSIA
539 – 331 BC

BELLY AND THIGHS OF BRONZE
GREECE
331 – 168 BC

LEGS OF IRON
ROME
168 BC – AD 476

IRON MIXED WITH CLAY
EUROPE
OUR WORLD TODAY

THE STONE
JESUS' SECOND COMING
SOON

CTJ



THE ALARM IS SOUNDING AGAIN

One could write this all off as an ancient palace story . . . But note how the prophet ends his explanation of this mysterious dream:

'The great God has made known to the king what will come to pass after this. The dream is certain, and its interpretation is sure.' (Daniel 2:45)

Quoting now the words of famous Isaac Newton, himself a student of the prophecies in Daniel,

'A remnant, a few scattered persons which God hath chosen, such as without being led by interest, education, or humane authorities, can set themselves sincerely & earnestly to search after truth. For as Daniel hath said that the wise shall understand, so he hath said also that none of the wicked shall understand.

Let me therefore beg of thee not to trust to the opinion of any man concerning these things, for so it is great odds but thou shalt be deceived. Much less oughtest thou to rely upon the judgment of the multitude, for so thou shalt certainly be deceived.

*But search the scriptures thy self & that by frequent reading & constant meditation upon what thou readest, & earnest prayer to God to enlighten thine understanding if thou desirest to find the truth.'*¹²

As history has proved the accuracy of this prophecy, section by section, century after century, there is no reason to doubt its final part in our times.

When will it be fulfilled? According to the Bible the coming of the kingdom of Jesus Christ is in the very near future.

12. Isaac Newton, *Yahuda*, MS. 1. 1, National Library of Israel, <https://www.newtonproject.ox.ac.uk/view/texts/normalized/THEM00135>.



For further study of prophecies we recommend our course **Focus on Prophecy.**

It will help you to understand the current signs of the times: why Europe can't be united, why there are pandemics, wars and crises.



REFLECTING *hope*

The Great Controversy unveils the cosmic struggle between good and evil affecting our planet.

God will soon put an end to suffering and sin. Read this book to know & get ready for the end-time events. (EN / FR / ES / PT)



The book of Revelation (or the *Apocalypse*) outlines the future of our world. There is no need to fear it.



Watch a video series that takes you step by step from the past into the future, bringing **Hope, Meaning and Purpose.**

The Digging Series explores ancient civilisations, helping the student to discern how the past projects the future.

Key archaeological discoveries have a clear prophetic nature and a meaningful impact in our days. This is our most extensive course (3 series, and 36 lessons in total).



Looking for a free Bible? Look no further.

Scan the QR code below and visit **www.freebible.uk**

Complete ten online quizzes and you'll get your free hard-copy Bible.



Adventist Discovery Centre

Contact: 01923 672606
 info@adventistdiscoverycentre.org
 www.adventistdiscoverycentre.org
 Stanborough Park, Watford
 WD25 9JU

