



# Truth For These Times



## 3. NATIONS IN PROPHECY

Approximately one third of the Bible is prophecy. Prophecy defined, is history written in advance. Occasionally man guesses the future, and is right, simply because he has made some logical calculations. Because this world and its affairs are so complex, it is almost impossible to foretell the future. Man's attempt to predict what lies ahead is usually wrong: but not so with God. Bible prophecy is accurate – God knows the end from the beginning.

Isaiah 46:9,10      Remember the former things of old, for I *am* God, and *there is* no other; I *am* God, and *there is* none like Me, **DECLARING THE END FROM THE BEGINNING**, and from ancient times *things* that are not *yet* done, saying, 'My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure,'

Prophecy is from God. He claims to be the only one who can make known the "end from the beginning". God bases the proof of His existence on the accuracy of Bible predictions. Thus, if you prove any Bible prophecy wrong, then you prove God's existence is wrong. But, if one-third of the Bible foretells the future, and it all proves true, then you must acknowledge the fact that there is a Supreme Being – the Great God of the Universe. Notice one marvellous prophecy of Scripture – a prophecy that gives so many details it could not be fulfilled merely by accident.

Daniel 2:1      Now in the second year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign, **NEBUCHADNEZZAR HAD DREAMS; AND HIS SPIRIT WAS SO TROUBLED** that his sleep left him.

Read verses 1-30 of Daniel Chapter 2.

Nebuchadnezzar had forgotten his dream (see verse 5). Nebuchadnezzar II was the greatest king of the second Babylonian Empire. He brought the power of ancient Babylon to the pinnacle of its glory about 600 B.C. Daniel was a young Hebrew captive in Babylon, a worshipper of the true God, who had already earned a reputation for great wisdom (see Daniel 1). Verse 29 shows that before Nebuchadnezzar fell asleep on the night of his dream, he had been worrying about the future of his kingdom. This was probably the reason why he was so anxious to recall the dream. It might contain some kind of key to the future.

Babylon's wise men failed to tell the king the dream or provide an interpretation. These men were members of a guild of magicians, soothsayers and astrologers, who claimed to be in direct contact with the Babylonian gods. This explains why Nebuchadnezzar became so angry with them. When put to the test, they confessed they did not have contact with the gods, after all, so their hypocrisy was openly unmasked (verse 11). Because of his reputation for wisdom, Daniel was evidently classed among Babylon's 'wise men'. Therefore, he too was involved in the death decree.



Note the simplicity and childlike faith of Daniel and his companions. In their extremity they got down on their knees in the manner of an old fashioned prayer meeting. And God heard their prayer. He will do the same for us today if we approach Him with Daniel's simple faith. Note also the

reference to “the latter days” (verse 28): “after this” (verse 29) and “what would come to pass” (verse 29). God took the troubled mind of Nebuchadnezzar, filled with anxious thoughts about the future of his kingdom, and made it a channel through which to reveal the future history of the world!

Daniel 2:31-35

You, O king, were watching; and behold, a GREAT IMAGE! This great image, 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.



Here is the great metallic man, composed of five minerals. Now for the interpretation of the image. It is interesting to see how the Bible interprets itself – one portion gives enlightenment to another portion.

The Bible must explain itself. This is the only way for correct interpretation.

Daniel 2:36

THIS IS THE DREAM. NOW WE WILL TELL THE INTERPRETATION OF IT before the king.

A divine hand is about to turn the pages of world history in advance. The ages are now to be burst open before the king's astonished eyes.

Daniel 2:37,38

You, O king, *are* a king of kings. For the God of heaven has given you a kingdom, power, strength, and glory; and wherever the children of men dwell, or the beasts of the field and the birds of the heaven, He has given *them* into your hand, and has made you ruler over them all—YOU ARE THIS HEAD OF GOLD.

The head of gold is Nebuchadnezzar, but this is really speaking of the kingdom of which Nebuchadnezzar was the head. This is made clear in verse 39, when following kingdoms were referred to.

Isaiah 14:4

That you will take up this proverb against the king of Babylon, and say: “How the oppressor has ceased, THE GOLDEN CITY CEASED!”



The Golden Head of Babylon.

Babylon was referred to as the golden city, so appropriately it was represented by the head of gold in the image. Babylon ruled the world from 606 - 538 B.C. Nebuchadnezzar had planned that his kingdom would last forever, but God gave this dream to show this would not be so. Babylon would dominate only the early portion of human affairs.

Isaiah 13:19,20

And BABYLON, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldeans' pride, WILL BE AS WHEN GOD OVERTHREW SODOM AND GOMORRAH. It will never be inhabited, nor will it be settled from generation to generation; nor will the Arabian pitch tents there, nor will the shepherds make their sheepfolds there.

God foretold how Babylon would not stand forever, but would meet complete destruction. Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed in the past because of their wickedness.

Daniel 2:39

But after you shall arise ANOTHER KINGDOM inferior to yours; then ANOTHER, A THIRD KINGDOM OF BRONZE, which shall rule over all the earth.



The Silver Chest of Medo-Persia.

The second kingdom, represented by the chest of silver, was Medo-Persia, which ruled the world from 536 - 331 B.C. The armies of Cyrus of Medo-Persia overthrew Babylon. This is mentioned in Daniel 5:30,31, when Darius conquered the city.

The third kingdom, represented by the thighs of brass was Greece, which ruled from 331 - 168 B.C. Under Alexander the Great, Greece conquered the world in a few years. Daniel 7 and 8 illustrate these kingdoms by depicting them as certain animals. In Daniel 8:20,21 we can see how Greece did succeed Medo-Persia.

Daniel 2:40

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.

The fourth kingdom was Rome which ruled from 168 B.C. - 476 A.D. Rome ruled the world in Jesus' day (Luke 2:1). Whilst the year A.D. 476 has commonly been given for the downfall of Imperial Rome, the disintegration of the Empire was actually a long-drawn-out process that lasted for over 200 years. Between A.D. 350 and 550, Rome's territories were penetrated by successive hordes of Germanic invaders. Some of these barbarian tribes passed quickly into oblivion, leaving scarcely a trace. Others succeeded in carving out more definite and permanent territories from the body of the prostrate Empire.

Daniel 2:41

Whereas you saw the FEET AND TOES, PARTLY OF POTTER'S CLAY AND PARTLY OF IRON, THE KINGDOM SHALL BE DIVIDED; yet the strength of the iron shall be in it, just as you saw the iron mixed with ceramic clay.



The Brass Thighs of Greece.

The Roman Empire was divided into parts of Western Europe. Daniel had foretold there would be but four world dominating Empires, and then would come the division into a number of parts. And as the prophecy has foretold, so it came to pass 1,000 years later.

Daniel 2:42,43

And *as* the toes of the feet *were* partly of iron and partly of clay, *so* THE KINGDOM SHALL BE PARTLY STRONG AND PARTLY FRAGILE. As you saw iron mixed with ceramic clay, they will MINGLE WITH THE SEED OF MEN; BUT THEY WILL NOT ADHERE TO ONE ANOTHER, just as iron does not mix with clay.



The Iron Legs of Rome.

Here we see a divided Europe after the downfall of Rome. The prophecy states it will be partly strong and partly broken. This has been accurately fulfilled, as down through the history of Europe there have always been some nations strong, while others have been weak. The Roman Empire had been described as ‘History’s Humpty Dumpty’. After Rome’s Downfall in A.D. 476, “all the king’s men” – the warriors and diplomats of fifteen centuries – have failed to “put Humpty Dumpty together again”. Six notable rulers who have tried vainly to unite Europe were:

Charlemagne (of the Franks)	- 8 <sup>th</sup> Century
Charles V (of Spain)	- 16 <sup>th</sup> Century
Louis XIV (of France)	- 16 <sup>th</sup> Century
Napoleon (of France)	- 19 <sup>th</sup> Century
Kaiser Wilhelm (of Germany)	- 20 <sup>th</sup> Century
Adolf Hitler (of Germany)	- 20 <sup>th</sup> Century

Repeated efforts have also been made to weld the fragments of Europe by intermarriage between ruling families, especially in the period between 1850 and 1914, these too, have failed. Says historian Charles Downer Hazen:



The Ten Toes of Europe.

“Europe has always refused to be dominated by a single nation or a single man, it has run the risk several times in its history of passing under the yoke, but it always, in the end succeeded in escaping it”. *Modern European History*, page 229.

Why have all past efforts to unite Europe failed? Because men have attempted to do what God has said would never be done! “The kingdom shall be divided” (verse 42). “They shall not adhere to one another” (verse 43).

In 1500 years no man has been able to break the spell of prophecy. Today we are down in the feet of iron and of clay. We have been there now for 1500 years. WHAT WILL HAPPEN NEXT?

Daniel 2:44,45

And in the days of these kings the GOD OF HEAVEN WILL SET UP A KINGDOM WHICH SHALL NEVER BE DESTROYED; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and CONSUME ALL THESE KINGDOMS, AND IT SHALL STAND FOREVER. Inasmuch as you saw that the STONE WAS CUT OUT OF THE MOUNTAIN WITHOUT HANDS, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold—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.

The stone cut out without hands represents the great kingdom of God. There will be a fifth World Empire, ruled by the King of Kings. This is great news for our world today, as man cannot solve the problems of world control – but God can. He will set up a kingdom that will fill the earth, and rule forever.



All details of this prophecy have been fulfilled accurately so far. This gives us the certain hope that the remaining portion will also come to pass. Jesus Christ will come to this earth and set up this kingdom. When He came the first time, He came as a man of sorrows, and died on the cruel cross to pay the debt for the sin of mankind. When He comes again, He comes as King of Kings and Lords of Lords. Friend, you can be a subject in His kingdom if you accept Him as your King and Saviour. His kingdom will last forever. Why not plan to be one of His subjects? It will be a kingdom of peace and happiness and what is more, you can live in it for eternity.

	<b>Head of Gold</b> <b>Babylon</b> [B.C. 605 - 539]
	<b>Breast of Silver</b> <b>Medo-Persia</b> [B.C. 539 - 331]
	<b>Thighs of Brass</b> <b>Greece</b> [B.C. 331 - 168]
	<b>Legs of Iron</b> <b>Rome</b> [B.C. 168 - A.D 476]
	<b>Feet of Iron &amp; Clay</b> <b>Divided nation of</b> <b>Western Europe</b> [A.D. 476 - 2nd Advent]

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## Review Sheet – Nations in Prophecy

Assignment: Read the Bible study carefully before answering the following questions.

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1. What impression did Nebuchadnezzar's dream have upon him? Daniel 2:1  
Had dreams, \_\_\_\_\_.
2. What did the king see in his dream, and what did it look like? Daniel 2:31-35  
You, O king, were watching, \_\_\_\_\_! ...and its form was awesome. <sup>32</sup>“This \_\_\_\_\_,  
\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_,  
\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_,  
\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_,  
\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_.” <sup>33</sup>“  
\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_.”
3. What finally happened to the image? Daniel 2:31-35  
A stone was \_\_\_\_\_.
4. What did the head of gold represent? Daniel 2:37,38  
You *are* (Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon) \_\_\_\_\_.
5. How is Babylon described, showing gold as a fitting symbol? Isaiah 14:4  
The \_\_\_\_\_!
6. How did God foretell Babylon's doom? Isaiah 13:19,20  
And Babylon ... will be as \_\_\_\_\_.
7. After Babylon's fall, how does Daniel 2:39 describe the rise of succeeding kingdoms?  
And after you shall arise \_\_\_\_\_;  
\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_.
8. How is the fourth kingdom described? Daniel 2:40  
And the \_\_\_\_\_.
9. After the fourth kingdom, how is the division of nations described? Daniel 2:41  
The feet and toes, \_\_\_\_\_,  
\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_.
10. How did God say, no one nation would rule the earth again? Daniel 2:42,43  
The kingdom \_\_\_\_\_ ... they  
will mingle with the seed of men: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.
11. What kingdom will be set up that will last forever? Daniel 2:44,45  
The \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_;
12. What kingdoms were represented by:  
a) The head of gold? \_\_\_\_\_ b) The breast of silver? \_\_\_\_\_  
c) The thighs of brass? \_\_\_\_\_ d) The legs of iron? \_\_\_\_\_  
e) The feet of iron and clay? \_\_\_\_\_.  
f) The stone cut out without hands? The Kingdom of \_\_\_\_\_.

Do you plan to be a subject of God's everlasting kingdom? \_\_\_\_\_.