

Daniel Chapter 2 - The Image of the Dream



It was in the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, about 600 BC, that he had an amazing dream which worried him so much that he couldn't sleep.

In fact, this dream was a prophecy which was given to show the purpose of God with the kingdoms of men from the time of Nebuchadnezzar until the time of the Kingdom of God. This prophecy creates a framework which many other prophecies are part of and creates a foundation to enable determined Bible students to understand other prophecies which seem more complicated, like the Book of Revelation. It is important therefore to understand this prophecy and the principles of interpretation.

The king ordered the magicians, and the astrologers, and the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans, to tell him his dream as he could not remember it, as well as the meaning of it. They came and stood before the king. Of course, the first reaction is to think that the king was being unreasonable, how can anyone know what someone else has dreamed, without being told. this is what these men told the king which made him very angry and you said to them but if he didn't tell him the dream and its interpretation *you shall be cut in pieces, and your houses shall be made a dunghill*. But the king was right to be angry with them.

description	Hebrew	meaning	job	role
magicians	<i>chartomim</i>	to engrave	scribes	practiced magic
astrologers	<i>ashshaphim</i>	enchanters	prophets	voice of the gods
sorcerers	<i>kashaph</i>	to whisper	mediums	practiced witchcraft
Chaldeans	<i>kasdoyah</i>	wanderers	priestly	read the stars



These men loved to be called the wise men of Babylon, and the money and fame that went with it, walking around being treated specially, and looked up to by all the people. In fact, they were all tricksters, and deceivers, using the ignorance of the rest of the population to get rich. They championed a false religion, and distorted the truth to maintain power. The ideology of Babylon was originated from Babel when men wanted to make a name for themselves.

It was no different with these 'wise men' of Babylon, who enjoyed all the trappings of office, yet when the day came to see if their much

boasted abilities, and special communications with the gods, and knowledge of the underworld could help the king, they were exposed as the charlatans, liars and deceivers that all priests and clergy of false religion are.



A Babylon model kept in the British Museum of a sheep's liver showing points of how to read signs and omens formulas and predictions.

Yet when the time came – they were forced to say – we cannot tell the king his dream, - tell us the dream, and then we will explain what it means. How could the king

trust their interpretation, which was the easy bit, if they could not tell him what he had dreamed – surely if they had been telling the truth about their abilities all this time then they should be able amongst themselves to find out what the dream was – but they had to admit: ... verse 11: *it is a rare thing that the king requires, and there is none other that can shew it before the king, except the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh.* But were they not supposed to the priests of these gods? Were they not in communication with these gods then, after all, had they been faking it all along.

The King of Babylon was king – and emperor for a reason. A bit smarter than these 'wise men' he saw that they were exposed, and completely unable to do what they had been claiming to do all along.

Truth always triumphs over lies. The Apostle Peter shows how the spirit of Babylon is still with us today but will be exposed: 2 Peter 2:1-3,12 *But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privately shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their*

pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: ... But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption;

So it was that the king was very furious, and commanded to destroy all the wise men of Babylon. The decree went. Daniel and his friend were also summoned, showing that despite not being in the city for that long, they were already regarded as equal to the rest of the 'wise men' and were considered to be amongst them.

Daniel spoke to Arioch the king's captain who had come to arrest him. Arioch was captain of the king's guard, which in the original literally translates as chief of the executioners. A worrying time for Daniel it seems. But he was not worried. He said *Why is the decree so hasty from the king?* Daniel went and asked the king for time and that he would shew the king the interpretation. Then he went back to his friends and they prayed to God about it. How was Daniel so sure that God would reveal to him the secret?

Psalms 25:14: The secret of the LORD is with them that fear him; and he will shew them his covenant.

Amos 3:7 Surely the Lord GOD will do nothing, but he reveals his secret unto his servants the prophets.

Firstly Daniel knew that if God Willed it, he would be able to reveal the dream, as God had given this ability to Daniel – Daniel 1:17 *As for these four children, God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom: and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams.* Also those who immerse themselves in the Truth of God's Word, are able to have the Truth revealed, because their mind is in tune with the Gospel – hence: Revelation 1:1 *The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass...*

Daniel, did not assume in any way, and his first priority was in unity with his companions to pray earnestly for the God of heaven to reveal this to him. The wise men claimed to be astrologers and astronomers, and to understand all the signs and omens from the sky. Yet the Only One True God of Heaven was about to pronounce the Truth of these kingdoms of men. He answered their prayer.

Daniel reported in to the chief executioner: *Destroy not the wise men of Babylon: bring me in before the king, and I will shew unto the king the interpretation*

Yes, Daniel in being giving the secret, did not use the power of God to gain superiority over others, or to use the opportunity for all other 'wise men' to be wiped out, giving him the sole place of power. He never sought the limelight or took an opportunity to seek the downfall of the enemies of God. It was not his place, and he knew it. How unlike human nature that is, and what a great example for us to take notice of.

Daniel went and boldly revealed the dream and interpretation, and explained, that of course no one eels can reveal these secrets, but only the One God in heaven who is in full control of all things, and He has revealed what will happen in the latter days

The dream represented events which would take place in the future.

The king had seen in his dream a great image in the form of a man standing. It was made of different metals. This image's head was of gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay.

Nebuchadnezzar saw in his dream a little stone which had been cut out without hands, strike the image on its feet smashing them to pieces.



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.

Daniel immediately continued with the interpretation.

37-38 Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold.

Gold the heaviest metal at the top, followed by silver, the image would have been top heavy, and would have easily toppled. The Kingdoms of men all follow from the head of gold. The ideology of

Babylon runs through all the kingdoms of men. It is the reason why the image will be so unsteady on its feet.

Daniel revealed that the image really represented a time line, a chronology, of consecutive empires, one after another, which would succeed one another, until the latter days, when it would be destroyed. Of course such a far off future would not worry Nebuchadnezzar, but he was shown that in fact his empire would not be very long in duration.



He would be pleased to see his empire was described as gold. But why Gold? Why was the Babylonian ruler of superior metal than the subsequent ones? It was because of the method of effective rulership declined in value as time went on. Nebuchadnezzar was a tyrant, a dictator. All power rested

with him. It was an Absolute Autocracy. Rulership came from one. It is actually the Divine pattern- as God is one. All power is derived from Him. The Kingdom of God will be delegated to One – Namely the Lord Jesus Christ, who in turn will delegate to the Wise Men of the Kingdom.

You are this head of Gold. Compared to the rest of the body parts the head is relatively small. The Babylonian empire only lasted for about 70 years



Daniel continued. *And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee*



The breast and arms of silver. A inferior metal. Though still of some value. Nebuchadnezzar was told that another kingdom would follow his. This the Bible reveals was the Medo-Persian Empire.

Persia, was a Monarchical Oligarchy with the nobles equal to the king in all but office, is represented by the silver. Medo-Persia had a set of laws which the king could not change, and in this way the empire was inferior.

Daniel in his interpretation does not actually say the names of the subsequent empires, but the history revealed in scripture shows who these empires relate to. Also the Chinese and other civilisations are not referred to, as this concerns only the consecutive empires which as the kingdoms of men, oppressed and ruled over the territory of what was once the Kingdom of God- the land of Israel.



The breast and arms have a much larger body mass than the head, and indeed the Persian empire lasted a lot longer than the gold head.

208 years, 3 times as long.

Daniel continued in his revelation to the

amazed king: and explained that this would be followed by *another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth.*



The Greek empire which followed was famed for brass or copper. Anciently known as Javan we read in Ezekiel 27:13 *Javan... they traded the persons of men and vessels of brass in thy market.* The Greek *hoplites* – the infantry which made up the all conquering *phalanx* wore bronze helmets and armour.

Brass/copper/bronze is of less value than

the silver, and the preceding golden head, and its rule was even more decentralised, emanating from city states with relatively independent governors



Daniel then explained what the iron legs meant:

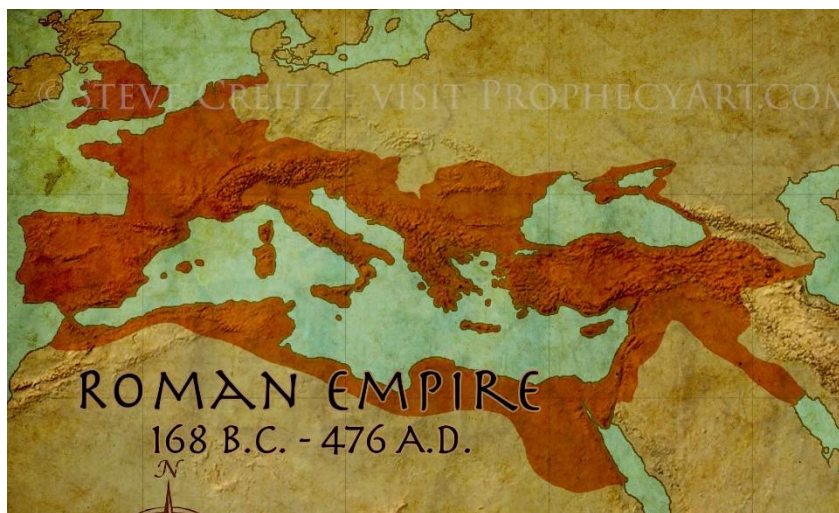


And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaks in pieces and subdues all things: and as iron that breaks all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise.

In violence, and conquest, the iron would prove to be harder than any of the preceding empires. Scripture reveals that it was Rome which succeeded the empire of Greece. Giving the image the great height, these iron legs represented the length of time the fourth

Kingdom would hold sway over the Kingdoms of men, in comparison to the other smaller segments, - for a much longer period of time. The Empire continued until 476 AD, some 644 years. This metal still yet inferior and far more common, showed that its power was decentralised even more – a Democratic Imperialism, with military dominion dependent upon the choice of army and citizenry and administered in the spirit of martial law. In fact, the method of Rule changed many times.

The words ...*after thee*... did not apply to this fourth kingdom. The previous two came *after thee* – see verse 39. Instead, this fourth Kingdom is introduced separately. This Kingdom did not succeed the same territory as the previous territories, as Roman Empire never ruled over the region of Babylon and did not expand eastwards into Persia, but spread further and further west.



The two legs were an accurate depiction of the Roman Empire as, it divided into two during the reign of the emperor Constantine, and he set up a new capital in the East.

Rome in the West, and Constantinople in the west. This was not all Daniel explained to Nebuchadnezzar that after the legs came two



feet, still of iron, but mixed with clay. A very brittle, and strange mixture. Yet inferior, - divided in

composition, and physically, these with ten toes represented a divided Kingdom. This is exactly what happened after the decline of

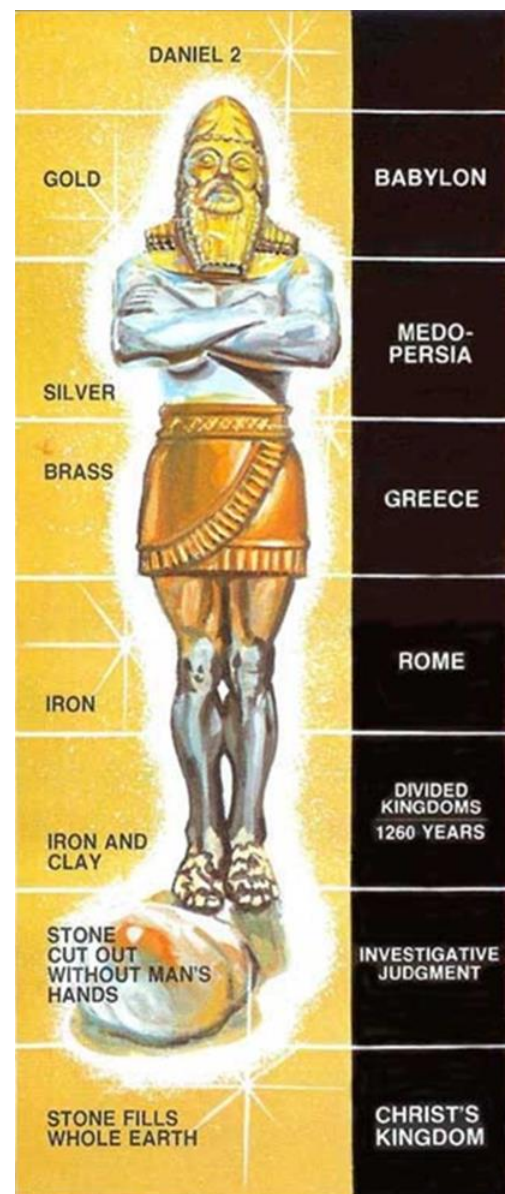


the Roman empire, and the Barbarian nations infiltrated and finally subsumed the empire, becoming known as the Holy Roman empire.

These were Kingdoms that had all the

infrastructure of the old Roman empire, but this was mixed with potters clay. The very basest of material – the kind of rule administered in those years was influenced by the false prophets, sorcerers and magicians of false religion which Nebuchadnezzar had exposed. ...*whereas you saw iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men:* Babylon the Great – the Roman Catholic religious system.

Although the image seen by the king was a chronological timeline, each separate part following the other. In the dream it stood and when it was standing it was then smashed on the feet. The image has never yet stood in history. There has been no power which has joined all the territories covered by the successive empires. Even the Roman empire did not take over all the Persian or Babylonian. This means that for the image to stand a new power has to arise, which will be an alliance of all those territories.



That alliance is described in detail in Ezekiel 38, which remarkably includes all the modern nations today, which correspond to all the territory covered by all those empires represented by Daniel's image.

Daniel, then speaking of far into the future from Nebuchadnezzar said: 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.*

Far superior, not lasting for just a few short years, the Kingdom of God, which was once based in the God's land, the land of Israel, but was oppressed by these empires, will shake off the kingdoms of men, destroy them, and last for ever. Completely separate to the kingdoms of men. The power, and Rule of this Kingdom will come from outside the systems of men – the Stone cut out without hands - will smash the assembled pieces of the image, as it stands top heavy and precarious on its crumbling foundation.

Nebuchadnezzar as the sole Ruler was explained this, and it was within his power to command all his subjects to worship the God of heaven – which he did. They did not obey of course. Since then governance of man has only become weaker and weaker. Man has corrupted himself so much so, that sun has gone down over the prophets, and there is no open vision. But the faith of Daniel and his witness is sure, as in our own day we witness the image very nearly assembled.

The stone has been cut out. Rejected by the builders, this Stone *on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.* (Matthew 21:44)

Brother Terry