

## THE BOOK OF DANIEL

Information and background dealing with the book of Daniel.

- The book of Daniel prophesies God's severe judgment of man and man's self-rule in the future. It also tells how God will restore His full sovereign rule to the earth through His Messiah. Man's kingdoms of self-rule will be replaced by a literal, earthly Kingdom of God. Utopia will come, not by man's rule apart from God, but by man's submission to the rule of God which he rejected in Eden.
- The theme of the book is the sovereign rule of God over the realm of man. The key verse emphasizing the sovereign rule of God is **Daniel 4:17b**.

### Daniel 4:17b

<sup>17b</sup> **to the intent that the living may know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men.**

- The book of Daniel can be divided into 2 parts: **the prophetic passages** and **the practical passages**. Chapters 1, 3, 4, 5, and 6 are **practical**, 2, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12 are **prophetic**.

Of the prophetic chapters, four are considered major mountain peaks in Bible prophecy. They are chapters 2, 7, 9, and 11.

- Chronological Order of the book of Daniel.

The book of Daniel has twelve chapters, but it's best not to read them numerically; that's not the way the book unfolds. Instead its best to read it in chronological order. The chronological order of the book of Daniel: chapters 1, 2, 3, 4; then 7 and 8; next 5, 9, 6; and last 10, 11, 12.

Let's look at the Scripture and we will see why this is the case.

### Daniel 7:1

<sup>1</sup> **In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon** Daniel had a dream and visions of his head upon his bed: then he wrote the dream, and told the sum of the matters.

### Daniel 8:1

<sup>1</sup> **In the third year of the reign of king Belshazzar** a vision appeared unto me, even unto me Daniel, after that which appeared unto me at the first.

### Daniel 5:30-31

<sup>30</sup> **In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain.**

<sup>31</sup> And **Darius the Median took the kingdom**, being about threescore and two years old.

### **Daniel 9:1**

<sup>1</sup> **In the first year of Darius** the son of Ahasuerus, of the seed of the Medes, which was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans;

### **Daniel 6:28**

<sup>28</sup> So this Daniel prospered in the **reign of Darius**, and **in the reign of Cyrus the Persian**.

### **Daniel 10:1**

<sup>1</sup> **In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia** a thing was revealed unto Daniel, whose name was called Belteshazzar; and the thing was true, but the time appointed was long: and he understood the thing, and had understanding of the vision.

Daniel's vision continues on through chapters 11 and 12.

So, the chronological order is: 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 5, 9, 6, 10, 11, 12.

- Another interesting fact about the book of Daniel is that it is written in 2 different languages—Hebrew and Aramaic. Arabic is the modern-day language of the Arab people; Aramaic was their ancient language. The portion focused on the Gentile people—**Daniel 2:4b** through **Daniel 7:28**—is in the Aramaic language; the language of the Gentile people at that time. Everything else is in Hebrew (**Daniel 1:1-2:4a** and **Daniel 8-12**).

### **Daniel 2:4**

<sup>4</sup> Then spake the Chaldeans to the king in **Syriack**, O king, live forever: tell thy servants the dream, and we will shew the interpretation.

Next, we will look at the key prophetic Scriptures in the book of Daniel.

## **KEY PROPHETIC PASSAGES IN THE BOOK OF DANIEL.**

### **DANIEL CHAPTER 2**

Chapter 2 presents the **times of the Gentiles**. This period of time actually began with Daniel being taken into Babylonian captivity in 605 BC. Chapter 2 is often called the ABC's of prophecy. It contains the first and most basic prophetic outline of the times of the Gentiles in the statue of a man made up of four different metals.

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#### **A. The Troubling dream of Nebuchadnezzar—verses 1-30**

## B. Nebuchadnezzar's dream revealed—verses 31-36

1. The Great Image (statue of a man)
    - a. The head of gold
    - b. Chest and arms of silver
    - c. Belly and thighs of brass
    - d. Legs of iron
    - e. Feet of iron and clay
  2. A stone cut out of the mountain without hands.
- Two observations about the metals of the statue:
    1. They decrease in value.
    2. They increase in strength.
  - It is also important to note that in the interpretation, Daniel moves progressively from top to bottom of the image. This downward movement represents the passage of time. Thus, the upper parts of the image portrayed earlier history, and the lower parts portrayed later history.

## C. Nebuchadnezzar's dream interpreted—verses 38-45

1. The Head of Gold represents the **Babylonian Empire**.

### **Daniel 2:38**

<sup>38</sup> *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.***

2. The Breasts and Arms of Silver represent the **Medo-Persia Kingdom**.

### **Daniel 2:39a**

<sup>39</sup> *And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee...*

### **Daniel 5:28**

<sup>28</sup> *PERES; Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the **Medes and Persians**.*

a. Medo-Persia conquered Babylon in 539 BC. It was inferior to the Babylonian kingdom because it was a partnership empire. It lacked the absolute unity that Babylon had.

3. The Belly and Thighs of Brass represent **Greece**, the third kingdom.

### **Daniel 2:39b**

<sup>39</sup> *...and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth.*

### **Daniel 8:20-21**

<sup>20</sup> *The ram which thou sawest having two horns are the kings of **Media and Persia**.*

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<sup>21</sup> *And the rough goat is **the king of Grecia**: and the great horn that is between his eyes is the first king.*

- a. Greece conquered Medo-Persia in 331 BC.

4. The Legs of Iron represent **The Roman Empire**, the fourth kingdom.

**Daniel 2:40**

*<sup>40</sup> 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.*

a. Rome conquered Greece in 146 BC.

b. The two legs represent the two divisions of the Roman Empire. It ruled extensive areas of both the western and eastern divisions of the known world. In fact, in A.D. 364 the Roman Empire was divided politically into two divisions—the Western Roman Empire with Rome as its capital and the Eastern Roman Empire with Constantinople as its capital.

- The Roman Empire continued through A.D. 476

5. The Feet and toes of Iron and Clay represent the final form of the fourth kingdom, **The Revived Roman Empire**.

**Daniel 2:41-43**

*<sup>41</sup> 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.*

*<sup>42</sup> 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.*

*<sup>43</sup> 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.*

a. The legs of the fourth kingdom consisted of iron, but the feet and toes were a mixture of iron and clay. This distinction in substance also indicated that the fourth kingdom would experience two distinct stages of existence—an earlier and a later stage.

b. Daniel interpreted the iron and clay mixture as follows: just as iron is strong, so the final stage of the fourth kingdom would be strong militarily. Just as clay is characterized by brittleness, so the final stage of the fourth kingdom would be characterized by division.

c. Inasmuch as the image of the dream was human in form, it would have had ten toes. This indicates that the final stage of the fourth kingdom would consist of a ten-nation confederation.

d. When is this later foot and toe stage to exist?

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The Roman Empire never consisted of a ten-nation confederation in past history, so, we must conclude that this final stage of the fourth kingdom's existence must take place in the future.

6. This fourth kingdom was to be succeeded by a fifth kingdom which is represented by the stone in the dream, **God's Kingdom**.

**Daniel 2:44-45**

<sup>44</sup> *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.*

<sup>45</sup> *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.*

a. This kingdom would be set up by the God of heaven, not by man. This kingdom would never be destroyed; no other kingdoms would ever succeed it. It would destroy and end all the Gentile kingdoms portrayed in the image of the dream; it would endure forever.

b. God purposely portrays His kingdom first as a stone cut out of the mountain and second as a stone that becomes a great mountain. The Babylonians called their chief god, Marduk, "The Great Mountain." They believed that their gods came from the sacred mountain of the earth. By God portraying His kingdom as a stone cut out of the mountain and that it became a great mountain was God's way of getting Nebuchadnezzar to understand that the fifth kingdom would be divine rather than human in origin. God emphasized this divine origin by portraying the stone as cut out without human hands.

c. The stone cut out of the mountain struck the image on the feet, thereby causing the entire image to disintegrate.

**Daniel 2:34**

<sup>34</sup> *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.*

(1). This indicates that the kingdom of God would take place when the final stage of the fourth kingdom (**Revived Roman Empire**) would be in existence.

**Daniel 2:44**

<sup>44</sup> ***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.*

(2). After the stone had crushed the entire image, the wind blew every remnant of it away. The Babylonians believed that wind was a divine activity. They called Marduk "Lord of the wind." Once every remnant of the image had been removed from the earth, the stone became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.

### **Daniel 2:35**

<sup>35</sup> *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 threshingfloors; 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.***

(3). Although the Fifth kingdom would be set up by the God of heaven, it would be a kingdom **on earth** just as the four Gentile kingdoms had been. In the ancient Orient, kings and kingdoms were regarded as being synonymous. In light of this, the stone of the dream must be a representation, not only of the Kingdom of God, but also of its King. Since the stone represents both Jesus Christ (the King) and the Kingdom of God, its appearance in the dream portrays the coming of Christ to establish that kingdom.

### **Daniel 7:13-14**

<sup>13</sup> *I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him.*

<sup>14</sup> *And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.*

## **CONCLUSION TO DANIEL CHAPTER 2**

Renald Showers: *“The ultimate purpose of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream was to assert the sovereign rule of God in the affairs of men and His superiority over the pagan gods. Not only did it show the future course of Gentile world dominion, but also the destruction by God and the replacement of it with His kingdom that would last forever. Since the pagans thought that no kingdom could conquer another kingdom unless its god were more powerful than the god of the other, the fact that the Kingdom of the God of heaven would conquer all Gentile dominion would indicate the superiority of the God of heaven to all the Gentile gods.”*

Daniel 2 indicates that the future Kingdom of God would be established in conjunction with the second coming of Christ. Since it would take the place of the four Gentile kingdoms, it would be a **literal, earthly** kingdom just as they were. God designed the image to portray the times when the Gentiles would be the dominant power in the world what is referred to in the scripture as, **“the times of the Gentiles”**.