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## 4.5 - Sequence of Kingdoms

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### 4.5.1 - Two Perspectives

The sequence of kingdoms shown to [Nebuchadnezzar](#) and Daniel in [chapter 2](#) and [chapter 7](#) are parallel.<sup>1</sup> They concern the same sequence of political powers ruling between the time of deportation of Daniel to [Babylon](#) and the establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth. The vast majority of interpreters down through history are in agreement on this point.

Whether early:

I deemed it necessary to transcribe what is said by Eusebius of Caesarea, who bears the surname Pamphili, in the 15th book of his *Gospel Demonstration*;<sup>2</sup> for he expounds the whole vision in these terms: “I think that this (i.e., the vision of Nebuchadnezzar) differs in nothing from the vision of the prophet. For as the prophet saw a great sea, so the king saw a great image. And again, as the prophet saw four beasts, which he interpreted as four kingdoms, so the king was given to understand four kingdoms under the gold, and silver, and brass, and iron.”<sup>3</sup>

The golden head of the image and the lioness denoted the Babylonians; the shoulders and arms of silver, and the bear, represented the Persians and Medes; the belly and thighs of brass, and the leopard, meant the Greeks, who held the sovereignty from Alexander’s time; the legs of iron, and the beast dreadful and terrible, expressed the Romans, who hold the sovereignty at present; the toes of the feet which were part clay and part iron, and the ten horns, were emblems of the kingdoms that are yet to rise; the other little horn that grows up among them meant the Antichrist in their midst; the stone that smites the earth and brings judgment upon the world was Christ.<sup>4</sup>

The prophecies of Daniel are all of them related to one another, as if they were but several parts of one general prophecy given at several times. . . . Now in this vision of the image composed of four metals, the foundation of all Daniel’s prophecies is laid.<sup>5</sup>

Or recent:

The first prophetic outline of the course of [the Times of the Gentiles] is given in Daniel [2](#), where, through the medium of the great image, the successive empires that would exercise dominion over Jerusalem are outlined. . . . The second prophetic outline of the course of this period is given in Daniel [7](#). Whereas in Daniel [2](#) the course of world empire is viewed from man’s perspective, in Daniel [7](#) the same course of empire is viewed from the Divine viewpoint.<sup>6</sup>

Interpreters are nearly unanimous in recognizing the differences between the two revelations as an indication of two differing perspectives. The image seen by Nebuchadnezzar in Daniel [2](#) is of a visually stunning, awe-inspiring, and attractive character in accord with man’s evaluation of the sequence of kingdoms. The wild beasts seen by Daniel in Daniel [2](#) (and Daniel [8](#)) symbolize the same kingdoms as viewed from God’s perspective: they reveal their true ruthless and rapacious character.

And it was fitting that the king, who prized the substances deemed precious among men, gold, and silver, and brass, and iron, should liken to these substances the kingdoms that held the sovereignty at different times in the life of men; but that the prophet should describe these same kingdoms under the likeness of beasts, in accordance with the manner of their rule.<sup>7</sup>

Chapter 7 pictures the nations . . . in their real character as God sees them, that is, as wild beasts . . . in their brutality, violence, and inhumanity, especially toward Israel. Chapter 2, on the other hand, pictures the same nations as man sees them, as a resplendent human image, for a proud pagan monarch is employed as the vehicle of revelation.<sup>8</sup>

This dual perspective of the sequence of Gentile kingdoms is evident not only in the parallels between the *image seen by Nebuchadnezzar* and the *beasts seen by Daniel*, but also in God’s judgment of Nebuchadnezzar after He elevates his own golden *image* (Dan. [3](#)), resulting in Nebuchadnezzar “becoming” a *beast* (Dan. [4](#)). This beastly assessment of humanism is

also evident in the events associated with Revelation 13 where all the world will worship an *image* (man's perspective) of the *beast* (God's perspective) (Rev. 13:15).

Therefore, the vision given to Daniel in chapter 7 augments the revelation given to Nebuchadnezzar in chapter 2. Given the progressive nature of revelation from God, we are not surprised because God—through the Holy Spirit—is guiding us to an understanding of the meaning of the sequence of kingdoms. So much so, that the information initially given in Daniel 2 is augmented not only by Daniel 7, but by Daniel 8,<sup>9</sup> Daniel 11, and other parts of the Bible such as Revelation 13 and 17.

Our goal in this section is to gather information from related passages to form a composite understanding of the sequence of kingdoms. For an exposition of the details pertaining to each passage, see the commentary under Daniel 2, Daniel 7, Daniel 8, Daniel 11, Revelation 13, and 17.

#### 4.5.2 - Kingdoms Represent the Times of the Gentiles

The first thing to observe concerning the sequence of kingdoms prior to the final kingdom of God is they are *Gentile* kingdoms ruling during a period in history when the throne of David, associated with Israel and Jerusalem, remains unoccupied. These kingdoms extend their rule during the period Jesus referred to as the *Times of the Gentiles*.<sup>10</sup> Specifically, the four metal kingdoms of Nebuchadnezzar's image and the four beast-like kingdoms of Daniel's vision are the only four Gentile kingdoms of significance to Israel which God allows to have dominion during the entire period from the deportation of Daniel until the arrival of God's kingdom.<sup>11</sup>

As mentioned in our discussion of the *Times of the Gentiles*, Israel continues to suffer “under the thumb” of Gentile control despite being back in her own land as a reborn country.

On December 7, 1949, the Special Political Committee of the United Nations General Assembly made its decision regarding the internationalization of Jerusalem, approving this action by a final vote of 35 to 13, with 11 abstentions. . . . In part, the text of the resolution reads that it is the intention of the General Assembly of the United Nations, “that Jerusalem should be placed **under a permanent international regime** . . . (1) That the city of Jerusalem shall be established as a ‘corpus separatum’ **under an international regime** and (2) shall be **administered by the United Nations** (3) The city of Jerusalem shall include the present municipality of Jerusalem, plus the surrounding villages and towns the most southern being Bethlehem, the most western Ein Karem, and the most northern Shufat.” [emphasis added]<sup>12</sup>

Jerusalem's rehabilitation awaits, then, the falling of the Stone upon the feet of the Gentile image; for, as we have already seen, that will conclude the Gentile Times.<sup>13</sup>

Many who oppose the futurist interpretation of the final kingdom and the eventual restoration of a Davidic kingdom in Israel argue that our view—that Israel will be restored in association with the arrival of the final kingdom of God, ending the *Times of the Gentiles*—is an innovation brought about by the unexpected recreation of the modern state of Israel in 1948. In other words, they say our interpretation is colored by “newspaper *exegesis*” where we are simply reading the current state of affairs back into passages of Scripture. This can be answered rather easily by citing numerous earlier interpreters who understood the Scriptures to be teaching this very thing: who wrote before the establishment of the modern state of Israel. Consider this eloquent passage, written in 1910 by Bishop J. C. Ryle.<sup>14</sup>

A fixed period is here foretold during which Jerusalem was to be given over into the hands of Gentile rulers, and the Jews were to have no dominion over their ancient city. A fixed period is likewise foretold which was to be the time of the Gentiles' visitation, the time during which they were to enjoy privileges, and occupy a position something like that of Israel in ancient days . . . Both periods are one day to end. Jerusalem is to be once more restored to its ancient inhabitants. The Gentiles, because of their hardness and unbelief, are to be stripped of their privileges and endure just judgments of God. But the times of the Gentiles are not yet run out. We ourselves are living within them at the present day. The subject before us is a very affecting one and ought to raise within us great searchings of heart. While the nations of Europe are absorbed in political conflicts and worldly business, the sands of their hourglass are ebbing away. While governments are disputing about secular things, and parliaments can hardly condescend to find a place for religion in their discussions, their days are numbered in the mind of God. Yet a few years, and ‘the times of the Gentiles will be fulfilled.’ Their days of visitation will be past and gone. Their misused privileges will be taken away. The judgments of God shall fall on them. They shall be cast aside as vessels in which God has no pleasure. Their dominion shall crumble away, and their vaunted institutions shall fall to pieces. The Jews shall be restored. The Lord Jesus shall come again in power and great glory. The kingdom of this world shall become the kingdom of our God and of His Christ, and ‘the times of the Gentiles’ shall come to an end. Happy is he who knows these things, and lives the life of faith in the Son of God! He is the man, and he only, who is ready for the great things coming on this earth, and the appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ. The kingdom to which he belongs, is the only kingdom which shall never be destroyed. The King whom he serves, is the only King whose dominion shall never be taken away (Dan. 2:44; 7:14). [J. C. Ryle: *Expository Thoughts on the Gospels*, St. Luke, Vol. II, p. 373. Rev. ed., London, 1910]<sup>15</sup>

### 4.5.3 - Which Kingdoms?

Since the four kingdoms within the dream given to **Nebuchadnezzar** and vision seen by Daniel are represented by symbols (metals in chapter 2, beasts in chapter 7), the question arises: Which kingdoms are meant? As can be seen in the “Scriptural Identification” column of the *Kingdoms of History* chart above, we believe there is Scriptural evidence indicating the kingdoms are to be identified as **Babylon** (Dan. 2:38▶), **Medo-Persia** (Dan. 5:28-31▶; 6:8▶; 8:20-21▶ cf. 2Chr. 36:20; Est. 1:1-3, 19; Isa. 13:17; 21:2; Jer. 51:11, 28), **Greece** (Dan. 8:20-21▶; 11:2▶ cf. Joel 3:6; Zec. 9:13; Rev. 17:10▶), and **Rome** (Dan. 9:26▶ cf. Rev. 17:10▶).

This identification of the kingdoms finds support among the earliest interpreters.<sup>16</sup>

I deemed it necessary to transcribe what is said by Eusebius of Cæsarea, who bears the surname Pamphili, in the 15th book of his *Gospel Demonstration*; . . . “For after the first kingdom of the Assyrians, which was denoted by the gold, there will be the second kingdom of the Persians, expressed by the silver; and then the third kingdom of the Macedonians, signified by the brass; and after it, the fourth kingdom of the Romans will succeed, more powerful than those that went before it; for which reason also it was likened to iron.”<sup>17</sup>

The Babylonians were sovereign over all, and these were the golden head of the image. And then, after them, the Persians held the supremacy for 245 years, and they were represented by the silver. Then the Greeks had the supremacy, beginning with Alexander of Macedon, for 300 years, so that they were the brass. After them came the Romans, who were the iron legs of the image, for they were strong as iron. Then (we have) the toes of clay and iron, to signify the democracies that were subsequently to rise, partitioned among the ten toes of the image, in which shall be iron mixed with clay.<sup>18</sup>

In speaking of a “lioness from the sea,” he meant the rising of the kingdom of Babylon, and that this was the “golden head of the image.” . . . Then after the lioness he sees a second beast, “like a bear,” which signified the Persians. For after the Babylonians the Persians obtained the power. And in saying that “it had three ribs in its mouth,” he pointed to the three nations, Persians, Medes, and Babylonians, which were expressed in the image by the silver after the gold. Then comes the third beast, “a leopard,” which means the Greeks; for after the Persians, Alexander of Macedon had the power, when Darius was overthrown, which was also indicated by the brass in the image. And in saying that the beast “had four wings of a fowl, and four heads,” he showed most clearly how the kingdom of Alexander was parted into four divisions. For in speaking of four heads, he meant the four kings that arose out of it. For Alexander, when dying, divided his kingdom into four parts. Then he says, “The fourth beast (was) dreadful and terrible: it had iron teeth, and claws of brass.” Who, then, are meant by this but the Romans, whose kingdom, the kingdom that still stands, is expressed by the iron? “for,” says he, “its legs are of iron.”<sup>19</sup>

The Talmud reflects throughout an uncharacteristic consistency in interpretation. In several places R. Johanan is cited as suggesting that the fourth kingdom is Rome, while other portions connect the second beast to the Persians, leaving no doubt that the fourth would be Rome. . . . The evidence in the writings of the Church fathers is massive and in unison in favor of the Roman view. Rowley begins with Irenaeus, Hippolytus and Origen and adds a dozen more voices before he has finished even the earlier periods.<sup>20</sup>

The interpretation of the royal image of Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. 2:31-43▶) and of the four corresponding beast figures of the night vision of Daniel (ch. 7▶) as the Babylonian, Persian, Grecian, and Roman world empires is found as early as Irenaeus (died A.D. 202) and in Josephus and the Jewish Rabbis. Luther says: ‘Upon this interpretation and the meaning all the world is harmonious, and fact and history strongly prove it.’<sup>21</sup>

R. A. Anderson (*Signs and Wonders*, ITC [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1984], 21-22) states: “This interpretation has found wide acceptance among commentators both early and recent. It is to be found consistently in the Talmud (e.g., *Abod. Zar.* 2b) and among medieval Jewish commentators such as R. Saadiah Gaon, R. Moshe ben Maimon, and R. Moshe ben Nachman. This lead has been followed, in the main, within traditional Judaism.” Both Jerome (pp. 31-32) in the fourth-fifth centuries a.d. and Calvin (*Daniel*, 1:172) in the sixteenth century a.d. held this view. Virtually all scholars who subscribe to the sixth-century date interpret these kingdoms to be Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome.<sup>22</sup>

The “orthodox” view, which refers the first three kingdoms to Babylon, Medo-Persia, and Greece, but the fourth to Rome and the states which have sprung from it since the empire; early represented by Josephus (*Ant.* X. 10, 4), by a majority of church-fathers—especially by Jerome, Orosius, and Theodoret; also by all the expositors of the Middle-age church after Walafrid Strabo, and by a majority of moderns, of whom we mention Buddeus (*Hist. eccles.* p. 2. sect. 5, p. 619 ss.), Joach. Lange, Starke, Zeis, Velthusen (*Animadversiones ad Dan.* 2:27-45; Prag, 1783), Menken (*Das Monarchienbild*, Brem, and Aurich, 1809), Hengstenberg, Hävernick, Caspari (*Die vier daniel. Weltmonarchien, in the Zeitschrift für luth. Theologie und Kirche*, 1841, No. 4), Hofmann (*Weissagung und Erfüllung*, I. 276 et seq.), Keil (*Einl. ins A. T.* § 134, p. 443, [also in his *Commentary on Daniel*]), Gaussen (*Daniel le Prophète*, 2d. edit. 1850, I. 250 ss.), Auberlen (*Daniel*, etc., p. 42 et seq.), Zündel (*Krit Unterss.* etc., p. 74 et seq.), Kliefoth, Füller, Gärtner (in their expositions), Pusey (p. 58 ss.), Volck (*Vindicie Dan.*, p. 7 ss.), . . .<sup>23</sup>

The earliest Jewish interpretation of this text comes from the end of the second temple period from the Jewish priestly community at Qumran. This Jewish sect apparently considered Daniel's 70 weeks prophecy to be a guide that calculated the time of the messianic era, a time in which they believed they were living. . . . This interpretation of expected contemporary fulfillment indicates they viewed the prophecy as future (rather than as having a past fulfillment in the events of the Maccabean revolt), since they identified their present Roman occupiers with "the people of the prince that shall come" (Daniel 9:26). **This implies they recognized Rome as the fourth kingdom in the vision of the great statue (Daniel 2:14).** [emphasis added]<sup>24</sup>

Our limited survey of interpreters reveals widespread support for the dominant interpretation with which we agree, including: Anderson,<sup>25</sup> Archer,<sup>26</sup> Barnes,<sup>27</sup> Benware,<sup>28</sup> Borland,<sup>29</sup> Calvin,<sup>30</sup> Clarke,<sup>31</sup> Clough,<sup>32</sup> Combs,<sup>33</sup> Constable,<sup>34</sup> Darby,<sup>35</sup> Dean,<sup>36</sup> Fausset,<sup>37</sup> Feinberg,<sup>38</sup> Ferguson,<sup>39</sup> Fruchtenbaum,<sup>40</sup> Gaebelein,<sup>41</sup> Gill,<sup>42</sup> Hippolytus,<sup>43</sup> Howe,<sup>44</sup> Hughes,<sup>45</sup> Irenaeus,<sup>46</sup> Ironside,<sup>47</sup> Jeremiah,<sup>48</sup> Jerome,<sup>49</sup> Josephus,<sup>50</sup> Keil,<sup>51</sup> Kelly,<sup>52</sup> Larkin,<sup>53</sup> Leupold,<sup>54</sup> MacArthur,<sup>55</sup> McGee,<sup>56</sup> Meyers,<sup>57</sup> Miller,<sup>58</sup> Mills,<sup>59</sup> Newton,<sup>60</sup> Pentecost,<sup>61</sup> Pusey,<sup>62</sup> Sauer,<sup>63</sup> Scofield,<sup>64</sup> Showers,<sup>65</sup> Steinmann,<sup>66</sup> Unger,<sup>67</sup> VanGemeren,<sup>68</sup> Walvoord,<sup>69</sup> Whitcomb,<sup>70</sup> Wood,<sup>71</sup> and Young.<sup>72</sup>

The second most popular scheme for identifying the kingdoms interprets the Medo-Persian kingdom as two individual kingdoms thereby designating the fourth kingdom as Greece and omitting Rome.<sup>73</sup>

There have been two primary approaches to understanding the four kingdoms of Daniel. The first one (the "Roman" view) is the one that historically has been held by conservative interpreters: that the four kingdoms of Daniel are (1) Babylon, (2) Medo-Persia, (3) Greece and (4) Rome. The second view (the "Greek" view) presents the four kingdoms of Daniel as (1) Babylon, (2) Media, (3) Persia and (4) Greece. This second view has historically been the view of those who do not acknowledge predictive prophecy and who give a late date to the book of Daniel. Rome is left out because they just do not admit that such a thing could be predicted.<sup>74</sup>

Although there are exceptions, the primary motivation for splitting the Medo-Persian Empire in two is an attempt to deny the accurate prediction of the rise of Rome. This anti-supernatural bias is found in the comments of Zöckler:

[Identifying the fourth kingdom as Rome] is opposed by many considerations. (1) It ascribes a range of vision over the future to the dreaming king and the prophetic interpreter, which lacks every support based on the actual condition of the times, since, as is well known, the greatness and world-historical importance of Rome were unknown until four hundred years after the captivity. Unlike the sections of the prophecy which relate to Persia and Javan, **this would have no foundation in existing relations, but rather, would be of an abstractly supernatural character.** [emphasis added]<sup>75</sup>

God reveals, through Nebuchadnezzar and Daniel, the historic sequence of kingdoms from the time of Judah's captivity all the way to the establishment of God's kingdom on earth and Zöckler complains we shouldn't expect there to be any true prophecy in what is revealed! His bias against God's supernatural ability to prophesy is evident. As we shall see below, contra Zöckler, there is considerable evidence that the **Medo-Persian Empire** should be treated as a single kingdom in the sequence of kingdoms.

#### 4.5.4 - The Medo-Persian Empire

In an attempt to establish the identity of the fourth kingdom shown to **Nebuchadnezzar** and Daniel as Greece rather than Rome, numerous interpreters have taken the second kingdom as a Median kingdom and the third as a separate Persian kingdom—thus dividing the Medo-Persian Empire into two. As we've seen, this is frequently motivated by a desire to negate the prophetic evidence of the book of Daniel. Those who assume Daniel is written by an unknown **author** living during the Maccabean period attempt to bolster their critical views by removing Rome from the sequence of kingdoms because a Maccabean "Daniel" would not have reliably predicted its subsequent rise to power apart from supernatural assistance.

The attempt to divide the second and third kingdom as if the second kingdom is that of the Medes and the third kingdom that of the Persians followed by the fourth empire identified as Greece, which Farrar supports so enthusiastically, is obviously motivated by the desire to reduce the prophetic element to a minimum. Even a spurious Daniel living in the second century, according to these critics, could not have predicted accurately a future Roman Empire, but he could have reported on the Babylonian, Median, and Grecian empires. . . . They prefer to hold that the four empires are Babylon, the Medes, the Persians, and the Grecian Empires, and that all of what Daniel "predicted" was actually already history by the Maccabean period.<sup>77</sup>

The opinion that the second kingdom was a legendary Median empire and the third and fourth were Persian and Greek empires fits nicely with the second-century dating of Daniel but has little to support it.<sup>78</sup>

On whatever ground Cyrus placed Darius the Mede as Vice-king over Babylon [Dan. 5:31], there is not a plea for thinking that Daniel speaks of a Median Empire distinct from Persia. The account of Daniel, throughout, expresses the contrary.<sup>79</sup>

When we turn to the ultimate authority, the Word of God, we find explicit support for interpreting the Medo-Persian Empire as a single entity. Perhaps the greatest single support for making the second kingdom the Medo-Persian Empire is found in what Daniel tells **Belshazzar** on the very night of the overthrow of **Babylon**: his kingdom is being given to the *Medes and Persians* (Dan. 5:28-31). This alone should be sufficient to establish the identity of the second kingdom beyond question. But there is more.

### Winged Sphinx from Shushan Palace

When Babylon, under Belshazzar (and **Nabonidus**), falls in **chapter 5**, it is given into the hands of **Darius the Mede** (Dan. 5:31). This might be interpreted as evidence of a separate Median kingdom. However, when we reach the events of **chapter 6**, we find the same Darius bound by the *law of the Medes and Persians* (Dan. 6:8). This clearly indicates that Darius, although a Mede by nationality, was acting on behalf of a coalition between the Medes and Persians. This same coalition is evident in the book of Esther where we find the officials and servants of King Ahasuerus described as *the powers of Persia and Media* (Est. 1:1-3). Out of his concern that the behavior of Queen Vashti might prove to be a detrimental influence upon the *ladies of Persia and Media*, the king is advised to issue a decree to be recorded in the *laws of the Persians and the Medes* (Est. 1:18-19).<sup>80</sup>

In **chapter 8**, in the **third year of Belshazzar** (551 B.C.), Daniel has a vision of an interaction between a ram with two horns (representing the second kingdom which will soon bring Belshazzar's reign to a close) and a male goat (representing Alexander the Great). Following the vision, a "holy one" identifies the two horns on the ram as representing *the kings of Media and Persia* (Dan. 8:20). Although there are two horns (Media and Persia), they are combined on the single animal (ram). Since each individual animal in **chapter 7** represents a kingdom, we have good precedent for understanding the two horns on the head of the ram to represent a single kingdom.<sup>81</sup>



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Those who would split Medo-Persia into two kingdoms, first Media and then Persia, overlook the evidence we've cited concerning their joint kingdom. Also, Scripture does not leave room for a Median kingdom holding sway between Babylon and Persia. "And those who escaped from the sword he carried away to *Babylon, where they became servants to him and his sons until the rule of the kingdom of Persia*, to fulfill the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her Sabbaths. As long as she lay desolate she kept Sabbath, to fulfill seventy years" (2Chr. 36:20-21). Isaiah also links the two. "A distressing vision is declared to me; The treacherous dealer deals treacherously, And the plunderer plunders. Go up, *O Elam!* [Persia] Besiege, *O Media!* All its sighing I have made to cease" (Isa. 21:2).<sup>82</sup>

Freeman summarizes the evidence in favor of a single combined Medo-Persian Empire.

The critical school, assigning a Maccabean date for Daniel and denying the possibility of predictive prophecy, places all four kingdoms prior to the alleged date of the books composition (c. 167 B.C.) and thus identifies them as Babylonian, Median, Persian and Greco-Macedonian. . . . However, this erroneous assumption by the critics is disproved by the book itself, which identifies the second kingdom quite specifically as Medo-Persian . . . Daniel does not say that the Babylonian kingdom will first be given to the Medes and then the Persians, but "given to the Medes and Persians," [Dan. 5:28-30], the Persians being in fact emphasized in the usage of the word *peres*. Again in Daniel 6:8, 12, 15 Darius is said to have ruled according to "the law of the Medes and Persians." If Persia constituted a separate kingdom following the alleged Median kingdom, it is obvious that Darius could not have know of, nor been bound by, the laws of the Persians. . . . Moreover, 2 Chronicles 36:20 disproves the alleged belief by the Jews of any intermediate Median empire before Persia. . . . chapter 8 . . . also speaks of Media and Persia as parts of one realm (Dan. 8:20), which was to be followed by the Greek Empire (Dan. 8:21-22). The two-horned ram is specifically said to be "Media and Persia," and the he-goat . . . which succeeded it, is said to be Greece.<sup>83</sup>

For Daniel to hold that **Cyrus** the Great, who released the Jews from their captivity, ruled over Media (but not Persia) is most unlikely.<sup>84</sup>

History shows the Median empire was overthrown by Cyrus and became a joint kingdom.

Famed Greek historian Herodotus, writing in the fifth century B.C., describes the formation of the Median Empire in which the Medes had numerous smaller settlements that were united by a man named Deioces. This man built a large capital city known as Ecbatana. According to the historian, he reigned for 53 years and united at least six regional groups into the

kingdom of Media. Herodotus then documents that Deioces' son Phraortes reigned for 22 years after his father. He was succeeded by his son Cyaxares, who "united all Asia beyond the Halys under his rule" . . . (1:95-103). Cyaxares reigned 40 years, died, and was succeeded by his son Astyagas. Under the reign of Astyagas, the Persians revolted against the Medes. Led by Cyrus the Great, the Persian army defeated Astyagas' army and Cyrus ascended to the throne of both the Medes and the Persians (1:127-30). The Nabonidus Chronicle confirms Cyrus' victory against Astyagas.<sup>85</sup>

The Medes had been subsumed under the Persians eleven years before Babylon was conquered by Cyrus the Great. Cyrus had combined the Median and Persian kingdoms in himself, since he was of Persian royal descent on his father's side and of Median royal descent on his mother's side, and he solidified this with the defeat of the Median king, his grandfather Astyages, in 550 BC. It should be noted that Medes continued to play an important part in the Persian Empire, and the Greeks often called Persians "Medes" down to the fourth century BC.<sup>86</sup>

On the unity of Medo-Persia as rather than two in the sequence of kingdoms there is sufficient archaeological evidence, such as from the stairway reliefs at Persepolis ["The northern part of the eastern staircase depicts alternating Persian and Median nobles conversing with each other" (Edwin M. Yamauchi, *Persia and the Bible* [Grand Rapids: Baker, 1990], 347). These reliefs make no distinction in official rank or status between the Persian and Median nobility. For photos, see Arthur Upham Pope and Phyllis Ackerman, eds., *Pre-Achaemenid, Achaemenid, Parthian and Sāsānian Periods*, vol. 4 of *A Survey of Persian Art from Prehistoric Times to the Present* (London: Oxford University Press, 1938), 90, 92], to demonstrate that the Medes were senior partners and equals with the Persians, rather than their vassals. One even finds an occasional reference to "Persians and Medes" in Greek writers such as Xenophon and Thucydides, instead of the usual "Persians" [Thucydides *History of the Peloponnesian War* 1.104.2; Xenophon *Anabasis* 3.2.25. See further Christopher Tuplin, "The Persian Empire," in *The Long March: Xenophon and the Ten Thousand*, ed. Robin Lane Fox (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2004), 156].<sup>87</sup>

#### 4.5.5 - Kingdoms of Significance to Israel

The following chart lists the sequence of kingdoms of significance to Israel, highlighted by Scripture because of their relation to the representative rule of God through the throne of David—the throne God uses ultimately to restore dominion lost through the fall of Adam (Gen. 1:26-28; Ps. 115:16; Mat. 4:8; Luke 4:5). The kingdoms of history revealed within the Bible are those associated most closely with the elective/redemptive goals of God from Genesis through Revelation, but especially because they impinge upon his chosen nation, Israel, and its tribe of Judah out of which arose the Messiah, the ultimate ruler destined to sit upon the throne of David (Gen. 49:10; Isa. 9:6-7; Luke 1:32; Mat. 25:31).

Although [Nebuchadnezzar's](#) dream (chapter 2) and Daniel's vision (chapter 7) primarily concern *five* kingdoms—four Gentile world powers followed by the kingdom of God—there are actually *nine* kingdoms of biblical significance highlighted by Scripture. In our view, the first eight of the nine kingdoms correspond with the *eight heads* revealed to John (Rev. 17:9-11). These represent a broader historical sequence of kingdoms of which the *six phases*<sup>88</sup> of the four Gentile kingdoms revealed to Daniel are a part. Looking backward from his time, John sees *seven heads*, taking in the sweep of history preceding Daniel's time. The eighth head was still future to John's time (Rev. 17:11). Daniel's view differs from John's because it looks forward in history and omits those kingdoms, seen by John, which had already come and gone prior to Daniel's time. See the "Heads" column in the following chart.



## Kingdoms of History<sup>89</sup>

| <b>Heads</b><br><br>(Seen by John, Rev. 12:3▶; 13:1▶; 17:3▶, 7-9▶) | <b>Kingdom</b><br><br>(See <i>Which Kingdoms?</i> ) | <b>Beautiful Image</b><br><br>(Seen by Nebuchadnezzar: Man's Perspective, Dan. 2:31-35▶) | <b>Vicious Beast</b><br><br>(Seen by Daniel and John: God's Perspective, Dan. 7:1-28▶; Rev. 13:2▶) | <b>Scriptural Identification</b>  |
|--|---|--|--|---|
| 1  | <b>Babel (or Egypt?)</b> <sup>90</sup>              |  |  | <p>“Now Cush became the father of Nimrod; he became a mighty one on the earth. He was a mighty hunter before the LORD . . . The beginning of his kingdom was <b>Babel</b> and Erech and Accad and Calneh, in the land of Shinar.” (Gen. 10:8-10).</p> <p>“And on her forehead a name was written, a mystery, <b>‘BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.’</b>” (Rev. 17:5▶, NASU).</p> |
| 2  | <b>Egypt (or Assyria?)</b> <sup>91</sup>            |  |  | <p>“Now there arose a new king over Egypt, who did not know Joseph. And he said to his people, “Look, the people of the children of Israel <i>are</i> more and mightier than we; come, let us deal shrewdly with them, lest they multiply, and it happen, in the event of war, that they also join our enemies and fight</p>  |

against us, and so go up out of the land.” ” (Ex. 1:8-10).

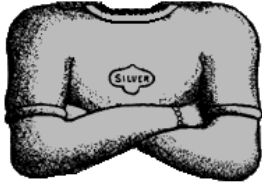
“Then you shall say to Pharaoh, “Thus says the LORD: ‘Israel is My son, My firstborn. So I say to you, let My son go that he may serve Me. But if you refuse to let him go, indeed I will kill your son, your firstborn.’ ” ” (Ex. 4:22-23)

“When Israel was a child, I loved him, And out of Egypt I called My son.” (Hos. 11:1)

|          |  |  |  |   |
|----------|--|--|--|---|
| <p>3</p> | <p><b>Babylon</b></p>                  | <p><b>Head of Gold</b></p>  <p>(Dan. 2:32, 37-38)</p> | <p><b>Lion with Eagle's Wings</b></p>  <p>92</p> <p>Like a lion with eagle's wings (Dan. 7:4).</p> <p>His Mouth like the mouth of a lion (Rev. 13:2)</p> | <p>Daniel told Nebuchadnezzar, “you are this head of gold” (Dan. 2:38).</p> |
| <p>4</p> | <p><b>Medo-Persia</b><sup>93</sup></p> |  |  | <p>Daniel told Belshazzar, “PERES: Your</p>                                 |



### Chest and Arms of Silver



(Dan. 2:32▶, 39▶)

### Bear with Three Ribs



94

*Like a bear with three ribs (Dan. 7:5▶).<sup>95</sup>*

*Like the feet of a bear (Rev. 13:2▶)*

kingdom has been divided, and given to the **Medes and Persians**. . . . That very night Belshazzar, king of the Chaldeans, was slain. And Darius the **Mede** received the kingdom, being about sixty-two years old” (Dan. 5:28-31▶).

Daniel was told, “The ram which you saw, having the two horns—they are the kings of **Media and Persia**” (Dan. 8:20▶).

“And those who escaped from the sword he [the king of Chaldea] carried away to Babylon, where they became servants to him and his sons until the rule of the kingdom of **Persia**” (2Chr. 36:20).

“Behold I will stir up the **Medes** against them [Babylon]” (Isa. 13:17a).

“A distressing vision is declared to me; The treacherous dealer deals treacherously, And the plunderer plunders. Go up, **O Elam!** Besiege, **O Media!** All its sighing I have made to cease.” (Isa. 21:2).

“Now, O king, establish the

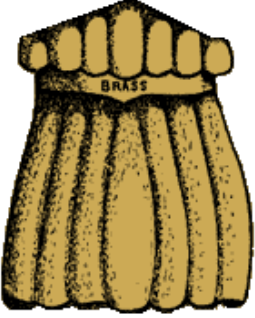

decree and sign the writing, so that it cannot be changed, according to the law of the **Medes and Persians**, which does not alter.” (Dan. [6:8](#)).

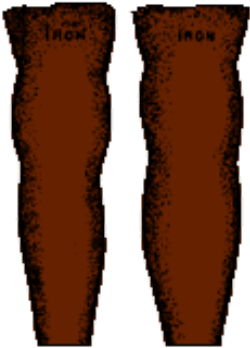



“Make the arrows bright! Gather the shields! The LORD has raised up the spirit of the kings of the **Medes**. For His plan is against Babylon to destroy it, Because it is the vengeance of the LORD, The vengeance for His temple.” (Jer. [51:11](#)).


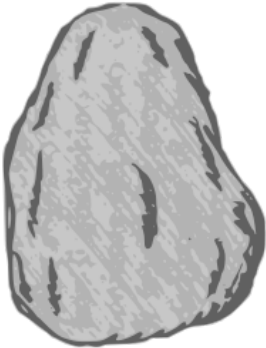
“Prepare against her [Babylon] the nations, With the kings of the **Medes**, Its governors and all its rulers, All the land of his dominion.” (Jer. [51:28](#)).

“Now it took place in the days of Ahasuerus, the Ahasuerus who reigned from India to Ethiopia over 127 provinces . . . in the third year of his reign he gave a banquet for all his princes and attendants, the army officers of **Persia and Media**, the nobles and the princes of his provinces being in his presence.” (Est. [1:1-3](#)).

“If it pleases the king, let a royal

|   |   |  |  |  |
|---|---|--|--|--|
|   |   |  |  | <p>edict be issued by him and let it be written in the laws of <b>Persia and Media</b> so that it cannot be repealed, that Vashti may no longer come into the presence of King Ahasuerus, and let the king give her royal position to another who is more worthy than she.” (Est. 1:19).</p>   |
| 5 | <p><b>Greece (Macedonian)</b> <sup>96</sup></p> | <p><b>Belly and Thighs of Bronze</b></p>  <p>(Dan. 2:32▶, 39▶)</p> | <p><b>Leopard with Four Wings and Four Heads</b></p>  <p>97</p> <p><i>Like a leopard with four wings and four heads (Dan. 7:6▶).<sup>98</sup></i></p> <p><i>Like a leopard (Rev. 13:2▶)</i></p> | <p>Daniel was told, “The ram which you saw, having the two horns-they are the kings of Media and Persia. And the male goat is the kingdom of <b>Greece</b>. The large horn that is between its eyes is the first king” (Dan. 8:20-21▶).</p> <p>Daniel was told, “three more kings will arise in Persia, and the fourth shall be far richer than them all . . . he shall stir up all against the realm of <b>Greece</b>” (Dan. 11:2▶).</p> <p>“Also the people of Judah and the people of Jerusalem You have sold to the <b>Greeks</b>” (Joel 3:6a).</p> <p>“I have . . . raised up your sons, O Zion, against your sons, <b>O Greece</b>” (Zec. 9:13).</p> <p>John lived under Roman rule and was told, concerning the</p> |

|          |  |  |   |  |
|----------|--|--|---|--|
|          |  |  |   | <p>seven kingdoms, <b>“five have fallen”</b> (Rev. 17:10).</p>   |
| <p>6</p> | <p><b>Rome</b><sup>99</sup></p>            | <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Legs of Iron</b></p>  <p style="text-align: center;">(Dan. 2:33, 40)</p>  | <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Dreadful and Terrible Beast</b></p>  <p style="text-align: center;">100</p> <p>A <i>unique</i> beast dreadful and terrible (Dan. 7:7, 19-20, 23-25).</p> <p>(Composite beast of Rev. 13:1-2.)</p> | <p>“The people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary” (Dan. 9:26)—Titus of <b>Rome</b> destroyed Jerusalem in 70 A.D.</p> <p>John lived under unified Roman rule and was told concerning the seven kingdoms, <b>“one is”</b> (Rev. 17:10).</p> |
| <p>7</p> | <p><b>Rome (divided and dispersed)</b></p> | <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Feet of Iron and Clay</b></p>  <p style="text-align: center;">(Dan. 2:33, 41-43).</p> <p style="text-align: center;">See <i>Legs of Iron</i>.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Ten Horns</b></p>  <p style="text-align: center;">101</p>   | <p>John lived under unified Roman rule and was told concerning the seven kingdoms, <b>“the other has not yet come”</b> (Rev. 17:10).</p>   |

|   |                                       |   |  |   |
|---|---------------------------------------|---|--|---|
|   |                                       |   | Ten horns (Dan. 7:7, 20, 24; Rev. 12:3; 13:1; 17:3, 7, 12, 16)   |   |
| 8 | <b>Little Horn (Antichrist) Alone</b> | (Dan. 7:8, 20, 24; Rev. 13:4-5, 8, 15)  | <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Little Horn</b></p>  <p style="text-align: center;">102</p> <p>Little horn mortally wounded (Rev. 13:3, 14; 17:8, 11).</p> <p>Little horn revived (Rev. 11:7; 13:4; 17:8, 11).</p> | The beast emerges out of the seven, as the eighth head, at his revival, “And the beast that was, and is not, is himself also <b>the eighth, and is of the seven . . .</b> ” (Rev. 17:11).   |
|   | <b>Millennial Kingdom</b>             | <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Stone Cut Without Hands</b></p>  <p style="text-align: center;">103</p> <p>(Dan. 2:32, 44-45; Rev. 20:4-6)<sup>104</sup></p> <p>See <i>When Does the Stone Strike?</i></p> | <p>Little horn, finally slain (Dan. 7:11; 8:25; 11:45; 2Th. 2:8; Rev. 19:20).</p> <p>Son of Man receives kingdom (Dan. 2:34-35, 44-45; 7:13-14, 18, 22, 26-27).</p>  | “I was watching in the night visions, And behold, One like the Son of Man, Coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, And they brought Him near before Him. Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, That all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, Which shall not pass away, And His kingdom the one Which shall not be destroyed” (Dan. 7:13-14). |

**4.5.6 - When Does the Stone Strike?**

There is great agreement among interpreters concerning the identity of the five kingdoms revealed in **chapter 2** and **chapter 7: Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome, and the kingdom of God**. But when it comes to interpreting the *manner, timing, and*

*nature* of the stone (representing the kingdom of God) as it overthrows the previous kingdoms (Dan. 2:34-35, 44-45), we encounter a major fork in the interpretive road:

- **Manner** - Does the stone suddenly and completely overthrow the previous kingdoms? Or does the stone gradually destroy them during a long historical overlap between the falling away of the kingdoms and the growth of the stone to fill the earth?
- **Nature** - Does the stone, when grown to fill the earth, result in a literal, geopolitical kingdom like the preceding kingdoms? Or is the kingdom represented by the stone of a different, exclusively spiritual, nature?
- **Timing** - Did the stone, representing Messiah and His kingdom, already strike the image at the **First Coming** of Jesus? Or will the stone only strike at the **Second Coming** of Christ?

One's belief concerning these three aspects of the work of the stone are interrelated. For example, those who believe the stone struck at the First Coming generally believe the stone gradually overthrows the previous kingdoms and the this stone kingdom is spiritual and coexists with the geopolitical kingdoms over a long period of time while these kingdoms slowly decline (or are redeemed).

#### 4.5.6.1 - At the First Coming?

The view that the stone struck at the First Coming establishing a spiritual kingdom which coexists with the geopolitical kingdoms and gradually supplants or transforms them, is held by Eugene Peterson, as illustrated by his paraphrase of Daniel 2:44 within *The Message*:<sup>105</sup>

But throughout the history of these kingdoms, the God of heaven will be building a kingdom that will never be destroyed, nor will this kingdom ever fall under the domination of another. In the end it will crush the other kingdoms and finish them off and come through it all standing strong and eternal.<sup>106</sup>

To support this gradual supplanting of the Gentile kingdoms by the kingdom of God, **amillennial** and **postmillennial** interpreters emphasize the way the stone grows (implying a lengthy process) to become a mountain filling the earth.

The fact that the stone becomes a mountain is significant. The stone enters the dream as a rock and then grows into a mountain, picturing the Messiah's first advent, then the growth of his kingdom throughout this world. Thus the vision does not end with the fourth kingdom, but depicts human history beyond the fourth kingdom as the kingdom of God grows. This is confirmed by the final statement, that the mountain "filled the entire earth" (Dan. 2:35), which points to the cosmic scope of the church, far beyond Babylon and its environs. . . . This messianic kingdom that struck the statue on its feet continues to crush the kingdoms of this world to this day through the preaching of the Gospel, the administration of the Sacraments, and the ingrafting of new members into the body of Christ, so that the church is spreading into all nations throughout the world.<sup>107</sup>

Notice how interpreters holding the gradual view explain the way in which the Gentile kingdoms are "crushed" by the stone: not through judgment or dramatic intervention, but by redeeming the culture of the kingdoms through reform and social justice.

The kingdom of God does that in part by the overthrow of the ancient and entrenched wrongs which are characteristic of all the world powers. Note how feudal systems, slavery, and caste systems—institutions of the world powers—yield before the Spirit of Christ in His church.<sup>108</sup>

For these interpreters, the primary tool used by God to accomplish this socio-redemptive conversion of the previously-Godless kingdoms is the *Church*, understood to be the kingdom of God on earth—even the ruling scepter of Christ.<sup>109</sup>

In the [amillennial], and [postmillennial views] for that matter, they interpret it this way, that the kingdom of heaven is the Church, and therefore the kingdom of heaven smashed the fourth empire from the time of Jesus Christ, on up to say about 500 AD, when finally Christianity triumphed over the Roman Empire. And that's their interpretation of the smashing, that the smashing occurred over a long, long time period, gradually and brought Rome to her knees. That is, the preaching of the gospel destroyed the Roman Empire. That is the [amillennial] and the [postmillennial] interpretation.<sup>110</sup>

Although such an interpretation may sound reasonable at first, we contend there are major difficulties with such a view. For one, it contradicts the teaching of Scripture on numerous counts.

The stone "rolls," and the "rolling" is an evangelical process, peaceful, missionary and full of music and love, with now and then some transient friction by way of occasional wars and rumors of war, with here and there a famine, earthquake or pestilence, which, however, only assist the rolling. The grinding is gradual, caused by the progress of Christianity, education, culture and civilization. By religion, better politics, vespers, ethics and love, human governments, especially those of Christian Europe and the United States, will become more Christian, and society be redeemed and reformed sociologically from the evils that now afflict it. The Stone comes in contact first of all with the knee-joints of the Colossus,

“rolls” gently down the iron legs, increases in size by aggregation of molecular atoms, or individual saints, and converts the world-power to a nominal Christianity, so that kings, cabinets, parliaments, congresses, nations, all profess to be Christians —massacres, murders, wars and crimes, mammon, selfishness, greed and oppression, to the contrary notwithstanding— swells to a “mountain” before the toes are reached, and so “fills the whole earth.” Strangely enough the Colossus is dwarfed down gradually, the chaff constantly flying, and yet it is all the time standing. The filling of the whole earth, which is posterior to the impact, is made anterior. “Broken to pieces” means glued together, and “smote” means “roll.” “No place found for them,” means that the kingdoms still exist as such, in a Christian form or under a Christian name. Sudden, perpendicular and chaff-making impact is displaced by gentle cycling from knee to ankle-joint and instep to toe, the statue still standing! The word “together” is strangely overlooked, and “one after another” put in its place. The result is, that the prophet is made to tell Nebuchadnezzar that Gentile politics and power will not pass away, but, at the first coming of Christ, a “Stone” will begin to “roll,” and keep on “rolling” for two thousand years, and that in the midst of the millennial age massacres, aided and abetted by “Christian powers,” will shame those of pagan times, and so the “kingdom” will come to victory, the world be converted.<sup>111</sup>

Premillenarians, however, hold that the kingdom to be established by Christ on earth is yet future. At least six points favor that view: (1) The stone will become a mountain suddenly, not gradually. Christianity did not suddenly fill “the whole earth” (Dan. 2:35▶) 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. Yet 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. Thus Nebuchadnezzar’s dream clearly teaches premillennialism, that Christ will return to earth to establish His rule on the earth, thereby subduing all nations. The church is not that kingdom.<sup>112</sup>

Amillennialists . . . interpret the prophecy of the falling stone which smites the image as representing the first advent and the gradual victory of the gospel in the present church age, culminating in the final overthrow of sin in the day of judgment. However, two fallacies are apparent. First, there appears to be in this view an unwarranted identification of the church with the kingdom of God (Dan. 2:44-45▶). Second, the graphic description of the stone striking the image on the feet in no sense suggests a gradual extension and growth of the kingdom or church (a progressive destruction of the heathen image).<sup>113</sup>

Another liability of the gradual destruction view is its difficulty explaining Church history. This fact has even been noticed by critics of Christianity. Calvin’s attempt to reply to the criticism of Rabbi Barbinel provides a helpful illustration of the problems.

I shall now relate what our brother Anthony has suggested to me, from a certain Rabbi Barbinel, who seems to excel others in acuteness. He endeavors to shew by six principal arguments, that the fifth kingdom cannot relate to our Christ — Jesus, the son of Mary. He *first* assumes this principle, **since the four kingdoms were earthly, the fifth cannot be compared with them, except its nature is the same.** [After some discussion, Calvin concludes] . . . The reasoning, therefore, of that rabbi is frivolous, when he infers that *Christ’s kingdom ought to be visible, since it could not otherwise correspond with the other kingdoms.* . . . [The Rabbi’s] *fifth* argument is this: — Constantine and other Caesars professed the faith of Christ. If we receive, says he, Jesus the son of Mary as the fifth king, how will this suit? as **the Roman Empire was still in existence under this king.** For where rite religion of Christ flourishes, where he is worshipped and acknowledged as the only King, that kingdom ought not to be separated from his. **When therefore Christ, under Constantine and his successors, obtained both glory and power among the Romans, his monarchy cannot be separated from theirs.** The *last* assertion is, — **The Roman empire as yet partially survives,** hence what is here said of the fifth monarchy cannot belong to the son of Mary. [emphasis added]<sup>114</sup>

Although we hold no sympathy for the rabbi’s attempt to deny Jesus as the promised Messiah, we do believe his points are valid: there is a major disconnect between the gradual view and history, not to mention predictions of Scripture.<sup>115</sup>

#### 4.5.6.2 - At the Second Coming!

We believe the stone: (1) strikes *suddenly*, completely overthrowing the previous kingdoms; (2) strikes at the Second Coming of Christ; and (3) establishes a literal, geopolitical kingdom which replaces the previous kingdoms with a perfectly righteous global government.

To consider this problem more carefully, we provide the following list of factors demonstrating that the stone did not strike at the *First Coming* and will not strike until the *Second Coming* of Christ.

1. **Sudden and Violent Destruction** - A straightforward reading of Daniel 2:34-25▶, 40-44▶ describes how the kingdom of God smashes the previous kingdoms by sudden and dramatic—even violent—overthrow. This is not a picture of gradual socio-redemptive spiritual conversion. “What does the symbolism of Daniel 2▶ connote; does it connote

something gradual or does it connote something catastrophic and sudden? Second, does it connote a phasing out of a political entity or does it connote a complete discontinuity of history. Is it this kind of thing, where the Roman Empire gradually shades off and the Church gradually picks it up? Is it that kind of a transition, or is it a sudden collision between one kingdom ending and the fifth kingdom beginning. Is there a continuity or is there a discontinuity in history, because if the amill and the postmill is correct, this smashing has already happened, it happened in the age of Constantine, when the Church was declared as the kingdom on earth. It happened, and Augustine will talk about it in . . . *The City of God* . . . Is it that or is it something yet to come to pass?"<sup>116</sup> Barnes, who believes the stone as having struck at the first advent realizes the problem and attempts to respond. "How, if this [the striking] is designed to apply to the kingdom of the Messiah, can the description be true? The language here would seem to imply some violent action; some positive crushing force; something like what occurs in conquests when nations are subdued. Would it not appear from this that the kingdom here represented was to make its way by conquests in the same manner as the other kingdoms, rather than by a silent and peaceful influence? Is this language, in fact, applicable to the method in which the kingdom of Christ is to supplant all others?"<sup>117</sup> Barnes labors for another four paragraphs to convince himself and the reader that the dramatic description found in Daniel 2 could somehow refer to the gradual working of Christianity to eventually overthrow Rome. Amillennial and postmillennial interpreters confuse the present age of grace following the First Coming with the prophesied cataclysmic judgment preceding the Second Coming. "The 'Stone' does not 'fill the earth' by degrees and thus 'crowd out' the Image, it at one blow DEMOLISHES IT, and its remains are blown away. The action of the 'Stone' is JUDGMENT, not Grace. Not the spread of a 'Spiritual Kingdom' by the preaching of the Gospel, but the immediate setting up of an outward and visible earthly Kingdom. The 'Stone' therefore cannot mean Christianity, for it is a PROCESS, whereas the action of the 'Stone' is SUDDEN AND CALAMITOUS."<sup>118</sup> "It does not act by a moral influence that changes the character of the object on which it acts. It destroys that object by force."<sup>119</sup> Another problem for the amillennial and postmillennial views is the amount of time it has taken so far and still the kingdom of God—if embodied by the Church—has not finished smiting the image. "No one would ever have dreamed that the smiting by the stone of Nebuchadnezzar's dream described a long process now more than nineteen hundred years underway and still far from completion."<sup>120</sup> The expectation of a sudden and violent destruction when the stone strikes is confirmed by the New Testament (1Th. 5:2-4) and especially by the Book of Revelation's predicted series of severe judgments (the seals, trumpets, and bowls) preceding the second advent.

2. **Image Destroyed Before the Stone Grows** - The sequence of actions in Nebuchadnezzar's dream is as follows: (1) the stone strikes the image (Dan. 2:34); (2) the metals are crushed (Dan. 2:35a); (3) a wind carries their remains away like chaff (Dan. 2:35b); (4) *then* the stone becomes a mountain filling the earth (Dan. 2:35c). Notice the image is completely destroyed and all trace of it removed *before* the stone grows. "The stone does not gradually increase in size to displace the image. Before it extends itself, it destroys the image."<sup>121</sup> "According to the vision, the statue and the stone do not co-exist except for that brief moment when the stone is obliterating the statue."<sup>122</sup> "Although the text does present the kingdom of God as becoming a great mountain, the text presents this as an action that takes place after the destruction and sweeping away of the other kingdoms. . . . There is no sense of a gradual overcoming of the statue, or a gradual replacing of the statue by the growing stone. . . . The stone grew to fill the whole earth only after the statue was completely gone."<sup>123</sup> Calvin recognizes the problem and attempts to circumvent it by suggesting the previously unrevealed Gentile kingdoms will remain after the stone struck, but that God chose not to reveal them to Daniel. "But Daniel says — the image perished when the Roman empire was broken up, and yet we observe in the East and the neighboring regions the greatest monarchs still reigning with very formidable prowess. I reply . . . the dream was presented to King Nebuchadnezzar, that he might understand all future events to the renovation of the world [the arrival of Christ]. Hence God was not willing to instruct the king of Babylon further than to inform him of the four future monarchies which should possess the whole globe, and should obscure by their splendor all the powers of the world, and draw all eyes and all attention to itself; and afterwards Christ should come and overthrow those monarchies. . . . No mention is made of other kingdoms, because they had not yet emerged into importance sufficient to be compared to these four monarchies."<sup>124</sup> Calvin is clutching at straws because the dream clearly allows for no additional kingdoms once the kingdom of God is established. Since Daniel 2 and Daniel 7 present parallel perspectives of the sequence of kingdoms and the way the kingdom of God overthrows them, we can look to Daniel 7 to see there is no indication of gradual overthrow of the last beast during which the saints possess the kingdom while the beast kingdom is still operative. *First*, the horn is destroyed (Dan. 7:11, 26) and *then* the kingdom is given to the saints (Dan. 7:14, 27). It is an all-or-nothing transition. There is no point when the saints possess the kingdom and are also given into the hands of the beast. This mutually-exclusive sequence is also found in Revelation 13.
3. **Kingdom of Iron is not Destroyed at the First Coming** - A plain reading of the dream of Daniel 2 suggests whenever the stone strikes, all four previous kingdoms (the fourth having dominion but incorporating cultural influences from the previous three) are destroyed. Those who think the stone struck at the First Coming must believe Rome was destroyed as a result of the First Coming. "But it is just as true that the Christian Church broke the power of pagan Rome. The disintegrating and corrupt empire crumbled through decay from within as well as through the impact of the sound morals and the healthy life of Christianity that condemned lascivious Rome. Other factors played into the process, not the least of which was the migration of barbarian hordes, who came in countless myriads from the Germanic forests and



central Europe. But the deepest and most powerful forces alive in history are moral forces like Christianity in particular. Their influence is most keenly felt and goes farthest. Christianity was in a sense God's judgment upon sinful Rome."<sup>125</sup> However, the fall of Rome cannot be attributed to the influence of Christianity. "In fact it was not the Christian church that undermined the Roman Empire, a fact that Augustine takes great pains to prove in *The City of God*. As Augustine argued, it was the corruption of the empire from within that caused it to collapse, and most historians concur with his estimation."<sup>126</sup> In other words, it was Rome's corruption—the exact opposite of what would be expected as a result of Christian influence—which contributed to her downfall. "According to both amillenarians and some postmillenarians, the kingdom of God which is here mentioned is that which was introduced by Christ at His first coming. This, of course, presupposes the destruction of the image by the church in succeeding centuries. . . The principal difficulty is that as a matter of fact Christianity was not the decisive force that broke the Roman Empire. The main reason was its internal decay and the political conditions which surrounded it. Further, the decay of the Roman Empire extended for more than a thousand years after the first coming of Christ. In other words, the time factor was greater than the period from Nebuchadnezzar to Christ. . . . There is certainly no evidence, nineteen hundred years after Christ, that the kingdom of God has conquered the entire world. . . . If it were not necessary to make Daniel's image conform somehow to the amillennial and postmillennial concept of the gradual conquering of the world by the gospel, no one would ever have dreamed that the smiting by the stone of Nebuchadnezzar's dream described a long process now more than nineteen hundred years underway and still far from completion. . . . As a matter of fact, in the twentieth century the church has been an ebbing tide in the affairs of the world; and there has been no progress whatever in the church's gaining control of the world politically. If the image represents the political power of the Gentiles, it is very much still standing."<sup>127</sup> "Such a destruction of the Gentile monarchy-system did not occur at the first advent of Christ. On the contrary, He was put to death by the sentence of an officer of the fourth empire, which was then at the zenith of its power."<sup>128</sup>

4. **Kingdom of Iron Mixed with Clay was not Present at the First Coming** - Nebuchadnezzar's dream indicates the stone struck at a specific place on the image, the stone *struck the image on its feet of iron and clay* (Dan. 2:34). Therefore, the stone cannot strike the image: (1) until the stage in history represented by the feet; (2) until the iron (Roman Empire) has already become mixed with the clay. The problem for those who believe the stone struck at the time of the cross is that Rome had not yet reached its peak and had not intermingled with clay (become fragmented). Young realizes this dilemma and attempts to dismiss the details concerning the anatomy where the stone strikes the image.<sup>129</sup> "The striking of the feet is symbolical, and does not necessarily have any particular reference to the fourth kingdom. The image is struck on the feet, because such a blow will cause it to totter and fall. Where else would one strike a blow that would cause the entire image to fall?"<sup>130</sup> Steinmann attempts to evade the problem by ignoring the presence of clay in the feet where the stone strikes. "The striking of the statue on its feet (Dan. 2:34) indicates that the destruction will happen during the time signified by the iron part of the statue."<sup>131</sup> These are evasions: the stone strikes the image on its feet of iron and clay and since Rome was unified at the time of the First Coming, it cannot be the time when the stone would strike.
5. **Ten Toes were not Present at First Coming** - The mixture of iron and clay in the final phase of the fourth kingdom includes the toes (Dan. 2:41-42). Since the stone strikes the final form of the kingdom, comprised of both iron and clay (see above), the toes must be present at the time the stone strikes. Almost all interpreters understand the (implicit ten) toes of the image seen by Nebuchadnezzar as correlating to the ten horns seen by Daniel (Dan. 7:7, 20, 24). If the ten toes correspond to the ten kings, then it is inconsistent to view the stone as having already struck the ten toes at the First Coming while the ten horns are not overthrown until the Second Coming. "The vast majority of commentators agree the dream statue of chap. 2 parallels the beast vision recorded in chap. 7. Regardless of millennial persuasion, scholars have generally interpreted the coming of the kingdom of God during the time of the ten horns in Dan. 7 to denote the second coming of Christ. Since the latter part of the statue (with its ten toes) corresponds to the latter part of the beast vision (the ten horns), it is logical to understand the rock destroying this segment of the image as also symbolizing the kingdom of God established at the Lord's return."<sup>132</sup> Moreover, scripture reveals the ten horns to be ten *contemporaneous* kings (Dan. 7:24 cf. Rev. 17:12, 16). Neither history nor Scripture reveal ten contemporaneous kings ruling during the First Coming of Christ. "Historically, the original Roman empire knew no time when ten contemporaneous subkings ruled; therefore, the time in view here, when this condition will be met, must be still future. Furthermore, even if such a time during the original Roman era could be found (attempts have been made, but unsuccessfully), all times which have presented any possibility are located in history well after the time of Christ and His beginning of the spiritual kingdom."<sup>133</sup> "The ten toes on the feet of the image represent (as a comparison with the ten horns on the Beast in chapter seven will make plain) ten kings who are to reign at one time, but who will form a confederacy on the ground of the ancient empire. This is something which the world has never yet seen. The commentators generally tell us that the ten-toed condition of the empire was reached in the fifth and sixth centuries, when the barbarians from the North overran the Roman empire, and it was divided into something like ten different kingdoms. A number of different lists have been made, of ten kingdoms each; but few writers agree as to the actual divisions. One thing they all seem to have overlooked: the ten kingdoms are to exist at one time, not through a period of several centuries, and all are to form one confederation. There is nothing in the past history of the kingdoms of Europe that answers to this."<sup>134</sup> Leupold attempts to evade the significance of the ten toes/ten horns by taking ten as a non-

literal symbolic number. “Yet we are, no doubt, correct in saying that the toes, generally speaking, represent the kingdoms into which the Roman Empire broke up when the disintegration set in. Since ten is the number of completeness or totality this would have the toes represent the sum total of these kingdoms. All attempts to name the resultant kingdoms of an earlier or a later date prove abortive and unreliable. For the number ten is definitely a symbolical number as are numbers generally in visions or dreams of this type. . . . Those interpreters who attempt to find the fulfillment of prophecy in enumerations in which ten European kingdoms are reckoned as an exact ten in number are seen to have juggled the facts in an unworthy way and to cut the evidence down to suit the preordained pattern.”<sup>135</sup> Leupold’s view is erroneous because the ten toes equate to the ten horns out of which Scripture indicates an eleventh horn will arise and overthrow three of the ten (Dan 7:8▶). These related numbers make little sense if ten is merely a “symbolical number.” The ten horns revealed to Daniel in the OT are identical to the ten horns revealed to John in the NT (Rev. 12:3▶; 13:1▶; 17:3▶, 7▶, 12▶, 16▶). Yet, in the book of Revelation, the ten horns are *future to John’s day*, “The ten horns which you saw are ten kings who have received no kingdom as yet, but they receive authority for one hour as kings with the beast” (Rev. 17:12▶). This provides further evidence the ten toes of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream did not exist<sup>136</sup> as late as 95 A.D. when John wrote Revelation.<sup>137</sup> We agree with Fausset, “The falling of the stone of the feet of the image cannot refer to Christ at His first advent, for the fourth kingdom was not then as yet divided—no toes were in existence . . .”<sup>138 139</sup>

6. **The Nature of the Kingdoms** - How can *literal geopolitical kingdoms* be completely replaced by a *non-literal, spiritual kingdom*? The idea that the fourth kingdom continues in the geopolitical sphere of influence while the fifth kingdom of God merely comes alongside it in a different “spiritual” sphere of influence reads an unnatural division into the dream. The kingdom of God must manifest in the same sphere of influence as a literal geopolitical kingdom in order to expunge and replace the previous kingdoms. “As the four Kingdoms typified by the ‘Colossus’ are literal kingdoms, it follows that the ‘Stone Kingdom’ must be a literal kingdom for it takes the place of the kingdoms that are destroyed and conquers the whole earth.”<sup>140</sup> “The fact that the text presents this kingdom as parallel with the earlier kingdoms argues that it will be earthly and physical in character, as they were.”<sup>141</sup> “The Last Kingdom replaces the first Four in the dream, and is, in the idea of the scene, spatially bound as are its predecessors; the Mountain fills the whole earth, is not a spiritual Kingdom of Heaven.”<sup>142</sup> This final literal geopolitical kingdom is not established until the return of Christ (Rev. 20:4-6▶). Those who attempt to find fulfillment of the stone striking at the First Coming must spiritualize passages in the OT describing this time period (e.g., Ps. 2:6-9; Mic. 4:1-2; Zec. 9:9-10; 14:16-21). Those who reject such an idea as “carnal”,<sup>143</sup> and incompatible with the teaching of the NT, should consider how Jesus could have been legitimately tempted by Satan’s offer of the *literal geopolitical kingdoms* of the world (Luke 4:5-6)? “Why would Christ be tempted to do something He didn’t want to do? He didn’t have a sin nature remember! Therefore, we maintain that the strength of this particular temptation, and Jesus’ response to it (in Luke 4:12 - which shows, I think, that He was tempted), present proof that it is indeed within His plan to reign over this earth one day; and this is in-line with Luke 1:32-33 and OT expectations in Mic 5:2; Isa. 11:1-10; Jer. 33:15f., Zec. 14:9 etc.”<sup>144</sup> “The period of Daniel’s prophecies, therefore, is that from the downfall of the theocracy at the captivity till its final restoration, yet future—the period of the dominion of the world powers, not set aside by Christ’s first coming (John 18:36; for, to have taken the earth-kingdom then, would have been to take it from Satan’s hands, Mat. 4:8-10), but to be superseded by His universal and everlasting kingdom at His second coming (Rev. 11:15▶).”<sup>145</sup>
7. **Antichrist must be Overthrown First** - Since the sequence of kingdoms in Daniel 2▶ and Daniel 7▶ match, the conditions during the overthrow of the fourth kingdom in each passage must also match. When we examine the overthrow of the fourth kingdom in Daniel’s vision in **chapter 7**, we find *the kingdom of God does not come until after Antichrist is destroyed* (Dan. 7:20-22▶, 25-27▶). Furthermore, Antichrist is not destroyed until the Second Coming of Christ (Dan. 7:11▶; 2Th. 2:8; Rev. 19:20▶). Therefore, the stone could not have struck the fourth kingdom at the First Coming.<sup>146</sup> Church fathers such as Origen,<sup>147</sup> Chrysostom,<sup>148</sup> and Cyril of Jerusalem<sup>149</sup> understood the Antichrist as a figure, future to their day, who would be destroyed at the Second Coming. Even Jesus associated the events of Daniel 7▶ with His Second Coming (Mat. 26:64; Mark 13:26; 14:62 cf. Dan. 7:13▶). “The ruler who dominates the political scene is declared to have power given to him to continue forty and two months. This three and one-half year period may be identified with the future great tribulation of Daniel 12:1▶ and Matthew 24:21 which is in turn related to the prophecy of Daniel 9:27▶ as being the last three and one-half years of the 490 years of Daniel’s prophecy pictured in Daniel 9:24-27▶. More important is the fact that the forty-two months (Rev 13:5▶) culminate in the second coming of Christ when, according to Revelation 19▶, the beast of Revelation 13▶ is captured and cast into the lake of fire (Rev 19:20▶). This clearly identifies the time factor as that immediately preceding the second coming of Christ and therefore future, not a part of past Roman history.”<sup>150</sup>
8. **The Times of the Gentiles are Still Underway** - We have seen the four Gentile kingdoms correspond to the *Times of the Gentiles*. One characteristic of this period is the absence of a king ruling upon the throne of David. Since Jesus is presently seated at the right hand of the Father’s throne in heaven (Rev. 3:21▶) and will not take up His throne, the throne of David on earth, until the Second Coming (Mat. 25:31), we know the Times of the Gentiles are still underway. Moreover, Jesus Himself indicated the Times of the Gentiles would continue beyond the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. (Luke 21:24). This period is also characterized by the global dispersion of the Jews, which continues today.

Scripture also indicates, within Jesus' government, the disciples will rule over Israel (Mat. 19:28) while other saints rule elsewhere within the kingdom (Dan. 7:26-27; Rev. 20:4). This is not happening today. Because the Times of the Gentiles are still underway, we know the image has not yet been struck by the stone.

9. **The Head of Gold (Babylon) has Never been Destroyed as Prophesied** - As we [discuss elsewhere](#), numerous prophecies concerning the destruction of Babylon—the head of gold of the image—have never been fulfilled. As seen in Daniel 5, the “fall” of Babylon to Medo-Persia took place without a major battle. Daniel evidently understood that aspects of Babylon's destruction did not find fulfillment in his day because he did not flee from Babylon as instructed by the Scriptures (Isa. 48:20; Jer. 50:8, 28; 51:6, 45; Zec. 2:7). How is it that Daniel, who was intimately familiar with the book of Jeremiah (Dan. 9:2), ignored Jeremiah's exhortations to flee Babylon? Evidently, he understood those passages to describe a destruction of Babylon unrelated to the overthrow of Babylonian by [Darius](#) the Mede. Since the head of gold has never been destroyed as predicted by the Scriptures (see also Isa. 13; 14; Rev. 17; 18) we know the stone has not yet struck the image.

10. **A Denial of Present Reality** - If the stone struck at the cross, then why, nearly two millennia later, is the world still filled with ungodly chaff (Ps. 1:4)? “When one looks at the crime, atrocities, and injustices of this present world, it is difficult to sense that the kingdom of God has now filled the earth. All persons have not entered Christ's kingdom, nor do they submit to his authority (the vast majority do not). Yet when Christ returns, all will acknowledge him as Lord (cf. Php. 2:10-11).”<sup>151</sup> “Has the Church ended all of Roman culture? Has the Church ended all of Greek thought? Has the Church ended all of the superstitious religion and the cultic rites of Babylon? . . . not at all, not at all! The smashing is yet future because when the smashing occurs it will end all these kingdoms. And we still see the kingdoms influencing us today.”<sup>152</sup> “The primary concern of this passage is the question, How are the nations of the world related to this ‘stone’? The clear testimony of Scripture is that unbelieving nations will continue to reject the grace of God in Jesus Christ until the day of judgment arrives, from which there is no escape . . .”<sup>153</sup>

Numerous early interpreters expected Daniel's prophecy would not find fulfillment until a future date. [Josephus](#) thought Daniel's prophecy concerned “things that are future” to his day.<sup>154</sup> Among early interpreters who associate the overthrow of the kingdoms with the Second Coming are Cyril of Jerusalem,<sup>155</sup> [Eusebius](#),<sup>156</sup> [Hippolytus](#)<sup>157</sup>, [Irenaeus](#)<sup>158</sup>, [Origen](#),<sup>159</sup> and [Theodoret](#).<sup>160</sup>

#### 4.5.7 - Where is the Roman Kingdom Today?

Having seen evidence from both Scripture and early interpreters that the stone does not strike the image until the Second Coming of Christ, how are we to understand our own day? In what sense can it be said the fourth kingdom (Rome) will be present in the future when Jesus returns in judgment? Walton provides a helpful summary of the interpretive options:<sup>162</sup>

In summary, three positions are commonly held among evangelicals today, all of which posit Rome as the fourth empire: (1) The fourth empire and the ten horns are all in the past, and the kingdom of God is represented and fulfilled in the Church. Fulfillment is viewed as complete. This view is at least as old as Augustine. (2) The fourth kingdom is still in power through the continued influence (political, religious, cultural, etc.) of the Roman empire, but the ten-horns stage is still future. An early proponent of this view is Jerome, and it seems to be the most popular view, historically speaking. But it is held by very few today because of the historical difficulties. (3) The fourth kingdom is over, and we are now in a prophetic gap that will end when a ten-nation confederacy reconstitutes the Roman empire. This view is scarce, if not nonexistent, prior to the nineteenth century.<sup>163</sup>

Our discussion above shows that, although position #1 was promoted as early as Augustine, such a view runs contrary to a large body of Scriptural evidence. This leaves the remaining two options.

##### 4.5.7.1 - A Prophetic Gap?

There is strong Scriptural evidence for the existence of unforeseen gaps within prophetic passages.<sup>164</sup> Numerous examples spring to mind such as between the betrayal and triumph of Christ in relation to Satan (Gen. 3:15), between the birth and reign of Jesus (Isa. 9:6-7), between the preaching of good tidings and the day of judgment (Isa. 61:1-2 cf. Luke 4:17-19), between the presentation of the king and the time of global peace (Zec. 9:9-10), between the First Coming of Christ and the destruction of [Antichrist](#) at His Second Coming (Dan. 9:26-27), between the striking of the Shepherd and the restoration of Israel (Zec. 13:7-9 cf. Mat. 26:21; Mark 14:27), between the baptism of the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost and the baptism by Fire at the future judgment (Mat. 3:11-12), between the first and second resurrections—separated by a period of 1,000 years (John 5:28-29 cf. Rev. 20:4-5).

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Scripture also indicates the body of Christ, the Church (**born on the day of Pentecost**), was not revealed to the Old Testament prophets (Eph. 3:1-6; Col. 1:24-27). Hence, the Church age—nearly 2,000 years long as we write this—was not revealed in the OT. This means those who were given inspired revelation in both OT and NT often wrote about events within a verse or two of each other which turned out to be separated by long periods of time. Add to this Israel's failure to respond to the *bona fide* offer of the kingdom made to her by Jesus at his First Coming (Zec. 9:9; Mat. 10:5-6; 15:24; 21:5; Mark 7:27; John 1:11), and it becomes clear the potential end of the **Times of the Gentiles** was extended (Luke 21:24; Acts 1:6-7) such that the age of the Church might well be omitted from **Nebuchadnezzar's** dream and Daniel's vision of the *Sequence of Kingdoms*.<sup>165</sup>

OT prophecy in general does not deal with the period between Christ's first and second advents. Thus in the Book of Daniel the period between ancient Rome (the time of Christ's first coming) and Rome's final phase (immediately preceding Christ's return) is not described. It should also be noted that the peoples who made up ancient Rome and who will come together to form the final phase of that empire during the last days have continued to survive throughout the centuries through various nations and empires, particularly those of Europe. In that sense the Roman Empire has never ceased to exist.<sup>166</sup>

Probably the best solution to the problem is the familiar teaching that Daniel's prophecy actually passes over the present age, the period between the first and second coming of Christ or, more specifically, the period between Pentecost and the rapture of the church.<sup>167</sup>

The important fact to see (and failure to see it has produced interminable confusion, even among premillennialists) is that the vision does *not* portray Gentile world power represented by Rome while Israel is temporarily in national rejection and the church is being called out. That truth is in accord with general Old Testament prophecy and typology in which the church is latent but not patent in the Old Testament, concealed in the mind and purpose of God, but unrevealed to the Old Testament saints and revealed in the New Testament as a mystery (Eph. 3:1-10), that is, a previously undisclosed truth now divinely disclosed. Hence, Daniel's prophecy passes over the present church age.<sup>168</sup>

An objection might be raised, that we do not find any such [global] power existing now. This is true. There exists no such imperial rule in the world, nor has there been since the fall of Rome, though there have been occasional pretenders to it. But it has failed. The book of Revelation shows us this suspension. There was such a ruler once, while imperial Rome subsisted—one who had kings for his servants. But **now there is an interval**, when all that is over. Still it is to be revived. And this, I believe, is one great change that awaits the world at the present time. It will take men by surprise; and when accomplished, it will be the means of concentrating the power of Satan, and of bringing about his plans on the earth. [emphasis added]<sup>169</sup>

#### 4.5.7.2 - Rome Continues?

Another possibility may be suggested by the details of **Nebuchadnezzar's** dream. When the stone finally strikes the image, "the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold were crushed together" (Dan. 2:35▶). When the final fourth kingdom is destroyed, elements of the earlier kingdoms, no longer having dominion or visible presence, continue in the fourth kingdom. This is also evident in the vision granted John concerning the fourth kingdom, "The beast which I saw was like a *leopard*, his feet were like the feet of a *bear*, and his mouth like the mouth of a *lion*" (Rev. 13:2▶). Scripture indicates the fourth kingdom, the beast, exhibits attributes of the previous three kingdoms.

The fact that, though the feet are smitten, the other parts of the body are broken as well indicates that, though the sovereignty passes from one empire to another, the preceding empires have not entirely ceased to be. They simply are no longer dominant empires, but their material, their civilization, religion, and culture are left, having been successively absorbed, both in their good and their bad elements. Consequently, when the last monarchy is crushed, they are all crushed.<sup>170</sup>

Thus, after a specific kingdom is overthrown or subsumed by another, some of its attributes are incorporated into the following kingdom and such that its influence continues. In this way, Rome's influence continues among the nations, peoples, and cultures which arose out of its demise.

Nebuchadnezzar's dream also reveals *three* phases of the fourth, Roman, kingdom: (1) iron alone; (2) feet of iron mixed with clay; (3) toes of iron mixed with clay. If iron alone represents unified Rome at the time of the First Coming of Christ and the toes of iron mixed with clay correspond to the ten horns (Dan. 7:7▶, 20▶, 24▶), the final confederation of ten contemporaneous kings (Rev. 17:12-13▶), then it would seem we may currently be living in the time of the feet of iron mixed with clay. In other words, Rome has degraded to a point where it is no longer a clearly identifiable unified "iron" kingdom. Numerous interpreters understand the clay and the mention made of mixing with the seed of men (Dan. 2:43▶) as an indication of a democratic or republican influence upon the remaining iron fragments of Rome.

Here we see "Imperialism" mixed with "Democracy." The Iron representing "Imperialism," and the Clay "Democracy." In short the character of government passes from an "ABSOLUTE AUTOCRACY" to a "DEMOCRATIC MONARCHY," to

the rule of the “Head” by the “Feet,” to a form of Government in which the masses, swayed by politicians and demagogues, who think only of their own selfish interests, control the Government. Such a form of government is the weakest that can be devised and opens the way for the growth and development of Socialism, Sovietism, Bolshevism, and Anarchy. The fact that such phases of government are becoming more prominent seems to indicate that, historically, we are now living in the time indicated by the “Feet” of the “Image,” and that it will not be long before the “Toes” will appear in the form of “Ten Federated Nations,” over which a Roman Emperor will rule.<sup>171</sup>

#### 4.5.7.2.1 - The Image Still Stands

Those who understand the image in [Nebuchadnezzar’s](#) vision to indicate an ongoing Roman influence are often criticized for artificially extending the significance of the image beyond its original historical setting. After all, Rome existed in a much more visible way at the time of the cross. But *all interpretations face this same dilemma*. Those who believe the stone struck the image at the time of the cross admit that the image has not yet been toppled because today “the Church continues to chip away” at the image as it converts and reforms the social systems of the world. If the socio-political influences of the four metal kingdoms continue their opposition to God’s kingdom today, *then the image has not yet been toppled*. Thus, the requirement for the historical span of the image to encompass our own day and beyond is not unique to futurist interpreters.

In summary, we believe there are two possible ways to understand our present position within the sequence of kingdoms:<sup>172</sup>

- **Prophetic Gap** - A [prophetic gap](#) exists somewhere in the representation of the fourth kingdom. If the gap occurs within the legs of iron, then we may expect a “revived” Rome to reappear on the stage of world history prior to the mixing of clay and arrival of the ten kings. Such a scenario raises the possibility that the description of Rome “devouring the whole earth” (Dan. 7:23) describes its reappearance prior to the arrival of the ten horns. If so, then a global government will precede the ten horns, followed by the final rule of [Antichrist](#) (Rev. 13). See commentary on [Daniel 7:23](#).
- **Continuance** - The iron leg phase existed at the First Coming of Christ but eventually gave way, in the break up of Rome, to the feet mixed with clay phase. This phase has continued since. The next phase will come when the nations comprising the pieces of iron mixed with clay produce ten contemporaneous kings—eventually controlled by the final king, the Antichrist (Dan. 7:24; Rev. 17:12-13).








#### Notes

<sup>1</sup> As will be seen in the following chart, the parallelism includes [chapter 8](#) as well.

<sup>2</sup> No longer extant.

<sup>3</sup> Hippolytus, “Scholia on Daniel,” in Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxe, eds., *The Ante-Nicene Fathers, Volume V: Fathers of the Third Century: Hippolytus, Cyprian, Novatian, Appendix* (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Company, 1886), 186-187.

<sup>4</sup> Hippolytus, “Treatise on Christ and Antichrist,” in Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxe, eds., *The Ante-Nicene Fathers, Volume V: Fathers of the Third Century: Hippolytus, Cyprian, Novatian, Appendix* (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Company, 1886), 210.

<sup>5</sup> Isaac Newton, *Observations Upon the Prophecies of Daniel, and the Apocalypse of John* (Cave Junction, OR: Oregon Institute of Science and Medicine, 1831, 1991), 24-25.

<sup>6</sup> J. Dwight Pentecost, *Things to Come: A Study in Biblical Eschatology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1958), 316.

<sup>7</sup> Hippolytus, *Scholia on Daniel*, 187.

<sup>8</sup> Merrill F. Unger, *Unger’s Commentary on the Old Testament* (Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers, 2002), 1640.

<sup>9</sup> “The vision of the eighth chapter of Daniel has a narrower range. It deals only with the two kingdoms which were represented by the middle portion, or arms and body, of the image of the second chapter.”—Robert Anderson, *The Coming Prince*, 10th ed (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1894, 1957), 41.

<sup>10</sup> Although other Gentile kingdoms ruled prior to these, none were explicitly given dominion by God because the throne of David was occupied. Moreover, we know history reveals many other Gentile kingdoms besides those identified in the dreams and visions of Daniel ruling over other portions of the globe. Yet they do not represent *Kingdoms of Significance to Israel* and thus are omitted from the treatment given by the Holy Spirit focusing on Gentile vs. Jewish rule in relation to the chosen nation, Israel.

<sup>11</sup> Numerous interpreters understand the *Times of the Gentiles* to begin with the first kingdom in the sequence: Babylon. “The times of the Gentiles is that extended period of time in which the land given in covenant by God to Abraham and his descendants is occupied by Gentile powers and the Davidic throne is empty of any rightful heir in the Davidic line. The times of the Gentiles, beginning with Nebuchadnezzar’s invasion of Jerusalem in 605 B.C., will continue till the Messiah returns. Then Christ will subdue nations, deliver the land of Israel from its Gentile occupants, and bring the nation Israel into her covenanted blessings in the millennial kingdom.”—J. Dwight Pentecost, “Daniel,” in John F. Walvoord and Roy B. Zuck, eds., *The Bible Knowledge Commentary* (Wheaton, IL: SP Publications, 1983), Dan. 1:1. “The period termed by our Lord the ‘Times of the Gentiles,’ commences with the capture of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar. It is a period coincident from its beginning to its close, with the treading down of Jerusalem.”—Arthur Walkington Pink,

*The Antichrist* (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, 1999, 1923), s.v. "Israel and the Antichrist." "At this crisis Daniel appears at the court of the Babylonish monarch, according to the sure word of Isaiah to King Hezekiah (Isa. 39). 'The times of the Gentiles' (for so runs the remarkable phrase in Luke 21) were begun, and of those times Daniel was the prophet."—William Kelly, *Lectures on the Book of Daniel* (3rd. ed.) (Richardson, TX: Galaxie Software, 1881, 2004), 21.

<sup>12</sup> Wilbur M. Smith, *Israeli/Arab Conflict and the Bible* (Glendale, CA: G/L Publications, 1967), 71-72.

<sup>13</sup> H. A. Ironside, *Lectures on Daniel the Prophet*, 2nd ed (New York, NY: Loizeaux Brothers, 1953), 113.

<sup>14</sup> "This is not to be found in a recently published 'Anniversary Edition' of Ryles' work."—Smith, *Israeli/Arab Conflict and the Bible*, 98.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 96-98.

<sup>16</sup> Walton believes early interpretation of the fourth kingdom was unduly influenced by the fact of Rome's dominance at the time when the early interpretations were made. "There is no question that the earliest Jewish interpreters favored the Roman view. We must note, however, that they already came from a time when the Roman empire was firmly in place."—John H. Walton, "The Four Kingdoms of Daniel (Part 1)," in *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*, vol. 29 no. 1 (Evangelical Theological Society, March 1986), 26. "Again we must note, however, that when [early interpreters] wrote, the Roman empire was still in existence. Therefore, for instance, Irenaeus sees Daniel 2 as predicting the downfall of the Roman empire of his day into ten kingdoms. Their interpretation came from a point in history in which what they considered to be the fourth kingdom was in power."—*Ibid.*, 26-27. Yet unanimity of interpretation should be *expected* if the Scriptures contain sufficient clues so as to reliably guide God's people as they attempt to understand the text. If a wide variety of results had obtained among believing interpreters, then how could one uphold the doctrine of the perspicuity of the Scriptures and the illumination of the Spirit?

<sup>17</sup> Hippolytus, *Scholia on Daniel*, Dan. 2:31.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 178.

<sup>20</sup> Walton, *The Four Kingdoms of Daniel (Part 1)*, 26-27.

<sup>21</sup> Eric Sauer, *The Dawn of World Redemption* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1964, 1951), 172.

<sup>22</sup> Stephen R. Miller, "Daniel," in E. Ray Clendenen, Kenneth A. Mathews, and David S. Dockery, eds., *The New American Commentary* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 1994), 96n76.

<sup>23</sup> Otto Zöckler, "The Book of the Prophet Daniel," in John Peter Lange, ed., *A Commentary on the Holy Scriptures: Critical, Doctrinal, and Homiletical* (New York, NY: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1880), 86.

<sup>24</sup> J. Randall Price, "Daniel," in Tim F. LaHaye and Edward E. Hindson, eds., *Exploring Bible Prophecy* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, 2006), 251.

<sup>25</sup> Anderson, *The Coming Prince*, 31-32.

<sup>26</sup> Gleason Leonard Archer, "Daniel," vol. 7 in Frank E. Gaebelien, ed., *The Expositor's Bible Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1985), Dan. 2:39.

<sup>27</sup> Albert Barnes, *Notes on the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1884-85), Dan. 2:39.

<sup>28</sup> Paul Benware, *Daniel's Prophecy of Things to Come* (Clifton, TX: Scofield Ministries, 2007), Dan. 2:40.

<sup>29</sup> James A. Borland, "Daniel," in Edward E. Hindson and Woodrow Michael Kroll, eds., *KJV Bible Commentary* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1994), Dan. 2:36-40.

<sup>30</sup> John Calvin, *Commentary on The Prophet Daniel* (Albany, OR: Ages Software, 1998, 1561), Dan. 2:31-35.

<sup>31</sup> Adam Clarke, *Adam Clarke's Commentary on the Bible - Daniel* (Broken Arrow, OK: StudyLamp Software, 1832), Dan. 2:32-33.

<sup>32</sup> Charles Clough, *Lessons on Daniel* (Spokane, WA: Ellen Kelso, [transcriber], 2006), 9.119.

<sup>33</sup> James O. Combs, *Mysteries of the Book of Daniel* (Springfield, IL: Tribune Publishers, 1994), 34-35.

<sup>34</sup> Thomas Constable, *Notes on Daniel* (Garland, TX: Sonic Light, 2009), 36.

<sup>35</sup> John Nelson Darby, *Synopsis of the Books of the Bible: Ezra to Malachi* (Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2008), 463-464.

<sup>36</sup> Robert Dean, *Lessons on Daniel* (Spokane, WA: Ellen Kelso [transcriber], 2006), 13.158.

<sup>37</sup> A. R. Fausset, "The Book of Daniel," in Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset, and David Brown, *A Commentary, Critical and Explanatory, on the Old and New Testaments* (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997, 1877), Dan. 2:31.

<sup>38</sup> Charles Lee Feinberg, *A Commentary on Daniel: The Kingdom of the Lord* (Winona Lake, IN: BMH Books, 1981), 36-37.

<sup>39</sup> Sinclair B. Ferguson, "Daniel," in D. A. Carson, ed., *New Bible Commentary (4th ed.)* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 1994, 1970), Dan. 2:24-49.

<sup>40</sup> Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, *The Footsteps of Messiah*, rev. ed (Tustin, CA: Ariel Ministries, 1982, 2003), 43.

<sup>41</sup> Arno Clemens Gaebelien, *The Prophet Daniel: A Key to the Visions and Prophecies of the Book of Daniel*, 2nd (New York, NY: Our Hope, 1911), 28-31.

<sup>42</sup> John Gill, *Exposition of the Old and New Testaments* (Broken Arrow, OK: StudyLamp Software, 1746-1763), Dan. 2:38-40.

<sup>43</sup> Hippolytus, *Scholia on Daniel*, Dan. 2:31.

<sup>44</sup> Thomas A Howe, *Daniel in the Preterist's Den* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2008), 92-94.

<sup>45</sup> Robert B. Hughes and J. Carl Laney, *Tyndale Concise Bible Commentary* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2001), 316.

<sup>46</sup> Hippolytus, *Scholia on Daniel*, Dan. 2:31.

- <sup>47</sup> Ironside, *Lectures on Daniel the Prophet*, 34-35.
- <sup>48</sup> David Jeremiah, *The Handwriting on the Wall: Secrets from the Prophecies of Daniel* (Dallas, TX: Word Publishing, 1992), 61.
- <sup>49</sup> Eusebius Sophronius Hieronymus, *Jerome's Commentary on Daniel (Translated by Gleason L. Archer Jr.)* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 407, 1958), Dan. 2:31-40.
- <sup>50</sup> Flavious Josephus, "The Antiquities of the Jews," in Flavius Josephus and William Whiston, *The Works of Josephus : Complete and Unabridged* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1996, c1987), 10.276.
- <sup>51</sup> Carl Friedrich Keil, "Daniel," in Carl Friedrich Keil and Franz Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2002), Dan. 2:39.
- <sup>52</sup> Kelly, *Lectures on the Book of Daniel (3rd. ed.)*, Dan. 2:14.
- <sup>53</sup> Clarence Larkin, *The Book of Daniel* (Glenside, PA: Clarence Larkin Estate, 1929), Dan. 2:45.
- <sup>54</sup> H. C. Leupold, *Exposition of Daniel* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1949, 1969), 115-119.
- <sup>55</sup> John MacArthur, *Revelation 12-22 : The MacArthur New Testament Commentary* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 2000), Rev. 13:1.
- <sup>56</sup> J. Vernon McGee, *Thru The Bible Commentary* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1997, c1981), Dan. 2:43.
- <sup>57</sup> Thomas Myers, "Translator's Notes," in John Calvin, *Commentary on The Prophet Daniel* (Albany, OR: Ages Software, 1998, 1561), s.v. "Early Church Views."
- <sup>58</sup> Miller, *Daniel*, 96.
- <sup>59</sup> Monty S. Mills, *Daniel: A Study Guide to the Book of Daniel* (Dallas, TX: 3E Ministries, 1988, 1999), Dan. 2:36.
- <sup>60</sup> Newton, *Observations Upon the Prophecies of Daniel, and the Apocalypse of John*, 24-25.
- <sup>61</sup> Pentecost, *Things to Come: A Study in Biblical Eschatology*, 317.
- <sup>62</sup> Edward B. Pusey, *Daniel the Prophet* (Oxford, England: James Parker & Co, 1868), 60.
- <sup>63</sup> Sauer, *The Dawn of World Redemption*, 172.
- <sup>64</sup> Cyrus Ingerson Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1996), Dan. 2:31.
- <sup>65</sup> Renald E. Showers, *The Most High God: Commentary on the Book of Daniel* (Bellmawr, NJ: The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry, 1982), Dan. 2:36-45.
- <sup>66</sup> Andrew E Steinmann, *Daniel* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 2008), 144.
- <sup>67</sup> Unger, *Unger's Commentary on the Old Testament*, 1616-1617.
- <sup>68</sup> Willem A. VanGemeren, "Daniel," in Walter A. Elwell, ed., *Evangelical Commentary on the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1995), Dan. 2:24.
- <sup>69</sup> John F. Walvoord, *Daniel: The Key to Prophetic Revelation* (Chicago, IL: Moody Bible Institute, 1971), 64-68.
- <sup>70</sup> John C. Whitcomb, *Daniel* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1985), 47.
- <sup>71</sup> Leon J. Wood, *A Commentary on Daniel* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1998), 67-71.
- <sup>72</sup> Edward J. Young, *The Prophecy of Daniel* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1949, 1998), Dan. 2:40.
- <sup>73</sup> Goldingay gives a unique interpretation, finding all four kingdoms in the multiple rulers of the single kingdom of Babylon. In his scheme, the stone striking the image is taken to be Cyrus. "The unspecificity of Dan 2► means that the four regimes can only be identified on grounds external to it. They can be linked with Nebuchadnezzar and three of his Babylonian successors on the basis of other OT material: the rock then in Cyrus, which fits with the role ascribed to him in Isa 41; 45."—John E. Goldingay, "Daniel," vol. 30 in Bruce M. Metzger, David A. Hubbard, and Glenn W. Barker, eds., *Word Biblical Commentary* (Dallas, TX: Word Books), 51.
- <sup>74</sup> Benware, *Daniel's Prophecy of Things to Come*, Dan. 2:39.
- <sup>75</sup> Zöckler, *The Book of the Prophet Daniel*, 85.
- <sup>76</sup> *Winged sphinx from Darius' palace at Susa (Heb. Shushan). Excavated by Roland de Mecquenem, 1911. Louvre Museum, Department of Oriental Antiquities, Sully, ground floor, room 12a.* Image courtesy of Jastrow, 2005. This image is in the public domain.
- <sup>77</sup> Walvoord, *Daniel: The Key to Prophetic Revelation*, Dan. 2:39.
- <sup>78</sup> C. Hassell Bullock, *An Introduction to the Old Testament Prophetic Books* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1986), 295.
- <sup>79</sup> Pusey, *Daniel the Prophet*, 131.
- <sup>80</sup> "Darius the Mede is not simply a Median king. He is clearly subject to 'the law of the Medes and the Persians' (Dan. 6:8►, 12►, 15►). This is similar to Xerxes in the book of Esther, who is subject to 'the laws of the Persians and the Medes' (Est. 1:19; cf. Est. 1:3, 14, 18-19; note also 'the kings of Media and Persia,' in Est. 10:2, where the order is Media, then Persia, as in Daniel). Clearly, Darius is a ruler within the Persian Empire, just as surely as Xerxes was a Persian king."—Steinmann, *Daniel*, 149.
- <sup>81</sup> "The author of Daniel demonstrates throughout the book that he was well aware that Media and Persia were not two separate world kingdoms but a unified empire. For example, in Dan. 8:20► the two-horned ram (symbolizing one kingdom) represents 'the kings of Media and Persia,' and in chap. 6► the author referred to the 'laws of the Medes and Persians' (cf. Dan. 6:8►, 15►), indicating that Darius ruled by the laws of the Medo-Persian Empire, not a separate Median kingdom."—Miller, *Daniel*, 95.
- <sup>82</sup> Notice Isaiah mentions Elam (Persia) before Media. Those who would try to take these as two separate kingdoms would then have to believe Persian ascendancy preceded that of Media, but such was not the case.
- <sup>83</sup> Hobart E. Freeman, *An Introduction to the Old Testament Prophets* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1968), 275-276.

- <sup>84</sup> “Since the Median Empire never existed as a separate world power after the Neo-Babylonian, however, this would mean that Daniel committed an enormous historical blunder. That even a semieducated Jew (even in the second century B.C.) could be ignorant of the fact that it was the ruler of the Medo-Persian Empire, Cyrus the Great, who delivered them from Babylonian captivity is highly unlikely. Next to the Egyptian exodus itself, this was the most important event in the history of Israel as a nation. Furthermore, both 2Chr. 36:22-23 and Ezra 1:1-4 testify that it was Cyrus the *Persian* who conquered Babylon and issued the decree allowing the Jews to return to their homeland.”—Miller, *Daniel*, 94-95.
- <sup>85</sup> Kyle Butt, “The Prophecy of Daniel 8,” in *Bible and Spade*, vol. 25 no. 3 (Landisville, PA: Associates for Biblical Research, Summer 2012), 61.
- <sup>86</sup> Steinmann, *Daniel*, 148-149.
- <sup>87</sup> Stephen Anderson, *Darius the Mede: A Reappraisal* (PhD diss., TX: Dallas Theological Seminary, 2014), 80.
- <sup>88</sup> The six phases are as follows: (1) Babylon, (2) Medo-Persia, (3) Greece, (4) Rome unified, (5) Rome divided and dispersed, (6) Little Horn, Antichrist, alone.
- <sup>89</sup> This chart is an enhancement of a previous version from . [Anthony C. Garland, *A Testimony of Jesus Christ : A Commentary on the Book of Revelation, Vol. 2 (Rev. 15-22)* (Camano Island, WA: SpiritAndTruth.org, 2004), 4.3.1] See *Nebuchadnezzar’s Dream and Daniel’s Vision*. Unless noted otherwise, images within this section are enhancements of the original work of Clarence Larkin, now in the public domain. Enhanced images are placed in the public domain.
- <sup>90</sup> On the one hand, if the first two kingdoms are identified by their significance in relation to Israel, then they would likely be Egypt and Assyria. On the other hand, the historic span of the seven-headed beast of Revelation and the identity and role of the woman which riding upon it (Babylon, the *mother* of harlots and abominations, Rev. 17:3▶, 7▶) argue for identifying the first head as representing Babel. For a discussion concerning the possible identities of the first two heads see [ibid., 4.3.2.5]. Although we prefer the view that the first kingdom is Babel, scriptures which could support the identification of the first kingdom as Egypt include: Ex. 1:8-10; 4:22-23; Hos. 11:1.
- <sup>91</sup> Although we prefer the view that the second kingdom is Egypt, scriptures which could support the identification of the second kingdom as Assyria include: 2K. 15:29; 17:6; 2Chr. 28:20; 32:1; Isa. 36:1; 52:4; Jer. 50:17
- <sup>92</sup> *Like a Lion with eagle’s wings* (Dan. 7:4▶). Copyright © 2018 by Kevin Kunz. Use of this image is subject to a Creative Commons Attribution-NoDerivatives 4.0 International (CC BY-ND 4.0) license.
- <sup>93</sup> Babylon fell to Medo-Persia in 539/538 B.C.
- <sup>94</sup> *Like a bear with three ribs* (Dan. 7:5▶). Copyright © 2018 by Kevin Kunz. Use of this image is subject to a Creative Commons Attribution-NoDerivatives 4.0 International (CC BY-ND 4.0) license.
- <sup>95</sup> See also Dan. 8:20▶.
- <sup>96</sup> “In 331 B.C. Alexander the Grecian conquered Media-Persia, and the third world empire came into being.”—Oliver B. Greene, *Daniel* (Greenville, SC: The Gospel Hour, 1964, 1974), 91. “This kingdom succeeded that of Assyria or Babylon, 538 years b.c., to the overthrow of Darius Codomanus, 333 years b.c.”—Barnes, *Notes on the Bible*, Dan. 2:39.
- <sup>97</sup> *Like a leopard with four wings and four heads* (Dan. 7:6▶). Copyright © 2018 by Kevin Kunz. Use of this image is subject to a Creative Commons Attribution-NoDerivatives 4.0 International (CC BY-ND 4.0) license.
- <sup>98</sup> See also Dan. 8:21-22▶; 10:20▶; 11:2-4▶.
- <sup>99</sup> “The remainder of the former Greek Empire was annexed by Rome after Antiochus the Great was defeated at Magnesia in 190 B.C. Macedon was annexed by Rome in 168, Greece was permanently subdued in 146, the Seleucid domains west of the Tigris were annexed by Pompey the Great in 63 B.C., and Egypt was reduced to a Roman province after the Battle of Actium in 31 B.C.”—Archer, *Daniel*, Dan. 2:39. “From the death of Alexander the Great in 323 B.C., until 30 B.C., the Grecian empire was not a single world-wide empire. It was a fourfold empire made up of the kingdoms of Thrace, Macedonia, Syria and Egypt. These four segments of the Grecian empire fell, one by one, over this period of time, from 323 B.C. until 30 B.C.; and finally the Romans conquered Egypt in 30 B.C., which made *them* the conquerors of the world.”—Greene, *Daniel*, 91-92. “The Roman Empire dominated the world from the defeat of Carthage in 146 B.C. to the division of the East and West empires in A.D. 395, approximately five hundred years. The last Roman emperor ruled in the West until A.D. 476, and the Eastern division of the empire continued until A.D. 1453.”—Miller, *Daniel*, 95.
- <sup>100</sup> *A unique beast dreadful and terrible* (Dan. 7:7▶). Copyright © 2018 by Kevin Kunz. Use of this image is subject to a Creative Commons Attribution-NoDerivatives 4.0 International (CC BY-ND 4.0) license.
- <sup>101</sup> *Ten Horns* (Daniel 7:7▶). Copyright © 2018 by Kevin Kunz. Use of this image is subject to a Creative Commons Attribution-NoDerivatives 4.0 International (CC BY-ND 4.0) license.
- <sup>102</sup> Image adapted from OpenClipArt.org and hereby placed in the public domain.
- <sup>103</sup> Image obtained from OpenClipArt.org. This image is in the public domain.
- <sup>104</sup> See also Mat. 19:28; 25:31; Luke 19:12; Acts 1:6-7; Rev. 11:15-18▶; 20:4▶. “It is a very common opinion, widely spread throughout Christendom, and in most cases believed to be true, that ‘the thousand years’ of which John speaks in the Apocalypse, Rev. 20:1-7▶, are mentioned nowhere else in the sacred Scriptures. The doctrine of a millennial kingdom on earth, introduced by the advent of Christ in His glory, is a Jewish fable without support from the word of God. A deeper study of the sacred volume dissipates this false prejudice and reveals the fact that, not only are ‘the thousand years’ of which John speaks found everywhere in both Testaments, but that next to the eternal state, the millennial blessedness of God’s people on earth, and of the nations, is the one high point in all prophecy, from Moses to John, the bright, broad tableland of all eschatology.”—Nathaniel West, *The Thousand Years in both Testaments* (Fincastle, VA: Scripture Truth Book Co., n.d.), 1.



- <sup>105</sup> This is an example why we believe *The Message* to be a seriously inferior translation of Scriptural truth. Numerous passages of *The Message* take incredible liberties in translation resulting in a distorted rendering of God's Holy Word.
- <sup>106</sup> Eugene H. Peterson, *The Message: The Bible in Contemporary Language* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2005), Dan. 2:44.
- <sup>107</sup> Steinmann, *Daniel*, Dan. 2:24-49.
- <sup>108</sup> Leupold, *Exposition of Daniel*, Dan. 2:44.
- <sup>109</sup> This view, in common with Roman Catholicism, explains the historic pattern of Christian power merged with secular power. One of the problems here is that the Church has *too high* a view of itself: believing its work to be wholly of the Spirit such that it qualifies as being "cut without hands." But the Church itself is operating with sinful hands and is neither capable nor destined to overthrow the Gentile kingdoms presently on earth. "A kingdom that is represented by a stone cut without hands; it can only mean one thing, that the stone cut without hands is a work that is supernatural, that it is a result of God alone doing the doing."—Clough, *Lessons on Daniel*, 10.131.
- <sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, 10.129.
- <sup>111</sup> Nathaniel West, *Daniel's Great Prophecy, The Eastern Question, The Kingdom* (New York, NY: The Hope of Israel, 1898), 43-44.
- <sup>112</sup> Pentecost, *Daniel*, Dan. 2:44.
- <sup>113</sup> Freeman, *An Introduction to the Old Testament Prophets*, 278.
- <sup>114</sup> Calvin, *Commentary on The Prophet Daniel*, Dan. 2:44-45.
- <sup>115</sup> This also demonstrates how faulty interpretation undermines apologetics. How can we expect sceptics to be impressed by prophetic fulfillment when we ourselves promote such sloppy "fulfillment"?
- <sup>116</sup> Clough, *Lessons on Daniel*, 10.129.
- <sup>117</sup> Barnes, *Notes on the Bible*, Dan. 2:44.
- <sup>118</sup> Larkin, *The Book of Daniel*, Dan. 2:45.
- <sup>119</sup> Darby, *Synopsis of the Books of the Bible: Ezra to Malachi*, 463.
- <sup>120</sup> Walvoord, *Daniel: The Key to Prophetic Revelation*, Dan. 2:44.
- <sup>121</sup> Darby, *Synopsis of the Books of the Bible: Ezra to Malachi*, 463.
- <sup>122</sup> Benware, *Daniel's Prophecy of Things to Come*, Dan. 2:34-35.
- <sup>123</sup> Howe, *Daniel in the Preterist's Den*, 90-91.
- <sup>124</sup> Calvin, *Commentary on The Prophet Daniel*, Dan. 2:31-35.
- <sup>125</sup> Leupold, *Exposition of Daniel*, Dan. 2:43.
- <sup>126</sup> Howe, *Daniel in the Preterist's Den*, 109-110.
- <sup>127</sup> Walvoord, *Daniel: The Key to Prophetic Revelation*, Dan. 2:44.
- <sup>128</sup> Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, Dan. 2:31.
- <sup>129</sup> Here we see the frequent technique of interpreters who hold views counter to the details of Scripture. Rather than modify their views to account for what Scripture reveals, they simply declare the offending passage as being symbolic or spiritual or typological and thereby attempt to skirt the problem.
- <sup>130</sup> Young, *The Prophecy of Daniel*, Dan. 2:44.
- <sup>131</sup> Steinmann, *Daniel*, Dan. 2:34.
- <sup>132</sup> Miller, *Daniel*, 101.
- <sup>133</sup> Wood, *A Commentary on Daniel*, Dan. 2:44.
- <sup>134</sup> Ironside, *Lectures on Daniel the Prophet*, 37-38.
- <sup>135</sup> Leupold, *Exposition of Daniel*, Dan. 2:43.
- <sup>136</sup> Sir Isaac Newton attempts to find the ten toes—which he relates to the ten horns—as historically fulfilled between John's day and his own day, "The Western Empire of the Romans, about the time that Rome was besieged and taken by the Goths, became broken into the following ten kingdoms: 1. The kingdom of the Vandals and Alans in Spain and Africa. 2. The kingdom of the Suevians in Spain. 3. The kingdom of the Visigoths. 4. The kingdom of the Alans in Gallia. 5. The kingdom of the Burgundians. 6. The kingdom of the Franks. 7. The kingdom of the Britains. 8. The kingdom of the Hunns. 9. The kingdom of the Lombards. 10. The kingdom of Ravenna."—Newton, *Observations Upon the Prophecies of Daniel, and the Apocalypse of John*, 47. Despite his brilliance as a physicist and mathematician, Newton appears to have overlooked the anatomical fact that *even if* the two legs of the fourth kingdom should be considered as the western and eastern parts of Rome, then we should expect five toes on each foot—not all ten toes on one foot. In any event, the ten horns/toes spring forth from the entire Roman remains—not only the western portion—and can hardly be found in Newton's suggested kingdoms at a time when the eastern branch was still very much in existence.
- <sup>137</sup> Concerning the date when Revelation was written, see [Anthony C. Garland, *A Testimony of Jesus Christ : A Commentary on the Book of Revelation, Vol. 1 (Rev. 1-14)* (Camano Island, WA: SpiritAndTruth.org, 2004), 2.11], <http://www.spiritandtruth.org/id/revc.htm#date>.
- <sup>138</sup> Fausset, *The Book of Daniel*, Dan. 2:34.
- <sup>139</sup> Boutflower believes the fall of Rome resulted in ten kingdoms which remain down to our time: "Rome, in its undivided state, stood for some 500 years, and in its divided state as the ten kingdoms continues down to the present time."—Charles Boutflower, *In and Around the Book of Daniel* (London, England: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1923), 33.
- <sup>140</sup> Clarence Larkin, *Dispensational Truth* (Glenside, PA: Clarence Larkin Estate, 1918, 1920), 68.

<sup>141</sup> Wood, *A Commentary on Daniel*, Dan. 2:44.

<sup>142</sup> James A. Montgomery, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Daniel* (Edinburgh, Scotland: T & T Clark, 1927, 1959), 178.

<sup>143</sup> “But strangely enough, some of the very men who are so scornful of the alleged ‘materialism’ of a millennial kingdom, are the most insistent that the Church today must make effective in society what they call the social and moral ideals of the present kingdom of God. Thus, it is our duty to vote the right ticket politically, give to the Red Cross, help the Boy Scouts, support the United Nations, endow hospitals, etc. But if a ‘spiritual’ kingdom can and should produce such effects at the present time through the very imperfect agency of sinful men, why cannot the same thing be true in larger measure in the coming age when the rule of God will be mediated more perfectly and powerfully through the Eternal Son personally present among men as the Mediatorial King? . . . The reasoning of such men at times seems very curious. If physicians conquer disease, if scientists eliminate certain physical hazards, if by legislation governments improve the quality of human existence, if wise statesmen succeed in preventing a war, etc.,—these things are often cited as evidence of the progress of a present Kingdom of God. But if the Lord Jesus Christ Himself returns to earth in person to accomplish these same things, more perfectly and universally, then we are told that such a kingdom would be ‘carnal.’ ”—Alva J. McClain, *The Greatness of the Kingdom* (Winona Lake, IN: BMH Books, 1974), 520-521.

<sup>144</sup> Paul Henebury, *Christ at the Center: The Fulcrum of Biblical Covenantalism (Pt. 4c)*, [<http://drreluctant.wordpress.com/2012/10/03/christ-at-the-center-pt-4c/>] accessed 20121004.

<sup>145</sup> Fausset, *The Book of Daniel*, s.v. “Introduction.”

<sup>146</sup> Some attempt to evade this conclusion by suggesting Nero fulfilled Scriptural predictions concerning the Antichrist. This can hardly be the case for a number of reasons: (1) the Antichrist is destroyed by the appearance of Jesus at the Second Coming (2Th. 2:8) whereas Nero committed suicide (died by his own hand); (2) Nero died in A.D. 68—well before John wrote the book of Revelation; (3) Nero did not fulfill the specific actions Paul predicts of the Antichrist (2Th. 2:4).

<sup>147</sup> “And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming: even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders, . . . The prophecy also regarding Antichrist is stated in the book of Daniel, and is fitted to make an intelligent and candid reader admire the words as truly divine and prophetic; for in them are mentioned the things relating to the coming kingdom, beginning with the times of Daniel, and continuing to the destruction of the world.”—Origen, “Origen Against Celcus,” in Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxe, eds., *The Ante-Nicene Fathers, Volume IV: Fathers of the Third Century: Tertullian, Part Fourth; Minucius Felix; Commodian; Origen, Parts First and Second* (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Company, 1885), 594.

<sup>148</sup> “For as the kingdoms before this were destroyed, for example, that of the Medes by the Babylonians, that of the Babylonians by the Persians, that of the Persians by the Macedonians, that of the Macedonians by the Romans: so will this also be by the Antichrist, and he by Christ, and it will no longer withhold. And these things Daniel delivered to us with great clearness. ‘And then,’ he says, ‘shall be revealed the lawless one.’ And what after this? The consolation is at hand. ‘Whom the Lord Jesus shall slay with the breath of His mouth, and bring to nought by the manifestation of His coming, even he whose coming is according to the working of Satan.’ ”—John Chrysostom, “Homilies of St. John Chrysostom,” in Philip Schaff, ed., *A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, Second Series, Volume XIII: Saint Chrysostom: Homilies on Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Thessalonians, Timothy, Titus, and Philemon* (New York, NY: Christian Literature Company, 1889), 389.

<sup>149</sup> “After perpetrating [crimes of inhumanity and lawlessness] for three years and six months only, he shall be destroyed by the glorious second advent from heaven of the only-begotten Son of God, our Lord and Saviour Jesus, the true Christ, who shall slay Antichrist with the breath of His mouth, and shall deliver him over to the fire of hell.”—Cyril, “The Nature of Antichrist,” in Philip Schaff, ed., *A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, Second Series, Volume VII: St. Augustine: Homilies on the Gospel of John, Homilies on the First Epistle of John, Soliloquies* (New York, NY: Christian Literature Company, 1888), 108.

<sup>150</sup> John F. Walvoord, “The Prophecy of the Ten-Nation Confederacy,” in *Bibliotheca Sacra*, vol. 124 no. 494 (Dallas, TX: Dallas Theological Seminary, April-June 1967), 104.

<sup>151</sup> Miller, *Daniel*, 101.

<sup>152</sup> Clough, *Lessons on Daniel*, 10.130.

<sup>153</sup> Feinberg, *A Commentary on Daniel: The Kingdom of the Lord*, 39.

<sup>154</sup> “Daniel did also declare the meaning of the stone to the king; but I do not think proper to relate it, since I have only undertaken to describe things past or things present, but not things that are future: yet if anyone be so very desirous of knowing truth, as not to waive such points of curiosity, and cannot curb his inclination for understanding the uncertainties of futurity, and whether they will happen or not, let him be diligent in reading the book of Daniel, which he will find among the sacred writings.”—Josephus, *The Antiquities of the Jews*, 10.210.

<sup>155</sup> “But this aforesaid Antichrist is to come when the times of the Roman empire shall have been fulfilled, and the end of the world is now drawing near. There shall rise up together ten kings of the Romans, reigning in different parts perhaps, but all about the same time; and after these an eleventh, the Antichrist, who by his magical craft shall seize upon the Roman power; and of the kings who reigned before him, three he shall humble, and the remaining seven he shall keep in subjection to himself.”—Cyril of Jerusalem, “The Catechetical Lectures of S. Cyril, Archbishop of Jerusalem,” in Philip Schley Schaff, *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers* (New York, NY: Christian Literature Company, 1899.), 7.107.

<sup>156</sup> “EUSEBIUS. Or by His setting out into a far country, He denotes His own ascension from earth to heaven. But when He adds, To receive for himself a kingdom, and to return; He points out His second appearance, when He shall come as a King and in great glory. He first of all calls Himself a man, because of His nativity in the flesh, then noble; not yet a King, because as yet at His first appearance He exercised

no kingly power. It is also well said to obtain for Himself a kingdom, according to Daniel, Behold one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and a kingdom was given to him. (Dan. 7:13).”—Thomas Aquinas and John Henry Newman, *Catena Aurea: Commentary on the Four Gospels, Collected Out of the Works of the Fathers, Volume 3: Luke* (Oxford, England: John Henry Parker, 1843), Luke 19:11-27.

<sup>157</sup>“The ‘legs of iron’ are the ‘dreadful and terrible beast,’ by which the Romans who hold the empire now are meant. The ‘toes of clay and iron’ are the ‘ten horns’ which are to be. The ‘one other little horn springing up in their midst’ is the ‘antichrist.’ The stone that ‘smites the image and breaks it in pieces,’ and that filled the whole earth, is Christ, who comes from heaven and brings judgment on the world.”—Hippolytus, *Scholia on Daniel*, 178. “For when the iron legs that now hold the sovereignty have given place to the feet and the toes, in accordance with the representation of the terrible beast, as has also been signified in the former times, then from heaven will come the stone that smites the image, and breaks it; and it will subvert all the kingdoms, and give the kingdom to the saints of the Most High. This is the stone which becomes a great mountain, and fills the earth, and of which it is written: “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 there was given Him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom; and all peoples, nations, and languages shall serve Him: His power is an everlasting power, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom shall not be destroyed.”—Ibid., 191. “When the legs of iron have issued in the feet and toes, according to the similitude of the image and that of the terrible beast, as has been shown in the above, (then shall be the time) when the iron and the clay shall be mingled together. Now Daniel will set forth this subject to us. For he says, ‘And one week will make a covenant with many, and it shall be that in the midst (half) of the week my sacrifice and oblation shall cease.’ By one week, therefore, he meant the last week which is to be at the end of the whole world; of which week the two prophets Enoch and Elias will take up the half. For they will preach 1,260 days clothed in sackcloth, proclaiming repentance to the people and to all the nations.”—Hippolytus, *Treatise on Christ and Antichrist*, 213.

<sup>158</sup>“And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, who have received no kingdom as yet, but shall receive power as if kings one hour with the beast. These have one mind, and give their strength and power to the beast. These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them, because He is the Lord of lords and the King of kings.” [Rev. 17:12-14] It is manifest, therefore, that of these [potentates], **he who is to come** shall slay three, and subject the remainder to his power, and that **he shall be himself the eighth among them**. And they shall lay Babylon waste, and burn her with fire, and shall give their kingdom to the beast, and put the Church to flight. After that **they shall be destroyed by the coming of our Lord . . .** The ten toes [Dan. 2:41-42], therefore, are these ten kings, among whom the kingdom **shall be partitioned . . .** If therefore the great God showed **future things by Daniel**, and confirmed them by His Son; and if Christ is the stone which is cut out without hands, who shall destroy temporal kingdoms, and introduce an eternal one, **which is the resurrection of the just . . .** [emphasis added]—Irenaeus, “Against Heresies,” in Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxe, eds., *The Ante-Nicene Fathers, Volume I: The Apostolic Fathers With Justin Martyr and Irenaeus* (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Company, 1885), 554-555.

<sup>159</sup>“The prophecy also regarding Antichrist is stated in the book of Daniel, and is fitted to make an intelligent and candid reader admire the words as truly divine and prophetic; for in them are mentioned the things relating to the coming kingdom, beginning with the times of Daniel, and continuing to the destruction of the world. And any one who chooses may read it. Observe, however, whether the prophecy regarding Antichrist be not as follows: ‘And at the latter time of their kingdom, when their sins are coming to the full, there shall arise a king, bold in countenance, and understanding riddles. And his power shall be great, and he shall destroy wonderfully, and prosper, and practise; and shall destroy mighty men, and the holy people. And the yoke of his chain shall prosper: there is craft in his hand, and he shall magnify himself in his heart, and by craft shall destroy many; and he shall stand up for the destruction of many, and shall crush them as eggs in his hand.’ What is stated by Paul in the words quoted from him, where he says, ‘so that he sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God,’<sup>8</sup> is in Daniel referred to in the following fashion: “And on the temple shall be the abomination of desolations, and at the end of the time an end shall be put to the desolation.” [Dan. 9:27, LXX]”—Origen, *Origen Against Celcus*, 594-595.

<sup>160</sup>“Theodoret polemicized against those who held that the prophecy was fulfilled in the moral Kingdom of God already established by Christ; he himself held to the consummation at the future Parousia of the Lord.”—Montgomery, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Daniel*, 192.

<sup>161</sup>*The vexilloid of the Roman Empire was a red banner with the letters SPQR in Gold surrounded by a gold wreath hung on a military standard topped by a Roman eagle or an image of the goddess Victoria made of silver or bronze. SPQR is an initialism from a Latin phrase, Senātus Populusque Rōmānus (“The Senate and People of Rome”), referring to the government of the ancient Roman Republic. Copyright © 2008 by Ssolbergj. Use of this image is subject to a Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 Unported license.*

<sup>162</sup>Walton holds the fourth kingdom to be Greece rather than Rome, “while the unanimity cannot be questioned, the weight that that unanimity should carry becomes an issue when we realize that a large majority of the interpreters who were supporting the Roman view wrote in a time when historical reality still clearly favored that view—that is, the Roman empire was still in existence. Many of those interpreters assumed a coming ten-nation conclusion to the Roman empire. By most historical perspectives we could agree that that did not happen. Their interpretation as they understood it would therefore be judged as incorrect by any modern position, thus making the weight of the tradition nil. Adjustment has taken the form of an ever-increasing dependence on the restored-empire (after a gap) view. The fact is, however, that that view has every appearance of grasping at straws. Besides, if a gap needs to exist, why could that gap not extend from the end of the Greek empire?”—Walton, *The Four Kingdoms of Daniel (Part 1)*, 28-29. “It is only in the nineteenth century, when the existence of the Roman empire became much more difficult to maintain, that the view arises concerning an indeterminate length of time, a gap in prophecy, after which the Roman empire would be reconstituted as a ten-nation alliance.”—Ibid., 29.

<sup>163</sup>Ibid., 28.

<sup>164</sup>We are using the term “unforeseen” in relation to the understanding of the prophets (1Pe. 1:10-11). God, of course, foresaw all such gaps and chose when and how to reveal their existence through His inspired messengers.

<sup>165</sup>In support of this idea, it appears the church age is omitted from Daniel’s *Seventy Weeks*, falling in the gap between the 69<sup>th</sup> and 70<sup>th</sup> weeks.

<sup>166</sup> Miller, *Daniel*, 99.

<sup>167</sup> Walvoord, *Daniel: The Key to Prophetic Revelation*, Dan. 2:44.

<sup>168</sup> Unger, *Unger's Commentary on the Old Testament*, 1617-18.

<sup>169</sup> Kelly, *Lectures on the Book of Daniel (3rd. ed.)*, 59.

<sup>170</sup> Leupold, *Exposition of Daniel*, Dan. 2:44.

<sup>171</sup> Larkin, *The Book of Daniel*, Dan. 2:45.

<sup>172</sup> Some may object: either a gap or continuance results in a freakish image having legs or feet extending for a much greater length relative to the rest of the body of the image. Two responses can be made: (1) if there truly is a prophetic gap, then the very nature of such a gap precludes its representation within the image so it cannot be said to contribute to a distortion of the legs or feet; (2) the overall proportions of the anatomical details of the image are constrained by its representation as a man, and should not be understood as indicators of division or historical extent. Thus, the relative reigns of Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome are not to be inferred from the relative length of their related body parts.



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