

PURPOSE OF STUDY: To demonstrate the accuracy & reliability of the Bible, to show the imminence and surety of Christ's second coming, and to give the invitation to be ready when He comes.

TEXTS:

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| 1. IS 46:9-10 | 9a. DA 2:37-38 |
| 2. JN 14:29 (13:19) | 9b. DA 2:39 (5:28) |
| 3. RV 1:1 (AM 3:7) | 9c. DA 2:39 (8:20-21) |
| 4. DA 2:1-3 | 9d. DA 2:40 (LK 2:1) |
| 5. DA 2:10-12 | 9e. DA 2:41 |
| 6. DA 2:16-19 (MT 7:7-8) | 10. DA 2:42-43 |
| 7. DA 2:28 | 11. DA 2:44-45; RV 11:15 (LK 1:31-33) |
| 8. DA 2:31-35 | |

THE STUDY

- 1. What ability makes the God of the Bible different from all other “gods”? IS 46:9-10**
God claims that His ability to foretell the future is evidence that He is the true God.
- 2. Why has God given prophecy? JN 14:29 (13:19)**
One primary reason God gives prophecy is to provide evidence for us to rest our faith upon. God doesn't just want us to blindly believe in Him; He is intentional about giving us reasons to believe.
- 3. Does God want us to know what the future holds? RV 1:1 (AM 3:7)**
Absolutely. God sent a message to Jesus “to show His servants. . .” He doesn't want us to be surprised by the future, but to know what is coming ahead and be content to trust our future in His hands. We are about to see this played out in one of the most amazing prophecies in the Bible.
- 4. What unusual thing awakened King Nebuchadnezzar out of his sleep one night? DA 2:1-3**
He had a troubling dream, but when he awoke, he could not remember it.
- 5. Could the king's wise men tell him the dream? DA 2:10-12**
No. This led the king to make a decree to begin killing all the wise men in his realm, which included Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah.
- 6. Who *did* God reveal the dream to, and why? DA 2:16-19 (MT 7:7-8)**
Daniel and his three close friends, because they asked. The same God will reveal His will today to those who ask Him.
- 7. What time in earth's history did the dream point to? DA 2:28.**
The latter days.
- 8. How did Daniel describe what the king saw in his dream? DA 2:31-35**
Daniel tells the king that he dreamed of a great image of a man made of different metals.

9. What did the different metals of the image represent?

a. The head of Gold? DA 2:37-38 (1:1)

"You are a king of kings; you are the head of gold" Daniel tells the king. The head of gold represents the world empire of Babylon, which conquered Jerusalem in 605 B.C.

b. The chest and arms of silver? DA 2:39 (5:28)

"Another kingdom", the Persian Empire, which conquered Babylon in 539 B.C. under the rulership of King Darius (refer to Dan. 5:28-30).

c. The belly and thighs of brass, or bronze? DA 2:39 (8:20-21)

"A third kingdom... over all the earth" - the Greeks, led by Alexander the Great, conquered the Persians at the Battle of Arbela in 331 B.C., becoming the next world ruler (refer to Dan. 8:20-21).

d. The legs of iron? DA 2:40 (LK 2:1)

"The fourth kingdom... like iron..." was the empire of Rome, which defeated Greece at the Battle of Pydna in 168 B.C. The Romans ruled the world during the time of Christ (see Lk. 2:1). The ancient historian Edward Gibbon, in his Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, referred to "the iron monarchy of Rome" using the exact expression from the Bible.

e. The feet of iron and clay? DA 2:41

Rome was not conquered, but divided by Germanic tribes from the north. The breakup of Rome was completed in 476 A.D., the divisions of the empire into the eastern and western sections forming the foundation of the nations located in Europe today [the Alemanni (Germany); Burgundians (Swiss); Franks (French); Lombards (Italians); Saxons (English); Suevi (Portuguese); Visigoths (Spanish); Heruli, Ostrogoths, & Vandals (extinct)].

10. Would the divided nations of Europe ever be united into one cohesive, lasting, political power again? DA 2:42-43

History records many attempts at world domination, but God's Word is clear. These seven prophetic words, "They shall not cleave one to another," have stopped every would-be conqueror of Europe through the centuries. Throughout history, political leaders such as Charlemagne, Charles V, Louis XIV, Napoleon, Hitler and Stalin have attempted to dominate by uniting Europe. Each has desperately failed. The Bible foretells of a final attempt in Rev. 17:12-13, 17. Once again, their reign will be short-lived. They only reign "one hour as kings with the beast... until the words of God are fulfilled." As with all the other would-be world rulers, "they shall not cleave together."

11. According to the dream, Who will be the last world ruler? DA 2:44-45; RV 11:15 (LK 1:31-33)

The rock represents the coming kingdom of God. Soon all wickedness, evil and rebellion will be gone forever. The forces of evil will be crushed, destroyed, broken in pieces. God will establish His everlasting kingdom forever. "The dream is certain, and its interpretation sure."

APPEAL:

Today, as we have studied this striking fulfillment of prophecy today, God has given us evidence that we can trust His word. Everything He has said has come to pass. The only thing that remains is the coming of Jesus. The future is in the hands of a loving God who is inviting us to be a part of His everlasting kingdom. "The kingdoms of this world" are soon to "become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ..." Don't you want to be a part of that kingdom? Don't you want to be ready when He comes? Will you commit to studying to know Him better through His word?

DIFFICULT TEXTS/OBJECTIONS:

Daniel wasn't written by Daniel/Daniel was written later

The issues in Daniel chapter 2 have more to do with the historical authenticity of Daniel. Critics will argue that Daniel couldn't have been written in 600 B.C. due to the accuracy of the prophetic fulfillments.

Instead of being written *by* Daniel, they claim that the book was written in the 2nd century *about* Daniel. This is actually an argument in favor of the book and the accuracy of its predictions regardless when the book was written. The weight of evidence, however, suggests that the book was indeed written in the 6th century by Daniel himself. First of all, Jesus believed that Daniel wrote the book (Mt. 24:15). Further, critics claim that the Aramaic language used in the book (chapters 2-7) doesn't match the 6th century Egyptian Aramaic. This is true. However, neither does it match the Aramaic from the 2nd century, when the alleged unnamed author lived. It *does* match the Imperial Aramaic, used throughout Persia and Babylon in the 6th century, the time and place that Daniel Lived, the official language employed in government documents, which Daniel would have used as a ruler in both Babylon and Persia.

Rome wasn't divided into ten kingdoms

This is really an insignificant point. The dream said that the fourth empire would be divided; that the divisions would attempt to reunite into one power; and that these attempts would not be able to succeed. The prediction has been fulfilled to the letter, regardless how many parts Rome was divided into.

What about China?

Once again, this point is irrelevant to the study. The historical fact is that the empires of prophecy – Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome understood themselves to be world dominating powers. They likely had no knowledge of China, or else they didn't see China as a threat. Otherwise, they would have sought to defeat and dominate China just as they had every other kingdom that stood in their way of world dominance.

We must remember that God's focus is His people, and all of these world empires were directly connected with the future/history of His people. China, on the other hand, was not.