

DANIEL: PART 1

NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S GREAT STATUE

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We saw last week that Daniel Chapter 8 — and the prophecy of the Ram and the He-Goat — is an end-time prophecy.

The prophecy describes the Ram (Iran today) attacking its geographical neighbours (“pushing at them”).

Following the US attacks on Iran starting February 28 — Iran has retaliated by attacking many of these nations ... since they are US allies.

Could this constitute a fulfillment of Daniel 8:14?

Possibly! Though might be just an interim step to greater and more destructive attacks?

So — possibly — this end-time prophecy is now underway?

And will have worldwide effects — the closing of the Strait of Hormuz with the interruption in oil and gas supplies — and fertilisers — is likely to lead to major economic problems ... possibly even famine?

We saw associated effects with the Red Horse of Revelation (takes peace of mind from the Earth) and the Black Horse (food shortages and sky-high food prices).

We need to watchful and alert! This might be it!

Daniel 8:4

4 I saw the ram pushing westward, northward, and southward, so that no animal could withstand him; nor was there any that could deliver from his hand, but he did according to his will and became great.

Possibly now being fulfilled?

The USA is now being less effective than it thought!

Daniel 8:17, 19

17 So he came near where I stood, and when he came I was afraid and fell on my face; but he said to me, “**Understand, son of man, that the vision refers to the time of the end.**”

19 And he said, “**Look, I am making known to you what shall happen in the latter time of the indignation; for at the appointed time the end shall be.**” (*“... for it refers to the appointed time of the end” — ESV and others*)

For the time of the end.

Jesus in Matthew Chapter 24 did encourage us to look to the Book of Daniel. So that’s what we’ll do!

The story begins around 600 BC. Babylon is conquering the world. After centuries of rebellion ... the House of Judah is about to go into captivity. Over a 20 year period ... Nebuchadnezzar will completely destroy the nation ... including the Temple of God.

Only a teenager ... though he must have had good parents? Possibly of Royal lineage.

Daniel 1:1-7

1 In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it.

2 **And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand**, with some of the articles of the house of God, which he carried into the land of Shinar to the house of his god; and he brought the articles into the treasure house of his god.

3 **Then the king instructed Ashpenaz, the master of his eunuchs, to bring some of the children of Israel and some of the king’s descendants and some of the nobles,**

4 young men in whom there was no blemish, but good-looking, gifted in all wisdom, possessing knowledge and quick to understand, who had ability to serve in the king’s palace, and whom they might teach the language and literature of the Chaldeans.

5 And the king appointed for them a daily provision of the king's delicacies and of the wine which he drank, and three years of training for them, so that at the end of that time they might serve before the king.

6 **Now from among those of the sons of Judah were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah.**

7 To them the chief of the eunuchs gave names: **he gave Daniel the name Belteshazzar**; to Hananiah, Shadrach; to Mishael, Meshach; and to Azariah, Abed-Nego.

Daniel was singled out for special training for 3 years.

Babylon was a great city — wealthy ... beautiful ("Hanging Gardens of Babylon") ... the centre of science ... astronomy ... mathematics ... music. The Paris of those days?

Daniel 1:8-21

8 **But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's delicacies, nor with the wine which he drank**; therefore he requested of the chief of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself.

9 **Now God had brought Daniel into the favor and goodwill of the chief of the eunuchs.**

10 **And the chief of the eunuchs said to Daniel, "I fear my lord the king, who has appointed your food and drink.** For why should he see your faces looking worse than the young men who are your age? Then you would endanger my head before the king."

11 **So Daniel said to the steward whom the chief of the eunuchs had set over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah,**

12 **"Please test your servants for ten days, and let them give us vegetables to eat and water to drink.**

13 **Then let our appearance be examined before you, and the appearance of the young men who eat the portion of the king's delicacies; and as you see fit, so deal with your servants."**

14 **So he consented with them in this matter, and tested them ten days.**

15 **And at the end of ten days their features appeared better and fatter in flesh than all the young men who ate the portion of the king's delicacies.**

16 **Thus the steward took away their portion of delicacies and the wine that they were to drink, and gave them vegetables.**

17 **As for these four young men, God gave them knowledge and skill in all literature and wisdom; and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams.**

18 Now at the end of the days, when the king had said that they should be brought in, the chief of the eunuchs brought them in before Nebuchadnezzar.

19 **Then the king interviewed them, and among them all none was found like Daniel**, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah; therefore they served before the king.

20 **And in all matters of wisdom and understanding about which the king examined them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers who were in all his realm.**

21 **Thus Daniel continued until the first year of King Cyrus.** (70 years later)

Daniel wasn't keen to eat the food and drink. Was that because the food and wine were not kosher? Did it come via idolatrous temples?

It took courage on Daniel's part to refuse them. Yet ... he was courteous ... wise. No compromise — ever! No doubt he fears God.

Will we remain faithful in the end-times?

Daniel 2:1-13

1 Now in the second year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign, Nebuchadnezzar had dreams; and his spirit was so troubled that his sleep left him.

2 **Then the king gave the command to call the magicians, the astrologers, the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans to tell the king his dreams.** So they came and stood before the king.

3 And the king said to them, **"I have had a dream, and my spirit is anxious to know the dream."**

4 Then the Chaldeans spoke to the king in Aramaic, "O king, live forever! Tell your servants the dream, and we will give the interpretation." *(Aramaic was the language of the people. From this verse until the end of chapter 7 is written in Aramaic).*

5 The king answered and said to the Chaldeans, "My decision is firm: if you do not make known the dream to me, and its interpretation, you shall be cut in pieces, and your houses shall be made an ash heap."

6 However, **if you tell the dream and its interpretation, you shall receive from me gifts, rewards, and great honor. Therefore tell me the dream and its interpretation.**”

7 They answered again and said, “Let the king tell his servants the dream, and we will give its interpretation.”

8 The king answered and said, **“I know for certain that you would gain time, because you see that my decision is firm:**

9 **if you do not make known the dream to me, there is only one decree for you! For you have agreed to speak lying and corrupt words before me till the time has changed. Therefore tell me the dream, and I shall know that you can give me its interpretation.**”

10 The Chaldeans answered the king, and said, **“There is not a man on earth who can tell the king’s matter; therefore no king, lord, or ruler has ever asked such things of any magician, astrologer, or Chaldean.**

11 It is a difficult thing that the king requests, and there is no other who can tell it to the king except the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh.”

12 **For this reason the king was angry and very furious, and gave the command to destroy all the wise men of Babylon.**

13 **So the decree went out, and they began killing the wise men; and they sought Daniel and his companions, to kill them.**

God was dealing with Nebuchadnezzar in a special way. He had given Nebuchadnezzar a special dream — a dream whose outcome stretches into the far-distant future.

Daniel 2:14-23

14 **Then with counsel and wisdom Daniel answered Arioch, the captain of the king’s guard, who had gone out to kill the wise men of Babylon;**

15 he answered and said to Arioch the king’s captain, “Why is the decree from the king so urgent?” Then Arioch made the decision known to Daniel.

16 **So Daniel went in and asked the king to give him time, that he might tell the king the interpretation.**

17 Then Daniel went to his house, and made the decision known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions,

18 **that they might seek mercies from the God of heaven concerning this secret, so that Daniel and his companions might not perish with the rest of the wise men of Babylon.**

19 **Then the secret was revealed to Daniel in a night vision. So Daniel blessed the God of heaven.**

20 Daniel answered and said:

**“Blessed be the name of God forever and ever,
For wisdom and might are His.**

21 **And He changes the times and the seasons;
He removes kings and raises up kings;** *(God raises up or removes kings as necessary to further His plan —like Nebuchadnezzar.)*

**He gives wisdom to the wise
And knowledge to those who have understanding.**

22 **He reveals deep and secret things;
He knows what is in the darkness,
And light dwells with Him.**

23 **“I thank You and praise You,
O God of my fathers;
You have given me wisdom and might,
And have now made known to me what we asked of You,
For You have made known to us the king’s demand.”**

Daniel 2:24-28

24 **Therefore Daniel went to Arioch,** whom the king had appointed to destroy the wise men of Babylon. He went and said thus to him: **“Do not destroy the wise men of Babylon; take me before the king, and I will tell the king the interpretation.”**

25 Then Arioch quickly brought Daniel before the king, and said thus to him, “I have found a man of the captives of Judah, who will make known to the king the interpretation.”

26 **The king answered and said to Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, “Are you able to make known to me the dream which I have seen, and its interpretation?”**

27 Daniel answered in the presence of the king, and said, **“The secret which the king has demanded, the wise men, the astrologers, the magicians, and the soothsayers cannot declare to the king.**

28 **But there is a God in heaven who reveals secrets, and He has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what will be in the latter days.** Your dream, and the visions of your head upon your bed, were these:

A vision which goes up to the “latter days”. Other translations: “The end of days”.

Daniel 2:29-35

29 As for you, O king, **thoughts came to your mind while on your bed, about what would come to pass after this; and He who reveals secrets has made known to you what will be.**

30 But as for me, this secret has not been revealed to me because I have more wisdom than anyone living, but for our sakes who make known the interpretation to the king, and that you may know the thoughts of your heart.

31 **“You, O king, were watching; and behold, a great image!**

This great image, whose splendour was excellent, stood before you; and its form was awesome.

32 **This image’s head was of fine gold, its chest and arms of silver, its belly and thighs of bronze,**

33 **its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay.**

34 **You watched while a stone was cut out without hands, which struck the image on its feet of iron and clay, and broke them in pieces.**

35 Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold were crushed together, and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; the wind carried them away so that no trace of them was found. **And the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.**

A great image — of a man.

People look for special significance in the two legs ... or 10 toes.
Caution! Why not the two arms ... or 10 fingers ... etc.

WATCH OUT FOR “CONFIRMATION BIAS”!

Daniel 2:36-45

36 “This is the dream. Now we will tell the interpretation of it before the king.

37 **You, O king, are a king of kings. For the God of heaven has given you a kingdom, power, strength, and glory;**

38 and wherever the children of men dwell, or the beasts of the field and the birds of the heaven, **He has given them into your hand, and has made you ruler over them all — you are this head of gold.**

39 **But after you shall arise another kingdom inferior to yours; then another, a third kingdom of bronze, which shall rule over all the earth.**

40 **And the fourth kingdom shall be as strong as iron,** inasmuch as iron breaks in pieces and shatters everything; and like iron that crushes, **that kingdom will break in pieces and crush all the others.**

41 Whereas you saw the feet and toes, partly of potter’s clay and partly of iron, **the kingdom shall be divided**; yet the strength of the iron shall be in it, just as you saw the iron mixed with ceramic clay.

42 **And as the toes of the feet were partly of iron and partly of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly fragile.**

43 **As you saw iron mixed with ceramic clay, they will mingle with the seed of men; but they will not adhere to one another, just as iron does not mix with clay.**

44 **And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.**

45 **Inasmuch as you saw that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold — the great God has made known to the king what will come to pass after this. The dream is certain, and its interpretation is sure.”**

The vision extends to the time of the Kingdom of God and the return of Jesus Christ. Still future!

One of the MAJOR KEY PROPHECIES OF DANIEL — of the whole Bible!!

Verse 39: “All the earth” — meaning the area of the prophecy — not the whole world.

The 4 metals are understood to picture 4 successive empires ... all the way down to Jesus’ return.

GOLD = BABYLON (IRAQ TODAY)

SILVER = PERSIA (IRAN TODAY)

BRONZE = GREEK EMPIRE

IRON = ?

STONE = KINGDOM OF GOD

The Iron Empire was traditionally thought to be the Roman Empire. First identified as such by the Bishop of Rome ... Hippolytus — around 200 AD.

To those of us living in “The West” ... this makes sense. But — **Nebuchadnezzar lives in The East — and the vision is showing him the future of his kingdom and realm.**

Notice verse 40: The 4th kingdom will “break in pieces” all the others. “Deqaq” = smash ... shatter ... pulverise ... beat into powder.

The Roman Empire fails this Biblical test.

- i) Never conquered Babylon
- ii) Never conquered Persia
- iii) Never pulverised Greece (they actually quite admired it. They liked the language ... culture ... religion ... architecture — the philosophy — all remained)

Despite the popularity of an end-time resurrected Roman Empire — perhaps 10 European nations working with the Vatican — **it doesn’t fit the Biblical test!!**

The only empire in history that did pulverise Babylon ... Persia and the massive Greek Empire — was Islam!

Starting around 600 AD — Islam came out of Arabia and swept across all of those regions. Crushed governments ... religion ... culture ... education — even the alphabet — replaced by Islam!!

In 1453 Islam conquered Constantinople (Istanbul) — the then capital of the Roman Empire. A clean sweep.

In the 1400 years of Islam — it is estimated that it has killed around 270 million people!!

Looking around the world today — the Middle East and Militant Islam certainly appear more of a threat than Europe?

Time will tell ... but **Daniel Chapter 2 does not support Rome as an option — BUT ISLAM DOES!**

Daniel 2:46-49

46 **Then King Nebuchadnezzar fell on his face, prostrate before Daniel, and commanded that they should present an offering and incense to him.**

47 The king answered Daniel, and said, **“Truly your God is the God of gods, the Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, since you could reveal this secret.”**

48 **Then the king promoted Daniel and gave him many great gifts; and he made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon, and chief administrator over all the wise men of Babylon.**

49 Also Daniel petitioned the king, and he set Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego over the affairs of the province of Babylon; but Daniel sat in the gate of the king.

Daniel — a Jew — becomes the effective ruler throughout the Kingdom.

No doubt he wields enormous influence.

Although Nebuchadnezzar has received an astonishing witness of the True God — Jehovah — it doesn't seem to result in any personal change.

Daniel 3:1-7

1 **Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold, whose height was sixty cubits and its width six cubits.** He set it up in the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon.

2 And King Nebuchadnezzar sent word to gather together the satraps, the administrators, the governors, the counsellors, the treasurers, the judges, the magistrates, and all the officials of the provinces, to come to the dedication of the image which King Nebuchadnezzar had set up.

3 So the satraps, the administrators, the governors, the counsellors, the treasurers, the judges, the magistrates, and all the officials of the provinces gathered together for the dedication of the image that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up; and they stood before the image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up.

4 Then a herald cried aloud: **"To you it is commanded, O peoples, nations, and languages,**

5 **that at the time you hear the sound of the horn, flute, harp, lyre, and psaltery, in symphony with all kinds of music, you shall fall down and worship the gold image that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up;**

6 and whoever does not fall down and worship shall be cast immediately into the midst of a burning fiery furnace."

7 So at that time, when all the people heard the sound of the horn, flute, harp, and lyre, in symphony with all kinds of music, all the people, nations, and languages fell down and worshiped the gold image which King Nebuchadnezzar had set up.

Some sort of obelisk?

An image that must be worshipped. A type of the Image of The Beast in the Book of Revelation?

Revelation 13:11, 13-15

11 Then **I saw another beast coming up out of the earth**, and he had two horns like a lamb and spoke like a dragon.

13 **He performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men.**

14 And he deceives those who dwell on the earth by those signs which he was granted to do in the sight of the beast, **telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast** who was wounded by the sword and lived.

15 He was granted power to give breath to the image of the beast, **that the image of the beast should both speak and cause as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed.**

A similar test in the end-times? Worship the Image — or else!

If we're faced with that test ...

Remember the many scriptures we've seen about martyrdom of the saints in the end-time!

Revelation 6:9-11

9 **When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held.**

10 And they cried with a loud voice, saying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?"

11 Then a white robe was given to each of them; and **it was said to them that they should rest a little while longer, until both the number of their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed as they were, was completed.**

The Fifth Seal. Slain "for the Word of God".

Back in Daniel Chapter 3 we're going to see how Shadrach ... Meshach and Abednego deal with these threats.

Next week!



COUNTRIES STRUCK BY IRAN



- ← HEAD OF GOLD
BABYLONIAN EMPIRE
- ← CHEST/ARMS OF SILVER
MEDO-PERSIAN EMPIRE
- ← BELLY/THIGHS OF BRONZE
GREEK EMPIRE
- ← LEGS OF IRON
?????
- ← FEET OF IRON & CLAY
?????



DANIEL 3 GOLDEN STATUE

90 FT TALL

9 FT WIDE

