

Daniel Chapter 2

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4) Aramaic was the common language of the Assyrian empire. It was also used in the neo-Babylonian and Persian periods as a diplomatic and commercial language. The text is in Aramaic from Daniel 2:4 through 7:28. *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary* says that Aramaic is "a Semitic language known since the ninth century B.C. as the speech of the Aramaeans and later used extensively in southwest Asia as a commercial and governmental language and adopted as their customary speech by various non-Aramaean peoples including the Jews after the Babylonian exile."

15) Obviously Daniel did not maintain close ties with the magicians and wise men of Babylonian. He does not know why Nebuchadnezzar has issued such a sweeping ultimatum.

17-18) This incident shows the depth of Daniel's faith. With his own life and the lives of many others at stake, he turns to God with complete trust.

21) God's sovereignty extends to the kingdoms of men. The nations exist by divine permission and providence (Dan. 4:17, 25; Jer. 27:5-8).

28) Daniel does not pretend to possess any magical abilities but gives all glory unto God.

31) Daniel interpreted the vision of Nebuchadnezzar by revealing that the image represented successive world empires: Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome (Dan. 2:31-45).

37-38) The head of gold represented the neo-Babylonian empire which existed from 626-539 B.C.

39) The breast and arms of silver represented the Medo-Persian empire which existed from 539-333 B.C. (cf. also Dan. 8:20).

The belly and thighs of brass represented the Alexandrian, or Grecian Empire which existed from 333 B.C. to approximately 60 B.C. (cf. also Dan. 8:21).

40-43) The legs and feet represented the fourth kingdom, the Roman empire which lasted from approximately 60 B.C. to 5th Century A.D. A far-flung empire, Rome was composed of many diverse peoples. Although immensely powerful, it was not a monolithic kingdom; thus, the fourth kingdom would be divided.

44-45) Finally, Daniel foresaw a stone that was cut out of a mountain without hands, i.e., one of divine origin (cf. vs. 34-35). In the days of the Roman Empire, God would begin to carve out a new, everlasting and universal kingdom that would fill the earth. This anticipates the

establishment of God's kingdom, the church. The prophecies recorded in Psalms 2, Isaiah 2, Daniel 2 and Joel 2 are all realized in Acts 2.

Nebuchadnezzar saw a stone that was cut out of the mountain without hands. Old Testament prophets likened the Messiah to a chief cornerstone (Psa. 118:22-23; Isa. 28:16). In the parable of the landowner, Jesus applied these prophecies to Himself (Matt. 21:33-44). The apostle Peter affirmed that Jesus Christ was this self-same stone (Acts 4:10-12). Paul taught that our Lord is the chief cornerstone of God's spiritual temple, the church (Eph. 2:19-22).

This divine stone will break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms. Such language symbolically represents the power and authority of the Messiah (Psa. 2:8-12; 110:4-6). The book of Revelation applies these words to Jesus Christ (Rev. 2:26-27; 12:5; 19:15).

The God of heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed. The Psalmist attests that God's throne is forever (Psa. 45:6), and His kingdom is everlasting (Psa. 145:13). This lesson is repeatedly emphasized in the Book of Daniel (Dan. 2:44; 4:1-3, 34; 6:26; 7:13-14, 18; 7:27). This promise is realized in the person of Jesus Christ (Luke 1:30-33; Rev. 11:15).

Premillennialists silently pass over 2,000 years of history and say the toes represent a coalition of ten kings that will rule when the Lord sets up His kingdom at the second coming of Christ. However, the Bible clearly teaches that God established His kingdom in the days of the Roman Empire, the fourth kingdom of Nebuchadnezzar's dream.

Our Lord was born during the days of Augustus Caesar, the first Emperor of the Roman Empire (Luke 2:1). His ministry occurred during the reign of Tiberius Caesar (Luke 3:1). The church was established during the days of Tiberius, and expanded through the reigns of Caligula, Claudius and Nero (Acts 11:28; 18:2; 25:11).

John the Baptist announced the coming of the Messiah by saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt. 3:1-2). Jesus affirmed the same truth (Matt. 4:17). He clearly taught that the kingdom of God would be established in the first century (Mark 9:1).

When Philip the evangelist preached the good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, many responded in obedience (Acts 8:12). As the apostle Paul pointed men unto Christ, he reasoned and persuaded about the kingdom of God (Acts 19:8; 28:23, 30-31). Later, he spoke of the kingdom as an established fact (Col. 1:13-14). The book of Hebrews describes it as a present reality (Heb. 12:28). So also does John (Rev. 1:5-6, 9; 5:9-10).