

Vespasian and Titus celebrated the dearly bought victory together. No expense was spared for the pageant. Crowned with laurel, and clothed in purple garments, the two conquerors rode slowly in separate chariots ... amid the shouts of the people and the aristocracy. They were preceded by the soldiers in festive attire and seven hundred Jewish captives. The images of the gods, and the sacred furniture of the temple—the table of show-bread, the seven-armed candlestick, the trumpets which announced the year of jubilee, the vessel of incense, and the rolls of the Law—were borne along in the procession and deposited in the newly built Temple of Peace, except the Law and the purple veils of the holy place, which Vespasian reserved for his palace.

The Temple of Peace was afterwards burned under Commodus, and it is not known what became of the sacred furniture. (pp. 400-401)¹

18. The “people” who “destroyed the city and the sanctuary” are the Romans under Vespasian and Titus on August 10, A.D. 70.
19. Therefore Daniel 9:26a reveals that the Antichrist will be a Roman – a citizen of the Revived Roman Empire of the Tribulation. He will be the ultimate blasphemer and is described in great detail in Daniel 7, where he is called the “little horn,” and in Revelation 13 where he is referred to as the “beast.”
20. A description of this dynamic personality follows:

Antichrist. (An) individual who, before being destroyed by Christ, should utter horrid blasphemies against the Most High, and practice great enormities upon the saints. This view is Scriptural and comes from connecting the passages in John’s epistles with the description in Daniel and the Apocalypse (Revelation) of the great God-opposing power that should persecute the saints of the Most High.

Early Christians looked for Antichrist as a person and not a polity or system. The general opinion ... was that he would be a man, in whom Satan would dwell utterly and bodily and who would be armed with Satanic and demonic powers. In the Old Testament he is prefigured under “the little horn” (Daniel 7 and 8) and “the prince that shall come (Daniel 9:26). In the New Testament he is called “Antichrist” (1 John 2:18) and “the Beast” (Revelation 13:1-10).²

¹ Philip Schaff, *Apostolic Christianity*, vol. 1 in *History of the Christian Church: A.D. 1–100* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1910), 393–401.

² Merrill F. Unger, *Unger’s Bible Dictionary*, 3d ed. (Chicago: Moody Press, 1966), 68.

Is Jesus the Messiah?

Christmas

December 21 & 28, 2014; January 04 & 18, 2015

Proof of the First Advent (continued)

King Nebuchadnezzar's Dream:

23. The purpose of the dream was twofold: First, to present a picture of future events; and, second, to introduce the person of Christ to a great gentile ruler.

Daniel 2:30 - "But as for me, this mystery has not been revealed to me for any wisdom residing in me more than in any *other* living man, but for the purpose of making the interpretation known to the king, and that you may understand the thoughts of our mind."

24. Now we must document that this charismatic, dynamic, and Satan-possessed dictator is a Roman. He is a Roman in the context of the prophecy of Daniel 2. When the staff soothsayers of Nebuchadnezzar **נְבוּכַדְנֶאצַּר (neb-u-chad-néz-ar)** refrain from interpreting his cryptic dream the king threatens to kill them all. Daniel however, is given the dream and its interpretation through a night vision (Daniel 2:19). The details of Daniels's analysis is provided by:

This particular vision was designed to give cohesiveness to history and to allow all mankind to realize that every historical event is a link within the plan of God. An image was used to depict the panorama of empires. During the administration of the fourth and fifth cycles of discipline to the Jews, when Israel would be neutralized in its effectiveness as a nation, we have the rise and fall of mighty gentile empires. This is delineated for us in the passage which follows and explains much of the Book of Daniel, as well as a large portion of the Book of Revelation. (pp. 44–45)

The image is fashioned in the shape of a man. The human form reflects man's domination over man in the devil's world. Every part of the image has historical significance and is a reminder to us that man's glory is a transient thing. Since Nebuchadnezzar's glory was not a passport to heaven, this was a challenge for him to face the facts about eternity. (p. 45)

Daniel 2:31, “You O king, were looking and behold, there was a single great statue; that statue, which was large and of extraordinary splendor, was standing in front of you, and its appearance was awesome.” (p. 46)

With only two phrases, Daniel gave a global description of the image: “large” means its appearance was overwhelming and “of extraordinary splendor” is the glamour of the empires represented by the various metals of the image. The word “awesome” alludes to the strength and power of the enormous figure, and by interpretation symbolized the strength and power of empires as they developed.

v. 32, “The head of that statue was made of fine gold [Chaldean Empire], its breast and its arms of silver [Meds and Persians], its belly [Graeco-Macedonian Empire of Alexander the Great] and its thighs of bronze [Hellenistic monarchies],

v. 33, “Its legs of iron [Roman Empire], its feet partly of iron [Revived Roman Empire of the Tribulation] and partly of clay [undetermined nations].

v. 34, “You continued looking until a stone [a stone so large it has never been reduced in size, i.e., Jesus Christ] was cut out without hands, and it struck the statue [Second Advent (Revelation 19:11-21)] on its feet of iron and clay, and crushed them [Armageddon].

v. 35, “Then [at the Second Advent] the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver and the gold were crushed all at the same time, and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors [baptism of fire for the unbelievers at the end of the Tribulation]; and the wind [judgment of the Second Advent] carried them away so that not a trace of them was found [they were not allowed to enter the millennial reign of Christ]. But the stone [Jesus Christ] that struck the statue became a great mountain [personal reign of Jesus Christ during the Millennium], and filled the whole earth. (p. 47)

v. 36, “This was the dream; now we shall tell its interpretation before the king.”

An important lesson is to be learned from the very construction of this image. From the head to the toes, the materials used decrease in intrinsic value. The decline is analogous to the increasing decadence of the nations represented. It is interesting to note that proponents of the theory of evolution contend that mankind is in a continual state of improvement. This is not only antithetical to what the Bible teaches, but history proves this theory to be false. Mankind is still mired in war, crime, pestilence, famine, hate, prejudices, moral and immoral degeneracy.

From our viewpoint the description of the image is historical; but from verses 41-44 we are dealing with future events. During the entire Church Age there have been and will continue to be power struggles among the nations of Western Europe.

Near the end of the present dispensation the old Roman Empire will be drawn together again as a 10-nation power bloc emerges.³ (p. 48)

When the Rapture of the Church takes place and the Tribulation begins, the “feet partly of iron and partly of clay” consolidate into the Revived Roman Empire, which shall exist during the seven years of Tribulation, the culmination of the Age of Israel. (p. 58)

³ R. B. Thieme, Jr., *Daniel: Chapters One through Six*, 3d ed. (Houston: R. B. Thieme, Jr., Bible Ministries, 1995), 44–48.