

“The Times of the Gentiles”

Daniel 2:24-45

East Berlin Community Church

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February 13, 2022

Introduction

- Many Political- geographical changes in our lifetime
- The United States of America in Prophecy
 - *“Are we a ‘rising’ sun or a ‘setting’ sun?”—Benjamin Franklin*
 - Professor Alexander Tyler’s quote regarding the fall of democracy.
 - *“A democracy cannot exist as a permanent form of government. It can only exist until voters discover that they can vote themselves money from the public treasury. From that moment on, the majority always votes for the candidate promising the most benefits from the public treasury. With the result that a democracy always collapses over loose fiscal policy, followed by dictatorship. The average age of the world’s greatest civilizations has been two hundred years. These nations have progressed through the following sequence: From bondage to spiritual faith. From spiritual faith to great courage. From courage to liberty. From liberty to abundance. From abundance to selfishness. From selfishness to complacency. From complacency to apathy. From apathy to dependence. From dependency back into bondage.”*
 - Signs that we are on the decline
- The God of History is also the God of Mystery
 - God reveals His 490-year plan for the spiritual rebirth of Israel
 - *“Jerusalem will be trampled by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.” (Luke 21:24)*

“The Times of the Gentiles”

A. The CRUX of the Mystery

- Daniel 2:24-30-- *“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.’ 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.’ 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?’ 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. 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 your visions of your head upon your bed, were these: 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. 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.”*
1. The meaning of “latter days” in Scripture: Genesis 49:1; Deuteronomy 4:30; 31:29; Isaiah 2:2; Ezekiel 38:16
 2. In the context, refers to all the coming events subsequent to the lifetime of Nebuchadnezzar until the second coming of Christ.

B. The **CHALLENGE** to the Mystery

1. Liberal Scholars claim the book of Daniel was written in 167 BC and thus records HISTORY , not PROPHECY.
 - a. Main argument: Since Daniel 8 and 11 sets forth such an accurate detailed description of the Greek period, it must have been written by someone living during the time of Antiochus Epiphanes.
 - b. Refutation: Book of Daniel written 6th Century BC by Daniel who lived during these events.
 - 1) Received revelation from God and given the ability to interpret dreams
 - 2) Records first-person accounts of events in Nebuchadnezzar's court
 - 3) Jesus believed that Daniel wrote the book of Daniel
 - Matthew 24:15-- *"Therefore when you see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet..."*
 - 4) Fragments of the book of Daniel found among other manuscripts dated to the 2nd Century BC with the Dead Sea Scrolls
2. Liberal Scholars reject predictive prophecy. Denies what sets apart our God from all the other gods of this world.
 - Isaiah 44:6-8-- *"Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel, and his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts: 'I am the First and I am the Last; Besides Me there is no God. And who can proclaim as I do? Then let him declare it and set it in order for Me, since I appointed the ancient people. And the things that are coming shall come, let them show these to them. Do not fear, nor be afraid; Have I not told you from that time, and declared it? You are My witnesses. Is there a God beside Me? Indeed there is no other Rock; I know not one.'"*
 - Isaiah 46:9-10-- *"Remember the former things of old, for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are not yet done, saying, 'My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure.'"*

C. The **COURSE** of the Mystery

1. **The Dream Revealed**

- Daniel 2:31-35-- *"You, O king, were watching; and behold, a great image! This great image, whose splendor was excellent, stood before you; and its form was awesome. This image's head was of fine gold, its chest and arms of silver, its belly and thighs of bronze, its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay. 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. 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. It was a "great image", that is, huge and brilliant. Awesome.
 - b. The image was made of different metals
 - c. The image is unified only at the "head". The rest of the body is divided.
 - d. The image remains unified until the end, when it is completely destroyed by the rock that grows into a mountain.

2. **The Dream Interpreted**

- Daniel 2:36-43-- *"This is the dream. Now we will tell the interpretation of it before the king. You, O king, are a king of kings. For the God of heaven has given you a kingdom, power, strength, and glory; 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 all—you are the head of gold. But after you shall arise another kingdom, inferior to yours; then a third kingdom of bronze, which shall rule over all the earth. 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 others. 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. 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. 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."

- a. **"Head of Gold"**-- Neo-Babylonian Period 636-539 BC
- b. **"Chest and Arms of Silver"**-- Medo-Persian Empire 539-330 BC
 - 1) Daniel 8 gives more details regarding the second kingdom
 - 2) Inferior to the first
 - a) not in size of its territory
 - b) not in its duration, for it last twice as long as the Babylonians
 - c) but inferior in power or government—the *"law of the Medes and Persians"*
- c. **"Abdomen and Thighs of Brass"**-- Grecian 330BC to 63 BC
 - 1) Alexander the Great expanded the territory to the largest in ancient times.
 - 2) Kingdom divided into four sections after his demise.
 - 3) Weakness was *"representative government"*
- d. **"Legs of Iron"**-- Roman or *"the West"*-- 63BC to Present
 1. Division of the Roman Empire into East and West
 2. Roman roots in Europe, and thus the Americans
- e. **"Toes of iron and clay"**--Final Form of the *"West"*
 - Daniel 2:42-43-- *"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. 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."*
 - Marked by progressive weakness and deterioration
 - Weakness due to refusal of the people to *"melt"* together into one.

D. The CLIMAX of the Mystery

- Daniel 2:44-45-- *"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. Inasmuch as you saw the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that is broke in pieces the iron, bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold—that great God has made known to the king what will come to pass after this. The dream is certain, and its interpretation is sure."*