

The Image of the Beast



Daniel 2:36 This is the dream; and we will tell the interpretation of it before the king. ³⁷ You O king, are king of kings, to whom the Elah of heaven has given the kingdom, the power, and the strength, and the glory; ³⁸ and wherever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the birds of the heavens has he given into your hand, and has made you to rule over them all: you are the head of gold. ³⁹ And after you shall arise another kingdom inferior to you; and another third kingdom of bronze, which shall bear rule over all the earth. ⁴⁰ And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron, because iron breaks in pieces and subdues all things; and as iron that crushes all these, shall it break in pieces and crush. ⁴¹ And whereas you saw the feet and toes, part of potter's clay, and part of iron, it shall be a divided kingdom; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, because you saw the iron mixed with miry clay. ⁴² and as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken. ⁴³ and whereas you saw the iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men; but they shall not cling one to another, even as iron does not mingle with clay.

THE HEAD OF GOLD

Babylon ~ 603 BCE to 538 BCE

From the verses 2:32-38, it is clear that Nebuchadnezzar is the head of gold. It is understood from the verses that follow that each portion of the image represents a kingdom which follows the one before. At the time this was written, Babylon was indeed the dominant world power.

THE CHEST AND ARMS OF SILVER

Media & Persia ~ 538 BCE to 331 BCE

2:39 And after you shall arise another kingdom inferior to you;

Beginning in chapter Daniel 5, we understand that Belshazzar is the son of Nebuchadnezzar. In verses 30 & 31, we learn that when Belshazzar died, the kingdom was taken over by Darius the Mede. From there, the kingdom was split between Media and Persia.

Later in Daniel 11:2-4 we read more about the fall of Media and Persia to Greece.

Daniel 11:2 And now will I show you the truth. Behold, there shall stand up yet three kings in Persia; and the fourth shall be far richer than they all: and when he has become strong through his riches, he shall stir up all against the realm of Greece. 3 And a mighty king shall stand up, that shall rule with great dominion, and do according to his will. 4 And when he shall stand up, his kingdom shall be broken, and shall be divided toward the four winds of heaven, but not to his posterity, nor according to his dominion with which he ruled; for his kingdom shall be plucked up, even for others besides these.

THE BELLY OF BRONZE

Grecian Empire 331 BCE to 168 BCE

2:39 ... and another third kingdom of bronze, which shall bear rule over all the earth.

We discover who is the successor to Media/Persia in chapter 8:20

The ram which you saw, that had the two horns, they are the kings of Media and Persia. 21 And the rough he-goat is the king of Greece: and the great horn that is between his eyes is the first king.

Greece defeated the empire of Media and Persia approx. 331bce.

THE LEGS OF IRON

Roman Empire 168 BCE to 476 AD

40 And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron, because iron breaks in pieces and subdues all things; and as iron that crushes all these, shall it break in pieces and crush.

From here one has only to research **any reliable history reference book or encyclopedia** to find that the Grecian Empire was defeated by the Roman empire ~187 BCE, in the Greco-Roman wars. Rome then continued to be the dominant world leader until falling to the barbarians ~ 470 AD. Remember that Rome was the occupying force even in Jerusalem at the time of the Messiah.

THE FEET OF IRON AND CLAY

Holy Roman Empire ~ 314 AD

41 And whereas you saw the feet and toes, part of potter's clay, and part of iron, it shall be a divided kingdom; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, because you saw the iron mixed with miry clay.

Thus, the kingdom in place at the end of time, will be *continuous and contiguous* with the preceding kingdom. There is no break between the legs and the feet. There is no change to the iron, it is not a different iron, or a different symbol. Verse 41 states that the kingdom of the legs of iron would be divided because it was mixed with clay in the feet and toes.

42 And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken. 43 And whereas you saw the iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men; but they shall not cling one to another, even as iron does not mingle with clay.

The Feet of Iron can only be the modern Roman Empire, with these added features: Continuous and contiguous with the Roman Empire of 2,000 years ago, partially strong, partially broken, and mixed with the "seed" of men. Now because the Roman Empire exists today only as the Roman Catholic Church, it can only be that the Roman Catholic Church is in fact the feet part of iron and part of clay. Were there some other exclaves or extensions or power of the Roman Empire, then there would be opportunity for debate. **Since there is no other remaining portion of it, there is no other possibility.**

Now that we have a directed and definitive conclusion, we can look at the comparative list and see how well it matches. The important point here is that we did not use the comparative list to find something that fits, and *then* find ways to support it. That would be more fun, but it would be fundamentally flawed.

Review of comparative points

The list of points describing the kingdom in place at the end of the age, as Daniel has described is:

1. It is an empire that will be partially Roman.
2. It must also be a continuation of the previous Roman empire
3. It must be a global empire.
4. It must be one that is in power today.
5. It must have the dual quality of being spiritual *and* political.
6. It must be a *divided* kingdom
7. It must be partially broken

Compare this to a list of points describing the Holy Roman Empire / Roman Catholic Church

1. The Roman Catholic church is the only surviving portion of the Roman empire.
2. It is in fact a continuation of the "Holy Roman Empire", which began in 314 CE.
3. It is obviously a global empire, the largest of its kind,
4. and is in power today.
5. The Holy Roman Empire co-existed alongside the Roman Empire until 476 CE.
6. Rome was divided between two Capitols. Rome in the west and Constantinople in the east.
7. Originally a political/military empire, it was mixed with the "miry clay" when Constantine made Catholicism the official religion of the Roman Empire. It was only partially broken in 476, defeated by the barbarians because the bulk of the power had long since been transferred to the Holy Roman Empire, and the Pope held the seat of authority.

The Seed of Men

Seed, in prophecy represents "The Word". Read the parable of the sower, and the interpretation in the book of Matthew 13:1-23, Mark 4:1-20, Luke 8:4-8. Each of these plainly illustrate that this symbol, "the seed", is in fact "the Word of men".

Remember that "the Word" represents the Messiah (John 1:14) who is "the way, the truth and the life" (John 14:6) and his name (Rev. 19:11). Now since, the Roman Catholic Church claims authority over all of these, it seems difficult to find a more accurate description. The Church has claimed authority over the promise and used this false authority to present its own substitute as the only valid word. It has taken the Sacred Scriptures and the Word of Yahweh and put something else in its place. It's own word, which is not Yahweh, but the word of men.

Epilogue

There are other points which we may or may not investigate, if it is necessary for whatever reason to pursue in the finest detail possible. Details such as the ten toes, the significance of the dimensions of the image, the tower of Babylon and it's destruction in the context of the Image being destroyed by the Stone, and

whatever other details we uncover. However none of these will change the definitive conclusion, which is the sole purpose of this study.

References

Between 509 B.C. and 476 A.D. Rome was successively the capital of the republic of the same name and of the Roman Empire. ... The city became the Holy See about 42 A.D. From the downfall of the Roman Empire to the formation, in June, 1947, of the Italian republic, Rome was, at various times, capital of the Holy Roman Empire, the Papal States, and the kingdom of Italy.

Funk & Wagnalls Standard Reference Encyclopedia 1964, p. 7636

Constantine ... overcame all rivals and reunited the western Empire under his rule. In 314 the defeat of Licinius, emperor in the east, made Constantine sole ruler of the Roman world. ... Constantine, adopting [Christianity] as his own religion, made it also the official religion of the Roman Empire, an event of far-reaching significance.

Funk & Wagnalls Standard Reference Encyclopedia 1964, p.7647

The history of Rome then merged with that of the papacy, the Holy Roman Empire, the Papal States, and Italy.

Funk & Wagnalls Standard Reference Encyclopedia 1964,p.7648

The term catholic (Gr. Katholikos, "universal" from kath'holou, "in general") is found for the first time in the letter of St. Ignatious to the smyrnaeans (about 110), and later appeared in Clement of Alexandria's Stromata. Its technical use seems to have been established by the beginning of the 3rd century, The formal principle of the Catholic church was expressed by Vincent of Lerins (about 434) as follows: "That which has been believed everywhere, always, and by all. This is what is truly and properly catholic."

Funk & Wagnalls Standard Reference Encyclopedia 1964, p. 1866

The papacy, which arose on the ruins of the Roman empire, differed from all previous forms of Roman power in that it was an ecclesiastical despotism claiming universal dominion over both spiritual and temporal affairs, especially the former. It was a union of church and state, frequently with the church dominant.

Bible Readings for the Home 1914, 1935, 1942, 1958, and 1963 by the Review and Herald Publishing Association London, England. Library of Congress Catalog Card Number 63-12806 p. 170

"Whatever Roman elements the barbarians and Arians left ..[came] under the protection of the Bishop of Rome, who was the chief person there after the Emperor's disappearance. ... the roman church in this way privily pushed itself into the place of the Roman World-Empire, of which it is the actual continuation; the empire has not perished, but has only undergone a transformation. ... That is no mere 'clever remark', but the recognition of the true state of the matter historically and the most appropriate and fruitful way of describing the character of this church. It still governs the nations. ... It is a political creation, as imposing as a World-Empire, because it is the continuation of the Roman Empire. The Pope, who calls himself "King" and "Pontifex Maximus," is Caesars's successor."

Adolf Harnack, What is Christianity? New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1915, Preface p. vi