

The Book of Daniel Syllabus

Chapter 2

The Times of the Gentiles

Jesus identified a period of time to be known as “the times of the Gentiles.”

When His disciples exclaimed in amazement about Herod’s rebuilding of the Second Temple Jesus prophesied it would be destroyed, “*See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down*” (Matthew 24:2).

That destruction happened 40 years later in 70 AD when Titus the Roman burned the Temple. Daniel had prophesied this destruction half a millennium earlier; “*the people [the Romans] of the prince that shall come [the antichrist] shall destroy the city and the sanctuary*” (Daniel 9:26).

Jesus said, to those listening as He spoke the prophesy, “*And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh...for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations; and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, UNTIL the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled*” (Luke 21:20, 23, 24).

Mighty Rome then carried away Jewish captives and its iron legs trod down Jerusalem. Later they plowed under the Holy City with a yoke of oxen. Jerusalem was turned into a pagan city which Rome renamed Aelia Capitolina and Jews were forbidden to live there. Emperor Hadrian changed the country’s name from Judea to Syria Palestina. Thus originating the name of Palestine.

But with the little word translated “until,” Jesus looked ahead 2000 years and prophesied the assured end of “the times of the Gentiles.”

The beginning of the period was the Babylonian captivity.

David Baron, *Israel in the Plan of God*, page 111

Idolatry was the climax of the first stage in the progressive apostasy of Israel which brought about the Babylonian captivity *with which commences “the times of the Gentiles,”* which only close with the end of this age, when the Kingdom shall once again be restored to Israel.

God gave King Nebuchadnezzar dreams of the entire period called “*the times of the Gentiles*,” which started with him and will end with the King of Kings, the King Messiah.

Nebuchadnezzar’s Dream

Dan. 2:1 ¶ *And in the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuchadnezzar dreamed dreams; and *his spirit was troubled, and his sleep went from him.* (ASV)

*Hebrew literally: *his spirit pounded itself*

The Creator gave dreams to this earthly king of a super power.
[God can still give dreams to earthly kings. And He probably is doing it whether or not we know it. (See Job 33:14-17.)]

The dreams—so powerfully ominous to Nebuchadnezzar and the subsequent Gentile trodders down of Jerusalem—shook the Babylonian ruler’s very spirit. He claimed not to remember them and he called upon “*the necromancers, the astrologers, the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans*,” (ArtScrolls translation of verse 2) to tell him his dreams and the interpretation. When they could not, he ordered the destruction of all the wise men of Babylon. Daniel and his three companions stood in this category.

Dan. 2:16 *And Daniel went in, and desired of the king that he would appoint him a time, and he would show the king the interpretation.*

Dan. 2:17 ¶ *Then Daniel went to his house, and made the thing known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions:*

Dan. 2:18 *that they would desire mercies of the God of heaven concerning this secret; that Daniel and his companions should not perish with the rest of the wise men of Babylon.*

Dan. 2:19 *Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a vision of the night. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven.*

Dan. 2:20 *Daniel answered and said, Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever; for wisdom and might are his.*

Dan. 2:21 *And he changeth the times and the seasons; he removeth kings, and setteth up kings; he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that have understanding;*

Dan. 2:22 *he revealeth the deep and secret [Hebrew: hidden] things; he knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him.*

Dan. 2:23 *I thank thee, and praise thee, O thou God of my fathers, who hast given me wisdom and might, and hast now made known unto me*

what we desired of thee; for thou hast made known unto us the king's matter...

Dan. 2:25 ¶ *Then Arioch brought in Daniel before the king in haste, and said thus unto him, I have found a man of the children of the captivity of Judah, that will make known unto the king the interpretation.*

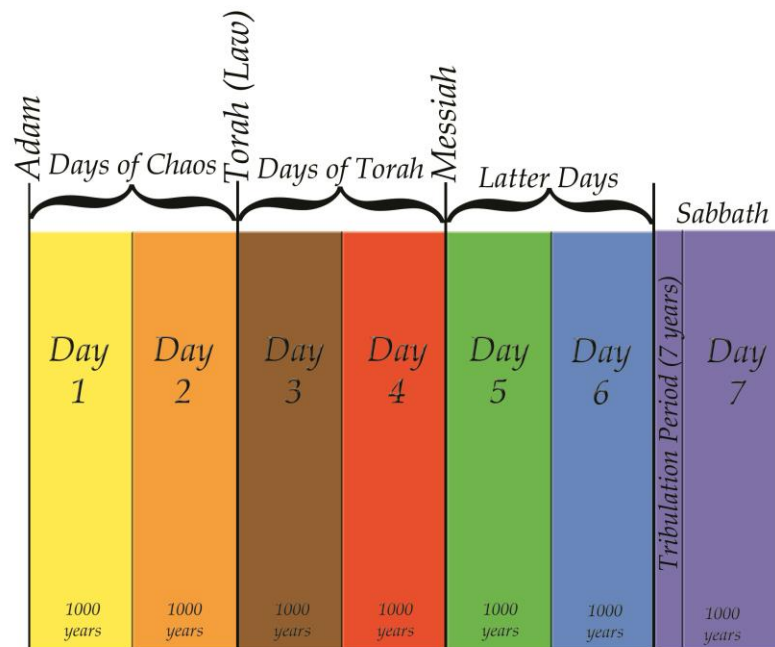
Dan. 2:26 *The king answered and said to Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, Art thou able to make known unto me the dream which I have seen, and the interpretation thereof?*

Dan. 2:27 *Daniel answered before the king, and said, The secret which the king hath demanded can neither wise men, enchanters, magicians, nor soothsayers, show unto the king;*

Dan. 2:28 *but there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and he hath made known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days.* [Hebrew: the end of days] *Thy dream, and the visions of thy head upon thy bed, are these:*

Dan. 2:29 *as for thee, O king, thy thoughts came into thy mind upon thy bed, what should come to pass hereafter; and he that revealeth secrets hath made known to thee what shall come to pass.*

Dan. 2:30 *But as for me, this secret is not revealed to me for any wisdom that I have more than any living, but to the intent that the interpretation may be made known to the king, and that thou mayest know the thoughts of thy heart. (ASV)*



Neb's Metallic Colossus
Four Gentile Empires

Dan. 2:31 ¶ *Thou, O king, sawest, and, behold, a great image. This image, which was mighty, and whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the aspect thereof was terrible.*

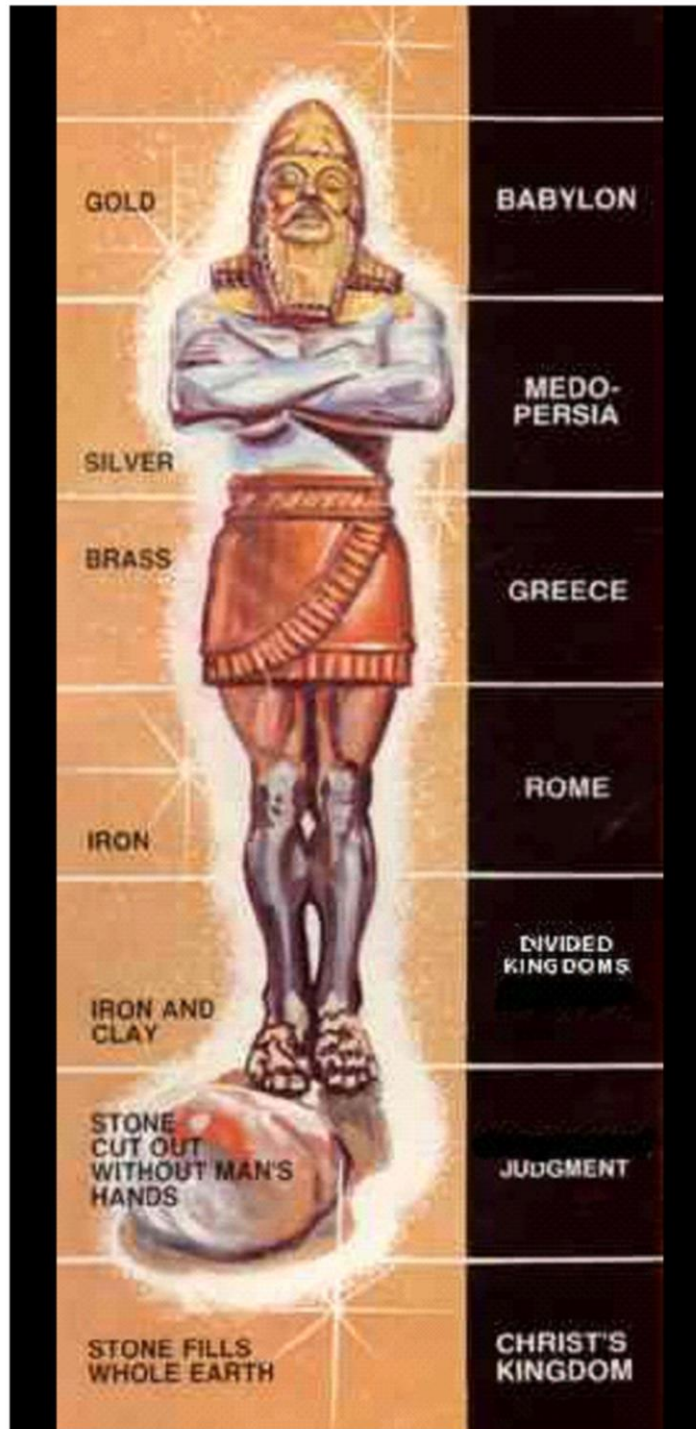
Dan. 2:32 *As for this image, its head was of fine gold, its breast and its arms of silver, its belly and its thighs of brass (copper),*

Dan. 2:33 *its legs of iron, its feet part of iron, and part of clay.*

Dan. 2:34 *Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon its feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them in pieces.*

Dan. 2:35 *Then was the iron, the clay, the brass (copper), the silver, and the gold, broken in pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors; and the wind carried them away, so that no place was*

found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth. (ASV)



Dan. 2:36 ¶ This is the dream; and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king.

Dan. 2:37 Thou, O king, art king of kings, unto whom the God of heaven hath given the kingdom, the power, and the strength, and the glory;

Dan. 2:38 and wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the birds of the heavens hath he given into thy hand, and hath made thee to rule over them all: **thou art the head of gold.**

Dan. 2:39 And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee; and another third kingdom of brass [copper], which shall bear rule over all the earth.

Dan. 2:40 And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron, forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things; and as iron that crusheth all these, shall it break in pieces and crush.

Dan. 2:41 And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potters' clay, and part of iron, it shall be a divided kingdom; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay.

Dan. 2:42 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.

Dan. 2:43 And whereas thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men; but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron doth not mingle with clay.

Dan. 2:44 And in the days of those kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed, nor shall the sovereignty thereof be left to another people; but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.

Dan. 2:45 Forasmuch as thou sawest that a stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure. (ASV)

The Four Gentile Kingdoms

The highly esteemed Jewish Rabbi known as the *Ramban* (1194-1270) interpreted:

...the four kingdoms are not meant to embrace all of mankind's history, but are to include, in outline form, the history of the Jewish exile. Therefore only the kingdoms considered responsible for the exile are mentioned. Other kingdoms, no matter how great their might, are not named...Babylon, responsible for the first exile, is named. Persia, successor in its totality to the Babylonian empire is considered the second kingdom; and Greece the third for the same reason. Rome is identified as the fourth kingdom for two reasons: 1) Its conquests included *Eretz Israel*...; 2) It was directly responsible for the subsequent exile from the Holy Land.

The Kingdoms, or Empires,:

- | | |
|----------------------------|--|
| 1. The Golden Head | Babylon |
| 2. The Two Silver Arms | Medo-Persian |
| 3. Copper Belly and Thighs | Greece |
| 4. Iron Legs | Rome (Early Roman Empire) |
| a. Iron and Clay Feet/Toes | Roman Empire Revived
(Headed up in Europe
from the place of
the Old Roman Empire) |

Judgment and Elimination of the Kingdoms

- | | |
|-----------------------|------------------------|
| The Stone | The Kingdom of God |
| Cut out without hands | (No human involvement) |

Crushes the image in the time of the multi-toed Roman Empire revived. All the Empires left their evil upon civilization. The last vestiges of each kingdom shall be crushed. All the mess of 6000 years will be like chaff. The Wind of the Holy Spirit will carry it away forever. This is God's doing. His kingdom fills the earth.

The Summer Threshing Floor

***Dan. 2:35** Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken in pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors; and the wind carried them away, so that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth. (ASV)*

There is a connection in Daniel 2:35 with Jesus' prophetic answers to the disciples' questions of "When?...."

Luke 21:29 ¶ And he spake to them a parable:

Behold the fig tree, and all the trees:

Luke 21:30 *when they now shoot forth, ye see it and know of your own selves that the summer is now nigh.*

The fig tree in this passage is the nation of Israel.

"all the trees" are the nations of prophecy...the nations the O.T. prophets spoke of when they prophesied about "the end of days."

Jesus answered their "When?" with instruction to watch Israel and the nations of prophecy. When they shoot forth into their prophesied outcomes, then we can *see and know* of our own selves that the "summer threshing floor" of Daniel 2:35 is nigh.

What The Prophets Say

It is of utmost importance to know what the O.T. prophets spoke if you want to "see and know of your own selves" about the signs of the times.

The Holy Spirit through Peter said that they are the light shining in the dark

2Pet. 1:18 And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount.

2Pet. 1:19 ¶ **We have also a more sure word of prophecy;** whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto **a light that shineth in a dark place**, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts:

2Pet. 1:20 Knowing this first, that no **prophecy of the scripture** is of any private interpretation.

2Pet. 1:21 For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake *as they were* moved by the Holy Ghost. (KJV)

[v. 19: Greek – The Prophetikos, i.e., The O.T. Prophets]

Rom. 16:25 ¶ Now to him that is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which hath been kept in silence through times eternal,

Rom. 16:26 but now is manifested, and by **the scriptures of the prophets**, according to the commandment of the eternal God, is made known unto all the nations unto obedience of faith:

[Bullinger; The Companion Bible: v. 26, the...prophets = prophetic writings. Gr. *graphie prophetikos*. The term prophetikos occurs only here and in 2 Peter 1:19.]

Matt. 26:56 *But all this is come to pass, that the scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled.* Then all the disciples left him, and fled.

Rev. 10:7 But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets.

“Without the prophets we’d have little to tell us what God is up to and what to expect next” (Pinchas Winston, The End of Days.)

Nebuchadnezzar Promoted Daniel to the office of “Rab Mag”

***Dan. 2:48** Then the king made Daniel great, and gave him many great gifts, and made him to rule over the whole province of Babylon, and to be chief governor over all the wise men of Babylon. (ASV)*

Babylon’s high offices included one known as the Rab Mag.
Rab Mag is a title. Chief or Head of the Magi, the Wise Men.

Jer. 39:1 ¶ And it came to pass when Jerusalem was taken, (in the ninth year of Zedekiah king of Judah, in the tenth month, came Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon and all his army against Jerusalem, and besieged it;

Jer. 39:2 in the eleventh year of Zedekiah, in the fourth month, the ninth day of the month, a breach was made in the city),

Jer. 39:3 that all the princes of the king of Babylon came in, and sat in the middle gate, to wit, Nergal-sharezer, Samgar-nebo, Sarsechim, Rab-saris, Nergal-sharezer, Rab-mag, with all the rest of the princes of the king of Babylon.

Jer. 39:13 So Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard sent, and Nebushazban, Rab-saris, and Nergal-sharezer, Rab-mag, and all the chief officers of the king of Babylon;

Daniel became the chief of all the wise men, or the Rab Mag.

The ancient Chaldeans were known as studiers of the heavens.

Astronomy, as well as astrology, was their forte.

(By the way, we still count time on their base 60 system.

60 minutes in an hour; 60 seconds in a minute; etc.)

Daniel, as the Rab Mag, would have taught those who studied the heavens that there would be a star connected with the coming of the Messiah.

Num. 24:17 I see him, but not now;
I behold him, but not nigh:
There shall come forth a star out of Jacob,
And a sceptre shall rise out of Israel,.

Num. 24:19 And out of Jacob shall one have dominion,

Daniel knew this prophecy. He would have taught it to the magi of the Babylonian Empire. Perhaps that’s why the magi came from the East at our Savior’s birth.