

Present Truth

2 Peter 1:12

Dear Readers,

May 1999

“Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord.” (2 Peter 1:2) Having a proper knowledge of God and His dear Son is of vital importance for us. I pray that you will grow in this knowledge so that grace and peace may be multiplied unto you. I pray that you will receive a blessing from our brief examination of prophecy.

Arizona Campmeeting - Final Notice: “The Church at Wilhoit” is having a campmeeting May 7-15 in Wilhoit, Arizona (about 1½ hours Northwest of Phoenix). Campmeetings are some of the most enjoyable times of the year so we hope you will plan on being there. We are certain you will gain a rich blessing by attending with your family. The first meeting will be May 7th at 7 p.m. with the remaining meetings to begin at 10 a.m. on the 8th and to continue until Sabbath evening on the 15th of May. Doug Goslin and Lynnford Beachy will be among the speakers at this campmeeting. Call (520) 442-9868 and ask for Kim to receive detailed information. I’ll see you at campmeeting!

Prophecy (Part 1)

An Exposition of Daniel 2

by James White

We most solemnly believe that God designed that his word should be understood; but not without searching the Scriptures, comparing one portion with another, and earnest prayer for that Spirit to guide into truth, which at first inspired holy men to write. In order to come to the knowledge of the truth, we must possess a child-like, teachable spirit, then pray much for divine aid. The blessed Jesus said, “I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight.” [Matthew 11:25, 26]

We do not agree with some who say that the prophecies cannot be understood. Revelation is something made known, and, of course, to be understood. A man may say in truth that he does not understand the prophecies; but to assert that they cannot be understood, is quite another thing; and he who says it, must be infidel in his principles. Not that he rejects the whole of revelation; but he virtually denies

that a part of the Bible is a revelation. Some men who denounce infidelity with an unsparing hand, tell us that we cannot understand the prophecies. What is this but infidelity?

We should humbly, and in faith, seek for the aid of the Holy Spirit to give us understanding, and in that light search the Scriptures to know what was the mind of the Spirit that inspired them, and we shall not search in vain. We will now examine the second chapter of Daniel, and for the sake of brevity begin with verse 31.

Verses 31-36. “*Thou O king, sawest, and behold, a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee, and the form thereof was terrible. This image’s head was of fine gold, his breast and arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, his legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay. Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out, without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron, and clay, and brake them to pieces: then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors, and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image, became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth. This is the dream; and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king.*”

We wish here to inquire, Where did the stone strike the image? Answer, "upon his feet." We shall have occasion to refer to this fact again.

"Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold."

"And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee."

"And another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth."

"And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron:" "And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potters' clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided."

"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. And whereas thou sawest 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 is not mixed with clay. And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed."

Verses 37, 38. "Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art [or, thy kingdom is] this head of gold."

Babylon was the first kingdom of universal empire. It was founded by Nimrod, the great grandson of Noah. See Genesis 10:8-10. It lasted nearly seventeen hundred years, though under different names; sometimes called Babylon, sometimes Assyria, and sometimes Chaldea. It extended from Nimrod to Belshazzar, who was its last king.

Verse 39. [First part] "And after thee shall arise another kingdom, inferior to thee."

What kingdom succeeded Babylon? See Chapter 5:28. "Thy kingdom [Babylon] is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians." Then the Medo-Persian kingdom was the second universal kingdom, and is represented by the breast and arms of silver.

Verse 39. [Last part.] "And another third kingdom of brass shall arise, which shall bear rule over all the earth."

What kingdom was this? See Chapter 8:5-7, 21. Here we learn that Grecia conquered the Medo-Persian kingdom and became a kingdom of universal empire. This took place

under Alexander. Here, then, we have the third kingdom, which is represented by the brass of the image.

Verse 40. "And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things; and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise."

What kingdom is this? It is generally admitted to be the Roman kingdom. It is a universal kingdom that is to break in pieces all that went before it. Rome alone answers the description. Rome was a universal empire. See Luke 2:1. "And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed." Who was Caesar Augustus? A Roman Emperor. Here, then, we have the fourth kingdom, represented by the legs of iron.

Verse 41. [First part.] "And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potters' clay and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided."

What kingdom shall be divided? Answer. The fourth kingdom. The Western empire of Rome, between the years A. D. 356 and 483, was divided into ten divisions, or kingdoms. 1. The Huns, in Hungary, A. D. 356. 2. The Ostrogoths, in Mysia, 377. 3. The Visigoths, in Pannonia, 378. 4. The Franks, in France, 407. 5. The Vandals, in Africa, 407. 6. The Sueves and Alans, in Gascoigne and Spain, 407. 7. The Burgundians, in Burgundy, 407. 8. The Heruli and Rugii, in Italy, 476. 9. The Saxons and Angles, in Britain, 476. 10. The Lombards, in Germany, 483. Thus the

kingdom was divided as designated by the ten toes.

Verse 41. [Last part.] "But there shall be in it the strength of iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with the miry clay."

The Roman or iron power, through the influence and authority of the Papacy, or Papal Rome, stretched itself among the clay so as to be mixed with it, and thereby kept up the strength of iron.

Verses 42, 43. "And as the toes of the feet were part of iron and part of clay, so the kingdom [Roman kingdom] shall be partly strong and partly broken. And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they [Romanists] shall mingle themselves [Rome Papal] with the seed of men; but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay."

How exactly has all this been fulfilled? Romanism, or the Roman Church, while it has mingled with all nations, has not mixed with them, but has kept up its authority over its subjects under whatever government they may have been located; so that the authority of Rome has been felt by all the



nations where her subjects have been “mingled with the seed of men.” The fourth, or Roman kingdom is thus perpetuated, though divided.

Verse 44. “*And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.*”

We shall do well to notice with care (1) what kings, or kingdoms are here referred to. Most certainly they are the ten kings of the divided fourth kingdom; for they are the subject of discourse. And (2) the kingdom set up. It is the fifth universal kingdom, and is never to be destroyed and left to other people. It is, therefore, the immortal kingdom. The subjects will not pass from one set of rulers to another, as has been the case with the four previous kingdoms.

In regard to the fifth kingdom, set up by the God of heaven, there are at least two general views.

One is, that it is the kingdom of grace, which was to increase till it filled the whole earth; “for” say they who hold this view, “the stone was to roll and grow till it became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.” Unfortunately for this view, however, there is not a word of Bible testimony to sustain it.

The other is the Bible view as follows: “*Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.*” Chapter 2:34, 35. Mark well the events here stated. The stone breaks the image, and it becomes like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors, and the wind carries it away so that no place is found for it - all earthly kingdoms are broken and cease to exist - then the stone becomes a great mountain and fills the whole earth. This view of the subject is in perfect harmony with the testimony of the Old and New Testaments.

But we would inquire of those who teach that the kingdom of grace was set up by our Lord Jesus Christ 2000 years since, Had God no “kingdom of grace” before the first advent of Christ? If not, then Enoch, Noah, Lot, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses and the Prophets have perished without hope, for certainly no man can be saved without grace.

But let us look at this subject a little further. Where did the stone strike the image when it smote it? Not on the head - Babylon; nor on the breast and arms - Media and Persia; nor on the belly and thighs - Grecia; nor yet on the legs - Rome Pagan, as it should have done, if the kingdom was set up at Christ’s first advent. Where, then, did the stone smite the image? Answer. “*Upon his feet.*” Now it could not smite

the feet before they existed; and they did not exist till several hundred years after Christ’s crucifixion, till the fourth, or Roman kingdom was divided; which we have seen did not take place till between the years A. D. 356 and 483.

But that the kingdom was not set up at certain periods spoken of in the New Testament, will appear from the examination of a few passages. It was not set up when our Lord taught his followers to pray, “*Thy kingdom come.*” it must have been future then. Again. The mother of Zebedee’s children understood it to be future when she desired our Lord to grant that her two sons might sit, “*the one on the right hand and the other on the left, in thy kingdom.*” It was still future when our Lord ate the last Passover. See Luke 22:18: “*I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come.*” So, it had not then come. Let us see if it had come when Christ hung on the cross. See Luke 22:42. “*Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.*” Thus, to his death, it seems, his kingdom had not been set up.

But did he not set it up before his ascension to heaven? See Acts 1:6. “*Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel.*” Not done yet. Now see 1 Corinthians 15:50. “*Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God.*” This settles the question that the kingdom of God is not set up till the saints put on immortality, or not till they enter the immortal state, which Paul tells us [verse 52] is “*at the last trump,*” and the Apostle tells us [2 Timothy 4:1] that “*the Lord Jesus Christ shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and kingdom.*” And again he tells us [Acts 14:22] that “*we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God;*” and this address was made to those who were already Christians, and shows that the kingdom of God was still future, in the Apostle’s estimation.

The kingdom is a matter of promise. “*Hearken, my beloved brethren, hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?*” James 2:5. It is yet to come. “*Fear not little flock, for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.*”

But when will the kingdom of God be set up? See Matthew 25:31-34. “*When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.*” Then, and not till then, will the kingdom of God be set up, “*for flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God.*”

Now comes the inquiry, “*Watchman, what of the night?*” In what period of prophecy are we now? Are we in the kingdom of Babylon, under the “*head of gold?*” No.

That has passed long ago. Are we in the Medo-Persian empire? Long since that kingdom was numbered with things passed. Are we in Grecia? That, too, was numbered and finished more than two thousand years since. Are we in Rome in its undivided state, or in the "legs of iron?" No. Long since that empire fell. Where are we, then? Answer. Down among the feet and toes. How long since those divisions came up, which constitute the feet and toes? Over fifteen hundred years. Almost fourteen hundred years we have traveled down in the divided state of the Roman empire. Where does the stone strike the image? "Upon his feet." Where are we now? In the feet. What takes place when the stone smites the image? It is all broken to pieces, and becomes like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors, and the wind carries it away that no place shall be found for it. Then

will the everlasting kingdom of God be set up which shall never be destroyed.

(This article was adapted from pages 3-18 of the book entitled *The Four Universal Monarchies of the Prophecy of Daniel, and God's Everlasting Kingdom*, by James White, published in Rochester, New York.)

Present Truth is published monthly by *Smyrna Gospel Ministries*. It is sent free upon request. Duplication of these papers is not only permitted but strongly encouraged.

Editor: Lynnford Beachy, HC 64 Box 128-B, Welch, West Virginia 24801, phone: (304) 732-9204, e-mail: berean@smyrna.org.

Associate Editor: Doug Goslin, PO Box 78, Kirkland, Arizona 86332, phone: (520) 442-9867, e-mail: believe@northlink.com.

Encouraging Words from Jesus

37 All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and **him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.**

38 For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.

39 And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.

40 And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day. ...

44 No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.

45 It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.

46 Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he which is of God, he hath seen the Father.

47 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life. (John 6:37-45)

Present Truth

HC 64 Box 128-B
Welch, West Virginia 24801
U.S.A.

Bulk Rate
U. S. Postage
PAID
Welch WV
Permit No. 35

Address Correction Requested