

While some people question the validity of the Bible, one thing that makes this book unique is its ability to tell the future. God has predicted the events leading up to the end of the world in no uncertain terms because only God knows "the end from the beginning" (Isa. 46:10). In this regard, the Bible is unlike any other book. Those who argue that the prophecies of the Bible are so obscure that they could mean anything clearly have not read the prophecy of Daniel 2, in which the Bible records the dream of a large metal man given to an ancient Babylonian king. Check it out for yourself.

Around the year 600 B.C., an amazing prophecy was given that would foretell the rise of future nations. At that time the king of Babylon had a strange dream. Upon waking, he could not remember the dream, so he called all the wise men of the kingdom to tell him the dream and its meaning. While these men were unable to tell the king his dream, one of the Israelites named Daniel asked the king for time to appeal to God for the answer to this mystery. That night God answered Daniel's prayer by giving him the same dream and revealing its secret meaning.

The next morning, Daniel explained the dream to the king, describing an image of a huge metal man which the king had seen in his dream. "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" (Dan. 2:32, 33). As he watched, a huge rock came hurling down from the sky and "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... so that no trace of them was found. And the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth" (Dan. 2:34, 35).

As the king listened, the dream began to come back to him. He realized that this was the dream he had and listened intently as Daniel then went on to explain, "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... and has made

you ruler over them all— you are this head of gold. But after you shall arise another kingdom inferior to yours; then another, a third kingdom of bronze, which shall rule over all the earth" (Dan. 2:37-39). Amazingly, this prophecy here predicts the rise of three leading monarchies that would rule the ancient world; Babylon, Persia, and Greece. But it gets more interesting.

After Babylon, Persia, and Greece came a "fourth kingdom... as strong as iron, inasmuch as iron breaks in pieces and shatters all things; and like iron that crushes, that kingdom will break in pieces and crush all the others" (Dan. 2:40). Of course, we know that after the fall of Greece came the Roman empire. As described in the prophecy, not only was the Roman empire characterized as the iron age, but its brutality was worse than any of the previous kingdoms, using such torture methods as death by the cross, burning people at the stake, and feeding people to wild beasts in the Roman coliseums.

Of course, the prophecy doesn't end there. After describing the fourth kingdom as the legs of iron, Daniel continues, "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" (Dan. 2:41). Notice that the kingdom which follows Rome is a mixed kingdom which contains iron, which is represented as Rome. That means, according to the Bible, Rome would continue to exist in part, but mixed with some other power.

While iron here represents Rome, what does clay represent? According to the Bible, clay represents Christians. Isaiah 64:8 says, "But now, O Lord, You are our Father; we are the clay, and You our potter," therefore the feet of iron and clay following Rome represents a mixture of Rome and Christianity. What is so amazing is that anyone who knows history recognizes that as the Roman empire was falling it latched onto the Catholic church and became the Holy Roman Empire, also known as the Roman Catholic Church, or the Christian era, perfectly fulfilling the ancient prophecy of Daniel.

Notice that after the fall of Rome we see this same mixture in the toes. The prophecy says, "as the toes of the feet were partly of iron and partly of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly fragile" (Dan. 2:42). Since the ten toes come out of Rome, these must represent ten groups that rise up to bring about the fall of Rome. This was fulfilled in the ten Germanic tribes which brought about the fall of Rome; the Ostrogoths, Visigoths, Heruli, Vandals, Suevi, Anglo-Saxons, Franks, Bergundians, Lombards, and Alemanni. While "three" of these ten kingdoms were "plucked out," or destroyed, as later predicted in Daniel 7:8, the remaining seven would grow up to become major nations in Europe. The Franks became France, the Anglo-Saxons became England, the Suevi became Switzerland, the Allemani became Germany, and so on.

The prophecy then goes on to say that these European nations will try to unite but will not be able to. The king was told, "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" (Dan. 2:43). While the nations of Europe will attempt to mingle or mix together and may even appear successful for a season, prophecy says they will not stick. The union will ultimately fail.

Throughout history the nations of Europe have been trying to cleave and unite together. There have been multiple failed attempts. Stalin, Kaiser Wilhelm II, Napoleon, Charlemagne, Charles V, Louis XIV, Mussolini, Hitler and others have attempted to dominate by uniting Europe. The recent British exit, otherwise known as "Brexit," was another fulfillment of prophecy, revealing the failed attempts to unite Europe. According to prophecy, the nations will try to mix, but they "will not adhere to one another."

Thousands of years ago, the Bible not only predicted the rise and fall of world empires down to the nations of Europe, but also the endless failed attempts of Europe to unite. Daniel concludes the prophecy by saying, "in the days of these [nations of Europe] the God of heaven will

set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed" (Dan. 2:44). These days are now. We are living in the final days of this prophecy. All has been fulfilled except the very last part; the return of Christ. This will soon take place.

Just as sure as the prophecy accurately predicted the rise and fall of nations, the end of this prophecy will also soon be fulfilled. Prophecy declares, "The dream is certain, and its interpretation is sure" (Dan. 2:45). As the European nations continue their attempt to unite, Jesus will finally come back and set up His kingdom which will last forever. Jesus said, "I have told you before it comes, that when it does come to pass, you may believe" (John 14:29). God has foretold the history of the world through the rise and fall of Empires so that we may know without a doubt that the end of this prophecy will eventually come. Jesus will return.

The final part of this prophecy is soon to take place. Revelation 1:7 says, "Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, and they also who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him" (Rev. 1:7). As Jesus is soon to return and bring a final completion to the ancient prophecy, God is calling the world to get ready. "He who testifies to these things says, 'Surely I am coming quickly.' Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus" (Rev. 22:20)!

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