

1. Last week I exegeted Dan 2:35-40. Before leaving verse forty I want to give you several summary points with reference to the Roman Empire.

2. First lets' review an expanded translation of Dan 2:31-40.

Dan 2:31 What you saw O King was this: there before you stood a great statue. This great image was awesome in brightness; its colorful appearance signified several future glamorous empires; its form was terrifying; a symbol of the great power of the empires to come.

Dan 2:32 The golden head represented you O King as ruler of Chaldea, the breast and arms of silver represent the Kingdom of the Medes and the Persians to follow and the belly and thighs of bronze represent a Grecian empire whose Kingdom will supplant the Medo-Persians.

Dan 2:33 The legs of the image were made of iron representing the Roman Empire and the feet were made of both iron and clay representing the Revived Roman Empire.

Dan 2:34 Then you saw a large uncut stone rolling down a steep grade; it struck the base of the image and the iron and clay were smashed into many pieces. The Stone represented Jesus Christ in His Second Advent Role.

Dan 2:35 As a result of the Stone striking the image, the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold were broken into pieces and a great wind blew them away, not a trace of the shards could be found: and the Large Uncut Stone, a representation of Jesus Christ, became a great mountain, and filled the entire earth; His rulership was recognized by all the nations of the world.

Dan 2:36 Now my King with reference to what you dreamed, I shall interpret it for you.

Dan 2:37 You Nebuchadnezzar are unique, for the God of the Universe has given you a remarkable kingdom; a kingdom of glamour and military power.

Dan 2:38 God has given you authority over the entire earth, yes Oh King you are the head of gold.

Dan 2:39 But after you shall arise an inferior Kingdom consisting of the Medes and Persians and after this Kingdom, another one shall arise, the Graeco-Macedonian Kingdom of Alexander the Great.

Dan 2:40 And then the Roman Empire, a fourth Kingdom, strong like iron, shall break and subdue all things; the iron empire shall bruise all peoples, especially my people Israel, who are under divine discipline.

3. Last week I gave you a secular view of the Roman Empire from the Grolier Encyclopedia. Let's take a further look at what is said of the Empire's ultimate demise.

“At its height, in the 2nd century AD, the Roman Empire extended from Britain and northern Europe along the Danube into Anatolia and as far as the rivers of Mesopotamia. It included more people and territory than any previous empire. The empire centered on the Mediterranean.

“Once more there was peace throughout the Empire; it was safe to travel the great roads which had been built. The Adriatic divided the Rome Empire both culturally and linguistically. The Koine Greek was the language of those countries east of the Adriatic; Latin was the primary language of those persons living in the western portion of the Empire. In Africa and Anatolia Roman nomads began to rebel and demands for independence became commonplace.

“Beginning in the 3rd century A.D., GERMANIC PEOPLES increased their pressure on the western and northern parts of the empire. Some Germanic tribes were admitted to the frontier districts of the empire as buffers against more violent tribes beyond. In addition, various Germanic tribes were recruited for service in the Roman army, but their service masked the fact that they had not completely absorbed Roman culture and laws. Increasingly, this subtly altered army intervened in the selection of emperors. Meanwhile, successive waves of barbarian tribes attacked the empire in force. Faced with mounting disorder, Emperor DIOCLETIAN (284-305) divided the empire into halves for easier administration.

“His partition officially recognized the profound cultural differences that had gradually developed in the later empire. Spain, GAUL (now France), and the central Danube plain (modern day Romania) provinces where Latin was spoken, found Roman customs prevailing. But in Greece, Egypt, and the eastern provinces, Roman garrisons remained a minority among the Greek-speaking majority. The Legions maintained an uneasy peace, which was punctuated by occasional wars with the Persians or unsuccessful revolts such as the rising by the JEWS in Judea in A.D. 66-70. In Syria and Palestine a new religion, CHRISTIANITY, arose out of the Jewish tradition. JESUS CHRIST gave a new meaning to the Jewish prophecies that had predicted a Messiah.

“Some Jewish sects interpreted these scriptures to mean that the Messiah would lead the Jews to political freedom; accordingly, they resisted Roman rule. Jesus, however, insisted that the promised kingdom would not be an earthly one. Urging submission and love of friend and enemy alike, Jesus rejected the Pharisees' narrow interpretation of Jewish laws. The new religion based on Christ's teachings won numerous converts, although they were persecuted by both Jews and Romans. The apostle PAUL, a spokesman for Christianity, traveled throughout Anatolia and Greece and even to Rome itself.

“As Roman administration and military power weakened, Christianity increasingly became the bond that united the citizens of the Roman world. In 325, Emperor CONSTANTINE I, a recent convert to Christianity, summoned an ecumenical church council at Nicaea to settle questions of Christian doctrine. Constantine made Christianity virtually the official religion of the empire. In 330 he also created a second capital--on the site of an ancient Greek city, BYZANTIUM.

“This capital, Constantinople (modern ISTANBUL), remained the nucleus of the Greek-dominated half of the empire, later called the BYZANTINE EMPIRE, for centuries. Constantine's move was, in fact, a retreat from Italy and Gaul. The movements of the Germanic tribes--FRANKS, GOTHs, VANDALS, and others--proved to be more than the empire's mercenary army could contain. In 410, Rome itself was sacked by the Visigoths, and in 455 a second assault by the Vandals nearly destroyed the city. Finally, in 476 the barbarian king, ODOACER, captured the western emperor Romulus Augustus (475-76) at Ravenna and did not bother to name even a puppet emperor; the title of emperor in the West had become an empty prize.”

4. Now let me comment on the ramifications of the empires and the several special relationships to the Scriptures:

5. The Old Testament Scriptures record many details concerning the empires we have studied in the image.

5.1 Some of the passages seem to be confusing, even seeming to contradict one another.

5.2 Since God is not the author of confusion (1 Cor. 14:33), there must be an answer; the answer is as you might have guessed dispensations!

1Co 14:33 For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.

6. The Old Testament contains prophecies with regard to birth, death, resurrection and ascension of the Messiah.

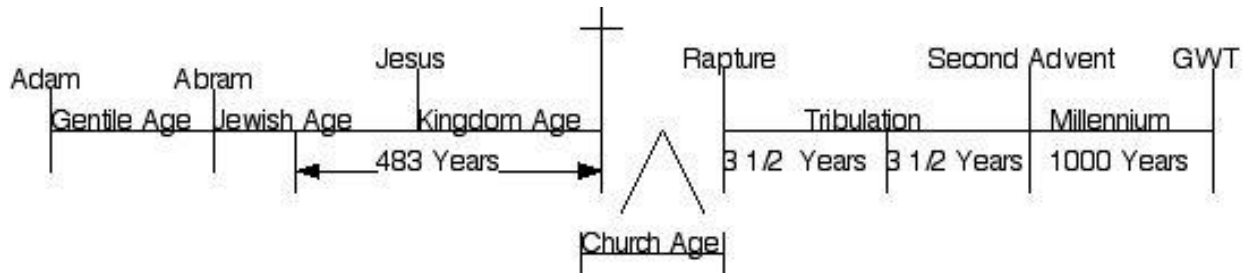
6.1 Psalm 110:1 records His session at the right hand of God; but after this, the Scriptures become silent: there is a parenthesis-a necessity for an intercalation.

Psa 110:1 The LORD says to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet."

7. The Jewish Age was dramatically interrupted; the Mystery or Church Age, must begin and end before the Jewish Age can be resumed and terminated.

8. There is virtually no teaching in the Old Testament with regard to the Church Age. When any Old Testament prophecy deals with coming events, it skips chronologically, the Church Age, and, then resumes the passage with information concerning events in another dispensation, either the Tribulation or the Millennium.

9. Between verses 40 and 41 we have such a parenthesis.



Dan 2:40 Finally, there will be a fourth kingdom, strong as iron--for iron breaks and smashes everything--and as iron breaks things to pieces, so it will crush and break all the others.

Dan 2:41 Just as you saw that the feet and toes were partly of baked clay and partly of iron, so this will be a divided kingdom; yet it will have some of the strength of iron in it, even as you saw iron mixed with clay.

9.1 The Church Age existed as a part of the plan of God, but it is not mentioned in the Old Testament.

9.2 Other examples of this are found in Dan 7:23-24; Dan 9:26 and 27; Dan 11:35-36; and Isa 61:1-2.

Dan 7:23 "He gave me this explanation: 'The fourth beast is a fourth kingdom that will appear on the earth. It will be different from all the other kingdoms and will devour the whole earth, trampling it down and crushing it.

Dan 7:24 The ten horns are ten kings who will come from this kingdom. After them another king will arise, different from the earlier ones; he will subdue three kings.

Dan 9:26 After the sixty-two 'sevens,' the Anointed One will be cut off and will have nothing. The people of the ruler who will come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end will come like a flood: War will continue until the end, and desolations have been decreed.

Dan 9:27 He will confirm a covenant with many for one 'seven.' In the middle of the 'seven' he will put an end to sacrifice and offering. And on a wing of the temple he will set up an abomination that causes desolation, until the end that is decreed is poured out on him."

Dan 11:35 Some of the wise will stumble, so that they may be refined, purified and made spotless until the time of the end, for it will still come at the appointed time.

Dan 11:36 "The king will do as he pleases. He will exalt and magnify himself above every god and will say unheard-of things against the God of gods. He will be successful until the time of wrath is completed, for what has been determined must take place.

Isa 61:1 The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me, because the LORD has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners,
Isa 61:2 to proclaim the year of the LORD'S favor and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn,

10. Since A.D. 70 with the destruction of Jerusalem, the Jews have been under the fifth cycle of discipline. They are scattered throughout the earth for the duration of the Church Age.

10.1 Their mission of evangelism has been taken from them and transferred to the Church Age believers.

11. This will be the status quo until the "body of Christ" is removed from the earth at the Rapture and the Jewish Age is resumed.

1Th 4:16 For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first.

1Th 4:17 After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.

End Lesson Taught 1-7-2001