

The tribes that overran the Roman Empire formed the kingdoms that later developed into the modern nations of Europe. Just as the prophecy predicted, some of the nations are strong and others remain weak.

10. How does Daniel describe the culmination of this prophecy in the second coming of Jesus? (**Daniel 2:44, 45**)
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What does this dream of Daniel tell us about God? Discuss your answers.

- He knows everything. He controls everything.
 Life is pre-determined. Other _____

Do you think God cares as much about your personal life as He does about what happens to nations throughout history? Read **Matthew 6:26, Matthew 10:30 and John 3:16, 17**, and write down your answer.

Remember, God has shared this overview of history because He cares about your life. He wants your personal life to be the best that it can be! God wants you to understand world history so you can be aware of what is happening in the world today, and He especially wants you to know that He wants you to join Him in His kingdom!

What would you like to say to God?

- Thank You for revealing history to me.
 I want to be part of Your Kingdom.
 Thank You for caring for my life.

MY PRAYER

Father, thank You for caring enough for me that You revealed world history in advance so that I could be aware of the future. As I continue to study the Bible, please give me understanding and guide me in Your ways. I ask this in the name of Jesus, Amen.



A New World Order

The morning newscast blasted out the news—discouraging to say the least. A tornado ripped the roof off of a house in Iowa. Fighter jets bombed targets in the Middle East. A private jet crashed into a home and burst into flames. Financial market predictors revealed a bleak future.

Would you like to know what the coming year holds for you and your family? What will happen in the world in the months ahead? Supermarket tabloids scream predictions from their front covers. Thousands in our world today are anxious to know the future.

Can we really know anything about tomorrow? Is it possible to see into the future? God does reveal the future in His Word, the Bible. He doesn't tell us in detail exactly what the coming year will hold for our lives. But He does give us prophetic outlines of where the world is going and of the major events that will mark the future of our world.

About 500 years before the birth of Jesus, God gave the world a startling glimpse into the future through the prophet Daniel. He presented an outline of world history, from Daniel's time to our own day. Accurate prophecy is one of the great evidences that the Bible is truly the inspired Word of God.

Let's see what the Bible says about the future.

GETTING TO KNOW DANIEL

1. Our story begins in **Daniel 1:1**. Which king and nation invaded Jerusalem?
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Historians place the invasion at about 605 BC. The name Nebuchadnezzar means "the god Nabu protects." Nabu was a Babylonian god. Babylon was located on the Euphrates River close to the site of the modern city of Baghdad, Iraq. The twin rivers, Tigris and Euphrates, watered a flat valley edged on the east by mountains and on the west by desert. Historians call this valley "Mesopotamia."

- On the week of His crucifixion, Jesus was talking to His disciples on the Mount of Olives and called attention to the “prophet Daniel” some 600 years earlier. (**Matthew 24:15**) Jesus called Daniel a “prophet” and gave support to his words. Let’s get better acquainted with Daniel.

List the original names of Daniel’s three friends and the new names assigned to them and Daniel. (**Daniel 1:6, 7**)

Original names _____

New names _____

Read **Daniel 1:17** and write down how God used Daniel and his three friends, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah. (**vs. 11**)

What special characteristics did God give to Daniel? (**vs. 17**)

It appears from Scripture that Daniel was born into a well-respected family and had potential as a leader. Read **verses 3 and 4** and list several of the characteristics the king gave regarding the “young men” that his servant, Ashpenaz, was to bring back to Babylon.

Which of the characteristics in Daniel’s life do you believe was the most important in his relationship to God? Why?

THE DREAM

- In the second chapter of Daniel, what did God use to represent world history from Daniel’s day to our day? Read **Daniel 2:31-33**.

Let’s review the details of the image as described in the Bible.

- Which world power is represented by the head of gold? (**Daniel 1:1; Daniel 2:36-38**)

Daniel was, in essence, telling the leader of the world’s greatest empire, “Nebuchadnezzar, your dream is a message from God. He represents your kingdom by the statue’s golden head.” Historians refer to ancient Babylon as the “golden kingdom” or the “golden age.”

- What world power followed Babylon and is represented by the chest and arms of silver? (**Daniel 2:39; Daniel 8:20**)

In fulfillment of God’s prediction, Nebuchadnezzar’s kingdom crumbled into ruins when Cyrus, the Persian general, overthrew the Babylonian Empire in 538 BC. You can read about this conquest of Medo-Persia in Daniel chapter 5.

- What world power followed Medo-Persia and is represented by the belly and thighs of bronze? (**Daniel 2:39; Daniel 8:21**)

The kingdom of Greece, under Alexander the Great, overthrew the Persians at the Battle of Arbela in 331 BC. Greece became the world’s third great empire.

- What world empire followed Greece and is represented by the legs of iron? (**Daniel 2:40**)

Edward Gibbon, the renowned historian, even uses the symbols of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream to describe Rome’s conquests. “And the images of gold, or silver, or brass that might serve to represent the nations and their kings, were successively broken by the iron monarchy of Rome.” (*The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, chapter 38, paragraph 1.)

- Which part of the image represents the dissolution of the Roman Empire? (**Daniel 2:41, 42**)

- How does God describe man’s efforts to reunite the divided Roman Empire? (**Daniel 2:43**)

