

The End of the
Times of the Nations
and
The Coming of the
Kingdom of Christ

(The Prophecy in Daniel 2 & 7 and Luke 21:24)

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Introduction

Nearly 2,700 years ago, “*God in heaven who reveals secrets*” (Dan. 2:28a) made known to the prophet Daniel not only the entire development of world empires from the Babylonian empire all the way to the Messiah’s everlasting kingdom on this earth, but also the timeline of Christ’s second coming. Today, we can look back at history and verify the prophecy, proving that God’s word is true. What is pertinent for us today is that we are now living at the end of the age, just before the second coming of Christ.

God, “*who is and who was and who is to come*” (Rev. 1:8), wants to show His people the signs of the times so that they can be prepared for the second coming of Christ. The Jews failed to discern “*the signs of the times*” (Matt. 16:3) of the first coming of Jesus, the Messiah. Today, His second coming is imminent. May we pay attention to the signs of the times of His soon return.

I. God’s Purpose for His Chosen People, the Israelites, in the Age of the Old Covenant

God’s eternal plan in creating man in His own image and likeness is for man to have dominion over all of His creation (Gen. 1:26-28; Psalm 8; Heb. 2:5-9), to recover the earth from the usurping hand

of Satan, the subtle serpent (1 John 5:19), and to bring God's kingdom down to this earth. However, through Satan's deception and Adam's disobedience, sin and death entered in and corrupted all of mankind and the world (Rom. 5:12-14). The apostle John wrote in 1 John 5:19, "*We know that... the whole world is under the control of the evil one.*"

But God will never give up on His plan. He made a new beginning with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, through whom He gained His chosen people, the Israelites. God delivered His people from slavery in Egypt through Moses and made the Old Covenant of the Law with them at Mount Sinai: "*Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine. And you shall be to Me a **kingdom of priests and a holy nation***" (Exod. 19:5-6). Then God led them into Canaan, the good land which He had promised Abraham. There He chose **Jerusalem, Mount Zion** (Psalm 132:12-13), to be His dwelling place forever, for His temple to be built and His throne to be set up (Psalm 48:1-2; Jer. 3:17). Out of Zion, God wants to rule over the whole earth. Israel was to be His kingdom during the age of the old covenant.

The Fall of Israel and Their Captivity in Babylon

But the Bible tells us that the Israelites rejected God as their King (1 Sam. 8:7). They rebelled against God, disobeyed His law, mingled with the nations and followed their ways (Lev. 18:3; Ps. 106:34-35; Ezek. 11:12; 16:47). Eventually, they even practiced idolatry worse than the nations, sacrificing their own children by fire to the demons (Jer. 7:31; 19:5; Ps. 106:37-38), shedding innocent blood.

“Moreover all the leaders of the priests and the people transgressed more and more, according to all the abominations of the nations, and defiled the house of the LORD which He had consecrated in Jerusalem. And the LORD God of their fathers sent warnings to them by His messengers, rising up early and sending them, because He had compassion on His people and on His dwelling place. But they mocked the messengers of God, despised His words, and scoffed at His prophets, until the wrath of the LORD arose against His people, till there was no remedy.” (2 Chron. 36:14-16)

Therefore, God gave them up into captivity in Babylon under King Nebuchadnezzar (vv. 17-21). From that time on, God handed over the rule of this earth to the Gentile nations.

The Times of the Nations

As mentioned above, beginning from the time of Israel's captivity in Babylon, the LORD God transferred the rule of this earth to the Gentile nations, referred to in Luke 21:24 by the Lord Jesus as "the times of the nations." There in Babylon, King Nebuchadnezzar had a dream and set the impossible task for his wise men to not only interpret the dream, but to tell him what his dream was. The LORD then revealed the dream and this amazing prophecy to Daniel:

"You, O king, were watching; and behold, a great image! This great image, whose splendor was excellent, stood before you; and its form was awesome. 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. You watched while a stone was cut out without hands, which 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, and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; the wind carried them away 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. 2:31-35)

(See Daniel 2 & 7 chart in Appendix A)

The different parts of the image represent the development of the world government, beginning with the Babylonian empire, followed by the Persian empire, the Grecian empire, the Roman empire even to the present age of democracy – a total of approximately 2,640 years. The different materials, starting with gold, then silver, brass, iron, all the way down to the feet of iron mixed with clay signify moral decline and degradation. Each subsequent empire was inferior to the former. The golden head was King Nebuchadnezzar; God gave him absolute power (Dan. 2:37-38). Daniel continued to say, *“But after you shall arise another kingdom inferior to yours; then another. . .”* (Dan. 2:39). Daniel 6:15 tells us that the Persian king possessed no power to reverse his own decree. Alexander the Great of the Grecian kingdom shared his power with his four generals. After he died at the age of 32, his kingdom fell into civil war and was divided among his generals.

While the metal shows degradation in quality, each subsequent metal also is harder than the one before (iron is the hardest) – showing that the empires became more and more brutal, like beasts. In Daniel Chapter 7, the Lord revealed that these empires of men were like beasts: the lion, the bear, the leopard and the fourth beast which was *“dreadful and terrible, exceedingly strong. It*

had huge iron teeth; it was devouring, breaking in pieces, and trampling the residue with its feet” (Dan. 7:7). The brutality and magnitude of destruction that occurred in World War I and World War II confirm what Daniel had prophesied.

We are currently living at the end of the age corresponding to the feet made of iron and clay, the rule of the people. The age of democracy began with the Declaration of Independence in the United States of America on July 4, 1776. Yet today, after 244 years, there are signs indicating that we are approaching the end of the age of democracy. The Democratic Party in the United States is trying to destroy democracy, blatantly pushing for socialism; and the majority of the young people, not treasuring the freedom of democracy, are buying into it. Now, political leaders throughout the world want to give up their national sovereignty, advocating open borders and globalism, paving the way for the final part of the image, the ten toes (Rev. 17:12-14; ref. Appendix A).

These ten toes represent the short time of 3½ years in which the “beast” will rule over the whole world. The beast is also referred to by the apostle Paul as “the man of sin,” “the son of perdition,” and “the lawless one” (2 Thess. 2:3, 8-10). The ten toes are the ten horns of the coming “beast” in Revelation 13:1 which are the kings of the ten na-

tions who will give their authority and power to the “beast” and help him in his reign of terror for forty-two months or 3½ years (Rev. 13:5) during the great day of God’s wrath.

II. The Age of the New Covenant – the First Coming of Jesus Christ

In the midst of the historical development described by Daniel, God was preparing for the first coming of His Son, Jesus Christ, who came in the likeness of the flesh of sin (Rom. 8:3; Phil. 2:5-8) to accomplish redemption for mankind, and to usher in the new covenant and the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 3:2; 4:17). This was prophesied by Zechariah (Zech. 9:9) and Isaiah (Isa. 53; 9:6-7). Daniel likewise gave the reason for the first coming of Christ: “... *to make an end of sins, to make reconciliation for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness... and to anoint the Most Holy*” (Dan. 9:24) and foretold the exact date of His entry into Jerusalem as King (Dan. 9:24-26; Appendix B). In the new covenant age, the wonderful gospel is not only for the Jews but also for all the Gentiles (Isa. 49:6; Luke 2:30-32; Acts 13:47; Matt. 28:19-20). God’s eternal purpose to bring His kingdom down to the earth remains the same. Now man is not justified by the works of the law, but by grace (Eph. 2:8-9). God’s kingdom is not earthly, but heavenly; it is no longer

the earthly Jerusalem, but the heavenly Jerusalem (Heb. 12:22). His kingdom is not outward by observation, but inward within the believers by life (Luke 17:20-21). The temple is not made of stone, but today it is a spiritual house: “... *you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ*” (1 Pet. 2:4-9). In the past 2,000 years, this wonderful gospel of salvation, life and the heavenly kingdom has been preached in all the world to nearly every nation, tribe and tongue (Matt. 24:14) – another sign that the end of this age is near.

In His first coming, the Lord Jesus foretold the destruction of the nation of Israel and Jerusalem in Luke 21:20-24: “*There will be great distress in the land and wrath against this people. They will fall by the sword and will be taken as prisoners to all the nations. **Jerusalem will be trampled on by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.***” In the year AD 70, Israel was utterly destroyed by the Roman prince Titus, fulfilling this prophecy and also confirming the prophecy in Daniel 9:26: “*And the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary.*” But the Lord also revealed that the “times of the Gentiles [nations]” will end, namely at the time of the restoration of Jerusalem. In May 1948, the nation of Israel, which had previously been

wiped off the world map, was restored, fulfilling the word of the Lord in Luke 21:29-31 concerning the fig tree: “*Then He spoke to them a parable: ‘Look at the fig tree, and all the trees. When they are already budding, you see and know for yourselves that summer is now near. So you also, when you see these things happening, know that the kingdom of God is near.’*” The fig tree refers to Israel, and all the trees refer to the nations. In June 1967, when Israel regained control of the entire city of Jerusalem after the Six-Day War, Jerusalem was no longer trampled by the Gentiles, signifying the end of the times of the Gentiles.

*The Second Coming of Christ and His Kingdom –
the Stone Cut Out Without Hands*

Since the restoration of the nation of Israel and particularly since Israel regained control of Jerusalem, God had already begun the work preparing for the return of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. His focus has turned from the Gentile nations back to Israel with a view to bring in the 70th week of Daniel’s 70-week prophecy, marking the last seven years before Christ’s second coming, which will begin with a peace covenant in the Middle East (Dan. 9:27, see Appendix B). In December 2017, the United States President Donald Trump declared Jerusalem “the Eternal Capital of Israel”. In May 2018, he made a bold

move – moving the United States Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. These two important events prompted the Jewish Council to mint two temple coins (see photos in Appendix C) with the images of both the United States President Donald Trump and the ancient Persian King Cyrus, believing that Trump, like Cyrus, will allow the Jews to return to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple. On June 25, 2019, the President officially presented the economic portion of the Middle East peace plan. On January 28, 2020, he presented a comprehensive peace plan between Israel and the Palestinians. If indeed this peace covenant comes to fruition in 2020, the final seven years will begin, and our Lord Jesus Christ will return. In the middle of the seven years, the great day of God’s wrath will begin. God’s word is true and will come to pass (see the 70th Week chart in Appendix D).

When He returns, He will come as the King of kings and Lord of lords to end this age and to establish His millennial kingdom of righteousness and peace on this earth. He is the “stone cut out without hands” in Daniel 2, striking the image at its feet to crush the whole image. The stone will become a great mountain which will fill the whole earth; the Lord will establish His millennial kingdom on earth. In Revelation 11:15, when the angel sounds the seventh trumpet, there will be loud voices from heaven declaring: *“The kingdoms of*

the world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He will reign forever and ever!”

III. The Vision of the Throne of God and the Ascension of Christ to the Throne

(Daniel 7)

In Daniel 7, after describing the development of the four empires in a more specific way using the four beasts in the first part of the chapter, the LORD God also gave Daniel a vision of the throne in heaven and of God, the Ancient of Days, seated on the throne judging the world. It is a vision similar to what John saw at the throne in Revelation 1. The verses give an awesome description of the majestic God:

“... His garment was white as snow; the hair of His head was white like wool. His throne was flaming with fire, and its wheels were all ablaze. A river of fire was flowing, coming out from before him. Thousands upon thousands attended him; ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him. The court was seated, and the books were opened.”

(Dan. 7:9-10 NIV)

The vision continues, showing Jesus Christ as the Son of Man ascending to heaven in a cloud (Acts 1:9-10); and He sat down at the right hand of the

Majesty on high to receive an everlasting kingdom
(Heb. 1:3):

“... And behold, One like the Son of Man, coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him. Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom the one which shall not be destroyed.”

(Dan. 7:13-14)

This vision corresponds to Revelation 5, where John witnessed the ascension of Christ to the throne. John heard a glorious proclamation:

“... Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has prevailed to open the scroll and to loose its seven seals.’

And I looked, and behold, in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as though it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth.

Then He came and took the scroll out of the right hand of Him who sat on the throne.

Now when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down

before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.

And they sang a new song, saying: 'You are worthy to take the scroll, and to open its seals; for You were slain, and have redeemed us to God by Your blood out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, and have made us kings and priests to our God; and we shall reign on the earth.'

Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne, the living creatures, and the elders, and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice, 'Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom, and strength and honor and glory and blessing!'"

(Rev. 5:5-12)

Today, Jesus Christ is enthroned in the heavens, fulfilling the prophecy in Daniel. His scepter is a scepter of righteousness (Heb. 1:8) and His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom (Dan. 4:3; 7:27; Ps. 145:13). His title in Revelation 1:5 is "Ruler over the kings of the earth." He is the only MAN worthy to take the scroll from the hand of the Ancient One and to open the seven seals – to administer and rule over the whole universe. When He returns, His name will be called "KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS" (Rev. 19:16). He will capture the beast and the false prophet and will cast

both of them alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone. The rest of their armies will be destroyed by the sword which proceeds out of His mouth (Rev. 19:11-21). Satan will be bound in chains and locked up in the abyss for a thousand years (Rev. 20:1-3). Then Christ will establish His millennial kingdom on this earth.

IV. The Saints of the Most High Shall Possess the Kingdom

The third part of Daniel 7 reveals the glorious goal of salvation of the saints: to possess the kingdom and to reign with Christ at His second coming!

“But the saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom, and possess the kingdom forever, even forever and ever.” (Dan. 7:18)

“I was watching; and the same horn was making war against the saints, and prevailing against them, until the Ancient of Days came, and a judgment was made in favor of the saints of the Most High, and the time came for the saints to possess the kingdom.” (Dan. 7:21-22)

“Then the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people, the saints of the Most High.

His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him.” (Dan. 7:27)

The New Testament Scriptures reveal to us that all the saints will inherit the kingdom and reign with Christ in the final eternal age of the new heaven and new earth and the New Jerusalem. Revelation 22:5 says, “...*And they shall reign forever and ever.*”

However, before the final eternal age, there is a period of 1000 years, the millennial kingdom, in which only those who are qualified will reign with Christ as a reward:

- 1) **the man-child** – the overcomers and the martyrs in the past ages (Rev. 2:26-28; 3:21; 6:9-11; 12:5);
- 2) **the firstfruits** – the mature and faithful believers among the Christians who are alive (Rev. 14:1-5); and
- 3) **the martyrs** during the 3½ years of the great day of God’s wrath (Rev. 15:2-4; 20:4).

All these will be raptured to the throne: the man-child and the firstfruits will be raptured before the great day of God’s wrath, and the martyrs in Revelation 15 will be raptured during the 3½ years of the “great tribulation.” The rest of the Christians remaining on the earth will be taken up to the air toward the end of the 3½ years, when the last

trumpet sounds; this is the last harvest mentioned in Revelation 14:14-15. This is where all of God's people shall appear before the judgment seat of Christ and must give an account and be judged according to what they have done (Rom. 14:10; 2 Cor. 5:10) (Appendix D).

This is God's plan revealed in the prophecy in the book of Daniel and confirmed in the book of Revelation. May the Lord wake up His people, so that they would prepare themselves for the Lord's soon return. *J.S.*

Appendix A

The Times of the Nations (According to the Prophecy of Daniel 2 & 7 and Luke 21:24)

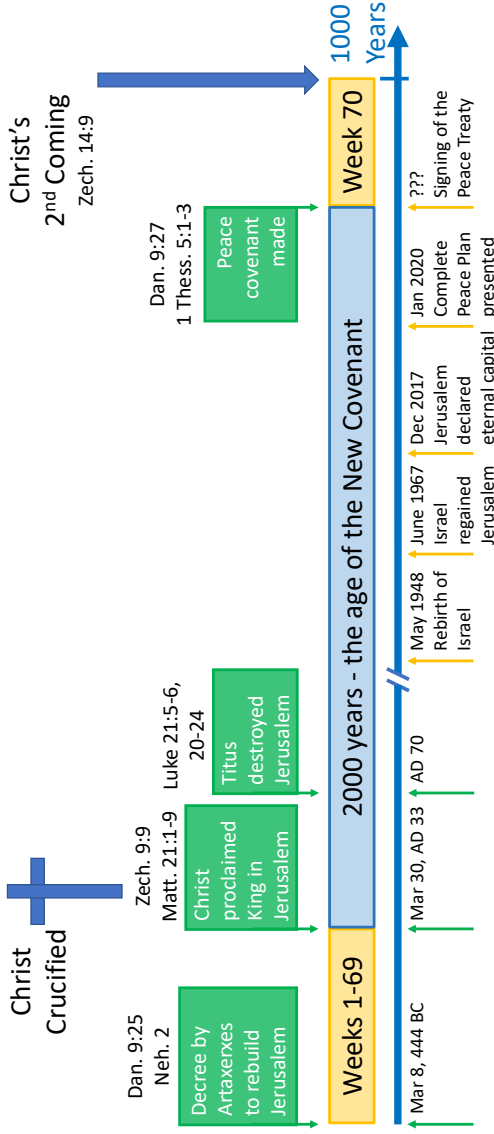
Nebuchadnezzar's Dream	Empire	Beast*	Initial Ruler	Historical Time	Length [years]	Type of Government	Remarks
Head of gold	Babylon	Lion (Dan. 7:4; Jer. 4:13)	Nebuchadnezzar II	606 BC - 539 BC	66	Autocracy (Dan. 2:37-38)	Ended with Belshazzar (Dan. 5)
Chest & arms of silver	Medo-Persia	Bear (Dan. 7:5)	Cyrus the Great	539 BC - 331 BC	209	Limited monarchy (Dan. 2:39a; 6:8, 12, 15)	Cyrus conquered Babylon but let his uncle, Darius the Great, sit on the throne for 2 years
Belly & thighs of bronze	Greece	Leopard (Dan. 7:6)	Alexander the Great	331 BC - 31 BC	300	Oligarchy	Alexander – the notable horn of the goat (Dan. 8:5) with the 4 horns
Legs of iron	Rome	The 4th beast – dreadful and terrible; exceedingly strong (Dan. 7:7)	Augustus Caesar Fall of the Roman Empire – rise of the nations	31 BC - 476 AD 476 - 1775	507 1300	Monarchy to republic Evolving gradually into democracy	Official end of Western Roman Empire The Roman papacy (Babylon the Great – Rev. 17:1-6) ruling in Europe – the horn in Dan. 7:8, 20-21
Feet of iron & clay	USA – superpower		Washington / Jefferson 45 th US President	1776 - 2017 2017 - 2024 **	241 8	Democracy	Jefferson – main author of the Declaration of Independence Today
10 toes	The rise of the beast	Combination of all 4 beasts (Rev. 13:2)	The beast – the antichrist	2024 - 2027 **	3 ½	Globalism – one world order	10 horns are the 10 nations (Rev. 13:1-2; 17:12-14) = the 10 toes of the image
Stone cut out without hands	Millennial Kingdom		Jesus Christ – Ruler over the kings of the earth (Rev. 1:5)	2027 **	1000	Christ – King of kings and Lord of lords (Rev. 19:11-21)	The saints possess the kingdom with Christ (Dan. 7:27; Rev. 1:6; 5:10; 20:6; 2:26-27; 3:21; 22:5)

* Chapter 2 shows the great image of a man, depicting the 4 great empires; but Chapter 7 shows that these 4 empires are 4 beasts. All the empires of man are like beasts. The last beast is the consummation of all the beasts joined together.

** Assumption: the 45th U.S. president will make the peace covenant, fulfilling the prophecy of Dan. 9:27.

Appendix B

Daniel 9:24-27 – Christ's 1st and 2nd Coming



Appendix D

Daniel 9:27 – The 70th Week

