

112623 Meeker Christian Church The Dream + 2,500 Years

A couple of weeks ago we looked at the interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream around 600 BC, as a prophecy leading to the end of the age of mankind on earth. That sermon concluded with Daniel 2:44 *And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.*

That part of the prophecy from Nebuchadnezzar's dream remains to be fulfilled. But today we are going to look at The Dream of Nebuchadnezzar PLUS over 2,500 Years and see where we are on the prophetic statue Daniel interpreted for him and for us:

As we live and breathe we find ourselves within the predictions of the iron and clay feet. **We have not forgotten that one priority in all of this has been to lead the nation of Israel and everyone who studies it to the recognition and acceptance of Jesus as their Savior Messiah.**

One reason we are able to establish where we are on the prophetic timeline of the end of this church age in which we are living is examining how God is dealing with the Jewish nation to get them to accept Jesus.

Let me clarify once again: Israel and the Jewish nation are two terms for the same people. They are also referred to as Hebrews, the chosen nation, and a host of euphemism and slanderous intentions like antisemitic, or sarcastically sometimes simply as Jews.

Whatever the description, the reality is that they - as a religious minority have very few adherents who have accepted Jesus as their Lord and are identified as Christians. They Stoically claim to be awaiting the Messiah taught in the Old Testament writings, but refuse to accept the New Testament writings that reveal His birth, life, death and resurrection !! It is surprising that even with the Jewish accumulated knowledge of the Old Testament Messianic prophecies that have been filled or are being fulfilled all around them and they still do not accept Him – but the book of Revelation prophecies

2. when many of them will! They do readily accept and understand the Old Testament promises to Abraham and later through Moses of their priority assignment by God to the land of Israel and Jerusalem as their Holy City.

Which of course, an increasing number of today's worlds present population question or outright doubt the validity of Jewish claim.

It is really important that we Christians clearly understand that our spiritual roots are in Judaism. Those foundational beliefs have resulted in we gentiles- that gentile term includes everyone who are alive but are not directly of Jewish ancestry.

Because Jews and gentile Christians share the one God and honor of the patriarchs and prophets of the Old Testament we have much in common. Today everyone around the world who have accepted Jesus as Savior are identified as the New Testament Church. And we exist to learn, obey and be a model of what and who God wants Israel to be. That is a reason for which God has blessed and blessed over and over the dedicated Christians and countries that espouse Christianity into our own generation. Paul defines and illustrates that in the New Testament book of Romans 11 for your study reference.

Now on with the end of Nebuchadnezzar's dream in the Old Testament book of Daniel 2:41-44 *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. 42 And as the toes of the feet were partly of iron and partly of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly fragile. 43 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. 44 And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.* That prophecy encompasses our day and extends into eternity that lies ahead for those who believe. Some 600 years after that prophetic dream we have Jesus Himself giving further information about the end of the age.

**3.** And as we examine the ongoing world events today and especially those making headlines in Israel - they draw us inexorably to the words of Jesus in Matthew 24.

My purpose has been and continues to be to show you the statue of Daniel 2 as an Old Testament prophecy as partial fulfillment, support and clarification of Jesus' words in Matthew 24 and their increasing and impending fulfillment for us today. Look at Matthew 24:1-2 *Then Jesus went out and departed from the temple, and His disciples came up to show Him the buildings of the temple. 2 And Jesus said to them, "Do you not see all these things? Assuredly, I say to you, not one stone shall be left here upon another; that shall not be thrown down."*

Verse 1& 2 describe the destruction of the grand Jewish temple of God in Jerusalem. That must have seemed to that little group of apostles in training about 33 AD as a highly improbable prophecy! But that improbable prophecy was given and we can see the specific fulfillment starting in 63 BC when the Roman general Pompey captured Jerusalem. The Romans started by ruling through a local client king who allowed free religious practice in Judea. At times, the divide between monotheistic and polytheistic religious views caused clashes between Jews and Gentiles as the New Testament church grew. That friction, combined with oppressive taxation and unwanted imperialism from Rome, culminated in 66 AD with a Jewish Revolt. The revolt was successful at first: Jewish forces expelled the Romans from Jerusalem, and a revolutionary government was formed that extended its influence into the surrounding area. In response, the Roman emperor Nero sent general Vespasian to meet the Jewish forces and isolated the majority into Jerusalem. By 69 BC that general Vespasian had been proclaimed emperor of Rome --Titus Flavius Vespasianus. The following year he ordered the destruction of Jerusalem and the Jewish uprising was quelled. Some of the apostles who had been with Jesus just over 30 years earlier would have still been alive and witnessed the improbable destruction of the Herodian temple in Jerusalem. AND just as those apostles had heard Jesus prophesy in Matthew 24:2 *not one stone shall be left here upon another; that shall not be thrown down.*" Prophecy fulfilled and documented by secular history.

4. The Bible record continues in Matthew 24:3 *Now as He {that is JESUS} sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?"* Here are Jesus' prophetic answers to their questions (around 33 AD): Matthew 24:4 *And Jesus answered and said to them: "Take heed that no one deceives you.* Jesus starts right off giving those apostle **and in the Bible record us**, a definitive instruction for identifying and surviving the prophetic future: If Christians are to survive and thrive during the time of these prophecies being fulfilled, we must gain the ability to recognize frequency and intensity of deception. The only possible way to do that is through God's revelation through His divinely inspired word. Now you know why it is sooo important to read and study your Bible and why I often recommend for you to read Proverbs on some regular schedule to be able to recognize and deal with evils deception every day of our earthly interactive lives. Just one little illustration: I read a source that said fraud and deception cost the public 5.8 billion dollars last year alone. Jesus prophecy being fulfilled all around us with the expanding tool of technology. Even our county has had to deal with it!

Jesus goes on with further examples of satans deception in our day: Matthew 24:5 *For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ, and will deceive many.* Listen up!!! You will not likely to hear the evil one say *I am the Christ*, in those specific words – though the time is coming when inhabitants on earth will hear that! Rather you will be submitting and controlled by outside deceptive influences rampant in the world today pretending their position, money, power and authority are to be blindly obeyed.///

Praise God for those of you who have been blessed to at least have started in formative years to have the example and instruction of righteousness – and also Praise God for those of you who have recognized deception and made the decision and determination to flee from it and to seek righteousness as taught in Matthew 6:33 *But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.* \_

5. All these things are the promised inheritance resulting from the sanctification we spoke of last week.

Next in Matthew 24 Jesus goes on to list some specific signs that will indicate the “season” of His coming along with the fulfillment of many prophecies: Matthew 24:6 *And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.* Do you see that contained in that prophecy is that Jesus makes possible the strength of iron in overcoming the satanic deceptive influences of clay? We are put here to help and encourage each other in this tumultuous time. We are here to help and encourage each other to identify and defend ourselves against all evil that will and is deceptively destroying the morals, ethics and hopefulness of the abundant life that Jesus came to earth to make provision for.

Jesus gives us even more specific deceptions we are going to encounter throughout our church age: Matthew 24:7 *For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places.* In prophetic fulfillment these world events are happening more and more and will absolutely continue to do so. But again Jesus reinforces the verse 6 with the words ***but the end is not yet.*** And even more emphatically in Matthew 24:8 *All these are the ***beginning*** of sorrows.*

That is us: These verses 3-8 are a list of prophetic events significance for we believers today because it means – that nothing else in the Bible revealed prophetic timetable must need happen on earth before Heaven’s Messiah will appear in the sky and call Christians to their inherited, eternal destiny. Be sure you understand --- please understand – that may mean today, or it may mean many years – we do not, dare not speculate, and cannot know the day or hour of the rapture for the reason that alone God knows Mark 13:32 *“But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.*

6. Those prophecies as they are being fulfilled around us further are a powerful reminder to everyone who to be about getting ready and being ready for the rapture to be caught to to heaven with Jesus.

Those deceptive beginnings have in these 8 verses been made apparent to us by Jesus and supported by such scripture as Luke 17:26 *as it was in the days of Noah, so it will be also in the days of the Son of Man:* referring to Genesis chapter 6 (reference only).

Here is another prophetic verse to help us be about His service as effectively as we can in the time we are given: Luke 18:8 *I tell you that He will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?*” Those possibilities prompt this question: Has our faith, much less the faith of our loved ones matured to the virtuous point of being included in the rapture. Here is another prophetic verse for our thoughtful meditation: Matthew 7:21 *Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven.*

I believe God has given all these prophecies to underscore everything from Genesis to Revelation as revealed in the Bible. Not to scare, or threaten but to present information for mankind to make an informed decision for their eternal destiny.