

## *The Future's Secrets Revealed*

**With political unrest, terrorism and natural disasters highlighting the evening news, there is much interest regarding the future of our world.**

- A. The events of September 11, 2001 have brought a new consciousness of terrorism and uncertainty to our world.
- B. New peace initiatives between Israel and the PLO are the signal of hope for some and of impending disaster for others.
- C. The powers of nature have been unleashed in the form of hurricanes, earthquakes and tsunami's as never before in modern history.

**The search for truth regarding the future has led people to many different sources, only one of which is reliable.**

- A. The prophecies of the Bible help us to see God's hand at work in our world. God assures us He will never do anything without revealing it to us through His prophets. Amos 3:7
- B. Today many people seek for knowledge of the future through many sources, such as astrology and psychic seers. These sources, although popular, are condemned by God and will be destroyed. Isaiah 47:13,14
- C. Only God has the knowledge to predict the future accurately. Isaiah 48:3,5
- D. He imparts that knowledge to His followers through the Word of Prophecy. 2 Peter 1:19
- E. Prophecy is not to be privately interpreted, but we are to yield to the guidance of the Holy Spirit who guided those holy prophets through whom it has come to us. 2 Peter 1:20-21
- F. We should never be content to accept what were are *told* about prophecy. We must allow scripture to interpret itself for us. We should follow the example of the Berean believers. Acts 17:11

**The prophecy of Daniel 2 is one in which God has accurately predicted the rise and fall of nations, and shows us how scripture helps us arrive at the correct interpretation.**

- A. Nebuchadnezzar's dream troubled him, so he sought for the interpretation. Daniel 2:1,2 He called upon the magicians, astrologers, sorcerers, and Chaldeans (wise men) of his kingdom.
- B. They were not able to tell the king his dream or interpretation but correctly told him that supernatural power was required. Daniel 2:10,11

C. Daniel asked for time to tell the interpretation, and depended upon the God of heaven to reveal it to him. Daniel 2:16-19

D. When asked by the king to give the interpretation, Daniel agreed that no earthly power could give the answer. Only the God of heaven was able to give the interpretation. Daniel 2:26-28

**Daniel gave Nebuchadnezzar the interpretation God revealed to him in vision (Daniel 2:19).**

- A. Nebuchadnezzar's dream showed what would come "in the latter days." Daniel 2:28
- B. In his dream, Nebuchadnezzar saw a huge image made up of several different types of metal. Daniel 2:31-36
- C. The head of gold represents the kingdom of Babylon, established in 606 BC Daniel 2:37,38

Archaeologists have uncovered tablets upon which King Nebuchadnezzar had written these words: "Babylon, the city which is the delight of my eyes, and which I have glorified; may it last forever." However, the prophecy predicted that this kingdom would come to an end.

1. Darius the Mede conquered Babylon while King Belshazzar participated in a drunken feast. Daniel 5:25-31
  2. Isaiah 13:19-22 predicted that Babylon would become a desolate place, which remains true to this day. Since the prophet Isaiah predicted that Babylon will never again be inhabited, we can clearly see that "Babylon" mentioned in the book of Revelation is not to be seen as a literal kingdom. Rather, we must view it with symbolic significance.
- D. The arms and breast of silver represents the kingdom of Medo-Persia, established in 538 BC. Daniel 2:39
  - E. The belly and thighs of brass represent Greece, established in 331 BC Daniel 2:39
    1. The Greeks, under Alexander the Great, conquered the Persians in the Battle of Arbela in 331 BC.
    2. Notice how the historians recognize God's sovereignty:  
"I am persuaded there was no nation, city, nor people then in being whither his name did not reach. . . there seems to me to have been some Divine hand presiding both over his birth and actions." *Historical Library*, Book 17, ch. 12.
  - F. Legs of Iron represent the Pagan Roman Empire, established in 168 BC Daniel 2:40

"The image 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." Edward Gibbon, *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, vol. 3, p. 643.

G. The feet and toes made part of iron and part of clay represent the division of the Roman Empire into ten kingdoms. This was completed by 476 AD Daniel 2:41,42

The ten kingdoms, then and now:

1. The Almanni -- Germany
2. The Lombards -- Italy
3. The Franks -- France
4. The Heruli -- destroyed
5. The Burgundians -- Switzerland
6. The Ostrogoths -- destroyed
7. The Suevi -- Portugal
8. The Visigoths -- Spain
9. The Vandals -- destroyed
10. The Anglo-Saxons -- England

H. These ten divisions will never again be united in peace and harmony with each other, even though many have tried and will try. Daniel 2:43

Man has made many attempts at uniting the nations of Europe:

Charlemagne -- Holy Roman Empire  
Napoleon -- France  
Kaiser Wilhelm -- Germany -- World War I  
The League of Nations  
Adolph Hitler -- Germany -- World War II

These attempts have all failed. We shouldn't be surprised since the Bible says "they will not adhere to one another."

We can expect other attempts in the present and the future:

The United Nations  
The European Union  
???

These attempts will also fail to unite Europe and bring lasting peace. Remember, God's Word says "they will not adhere to one another."

**NOTE:** All of man's attempts to usher in a new world order where peace reigns and the nations live together in harmony are doomed to fail. The Bible *does* predict that, in the last days, the world will follow the beast (Revelation 13:3). In later presentations we will identify this beast power, discover the relationship between the dragon, the beast and the false prophet, and even learn of the role to be played by the United States in earth's final history. The Bible does *not* predict that this world will develop into a utopian existence. The Bible *does* predict that in the last days "perilous times will come." 2 Timothy 3:1

1. On one side we find "three unclean spirits," identified as "spirits of demons," which proceed from the mouths of the "dragon," the "beast," and the "false prophet" Revelation 16:13,14. These three gather "the kings of the earth and of the whole world" to battle by "performing signs." Thus we find all the nations of the whole world gathered under the banner of the dragon, beast, and false prophet. This is an unholy alliance between human governments and false religious elements that are able to perform signs and miracles.

2. The nations, having given their power to the beast, make war with the Lamb (Jesus Christ) who wages war and overcomes them. Only true believers in Jesus can be on His winning side: those "called, chosen, and faithful." Revelation 17:13,14

3. In Revelation 19:11-16,19 Jesus comes with His armies from heaven and He defeats the nations of the world who are gathered under the banner of the beast.

**There is only one Ruler who can truly set up a new world order where peace will reign.**

A. The Stone Kingdom represents Christ's kingdom that will be established "in the days of these kings." Daniel 2:34,35:44,45

1. Jesus will be the next world ruler to rule in peace.

2. All other kingdoms will be destroyed.

3. His kingdom will last forever.

4. The interpretation is sure.

5. Through this dream we can recognize the authority of God, Daniel 2:47.

B. Understanding that God is in control of the nations gives us hope in the uncertain times in which we live. Truly, He is One that can be trusted to care for all our burdens. But first we must humble ourselves to His authority. 1 Peter 5:6,7