

Expansion of the Assyrian Empire

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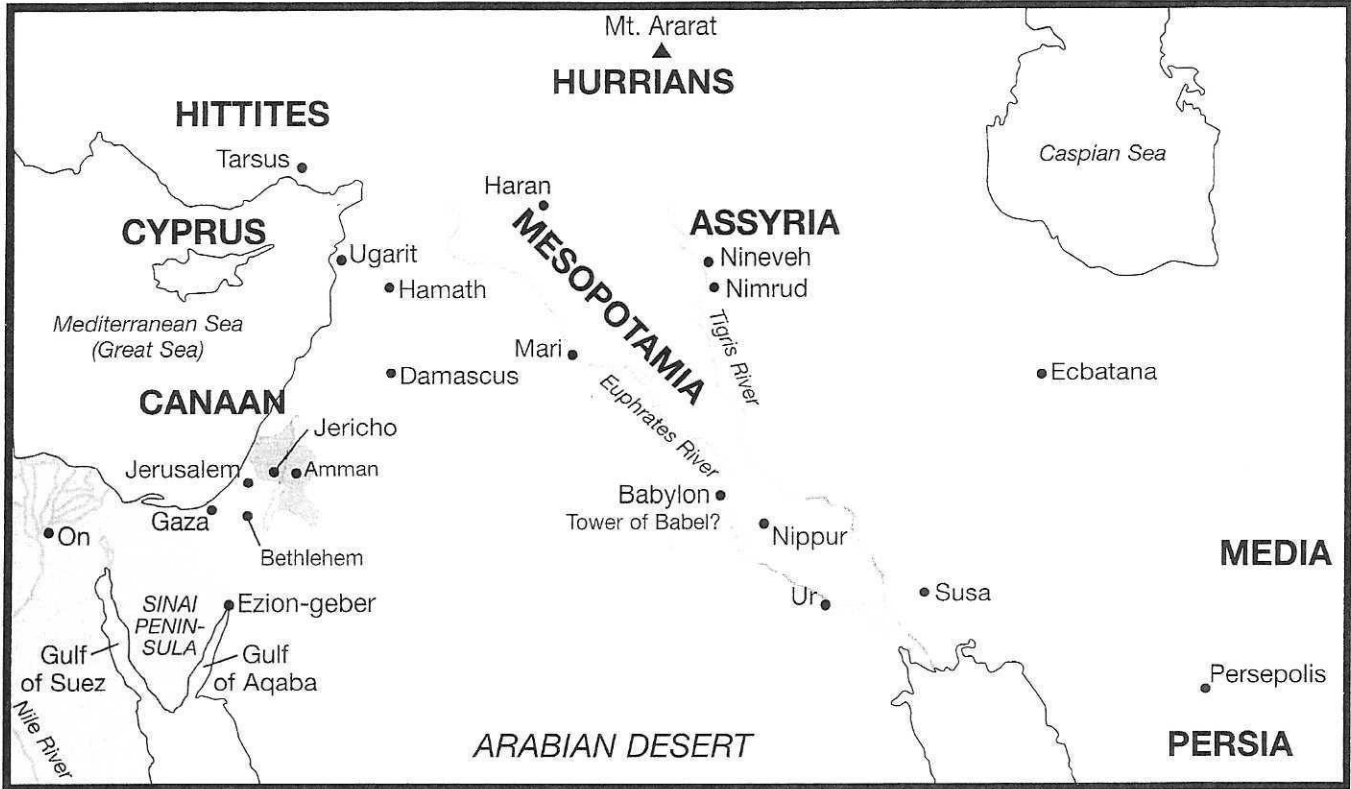
Existing Empire

Expansion

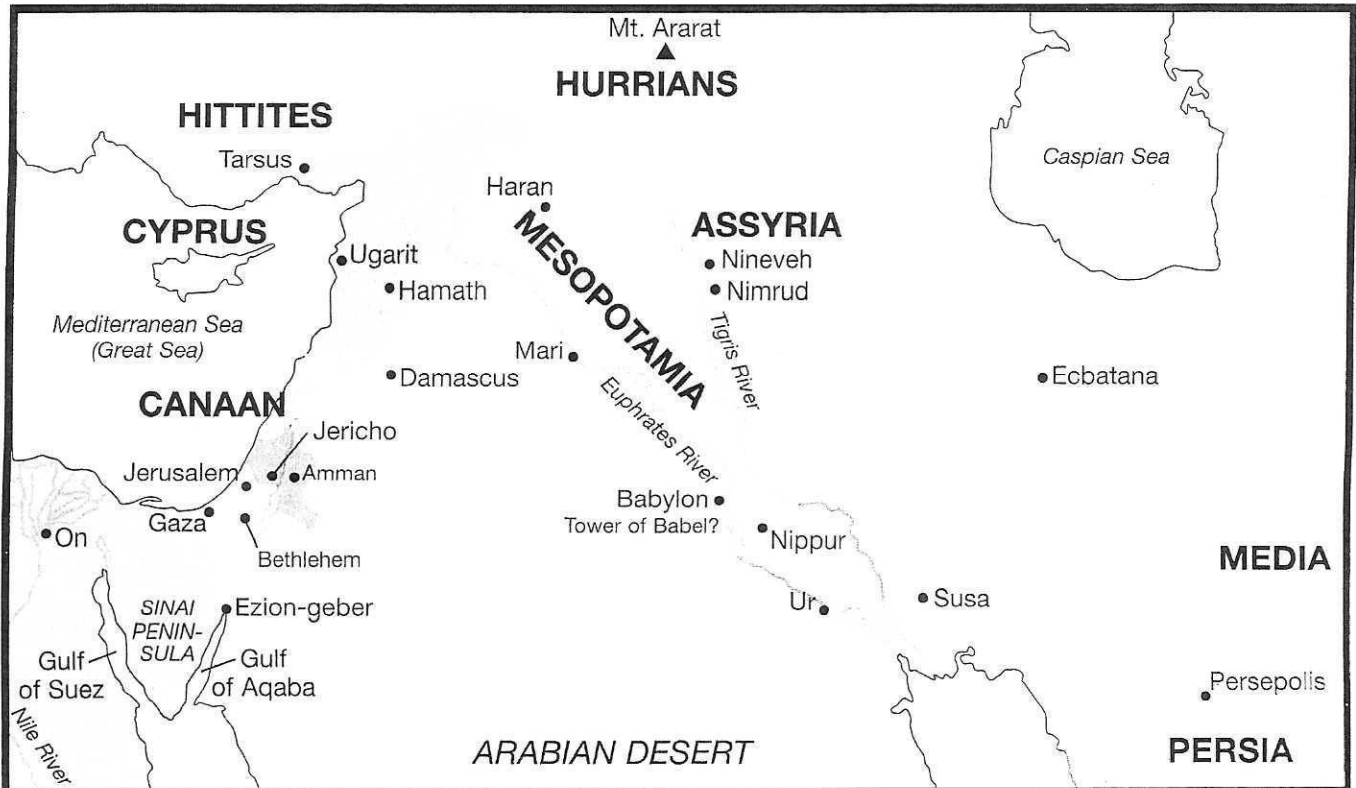
Israel

Judah

King: Ashurnasirpal II (883 BC–859 BC)



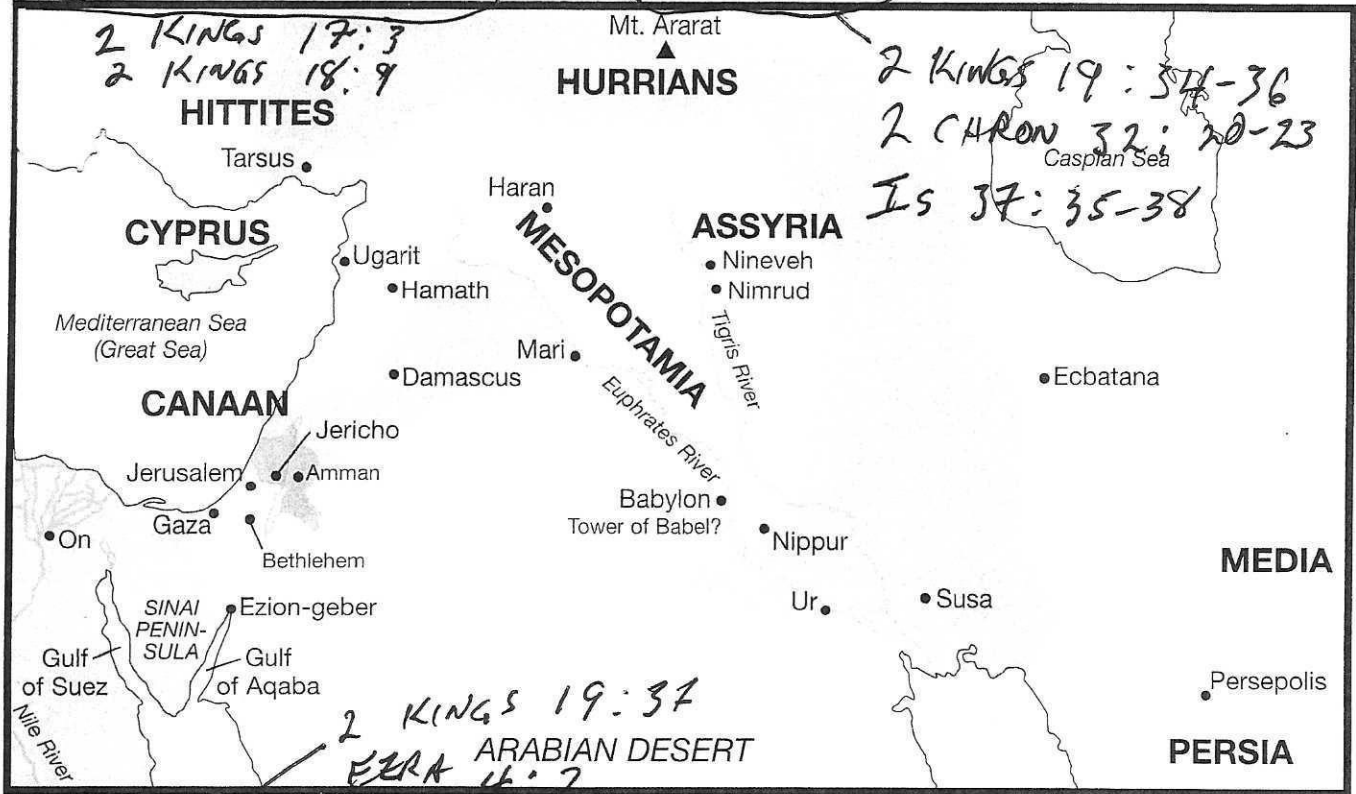
King: Shalmaneser III (858 BC–823 BC)



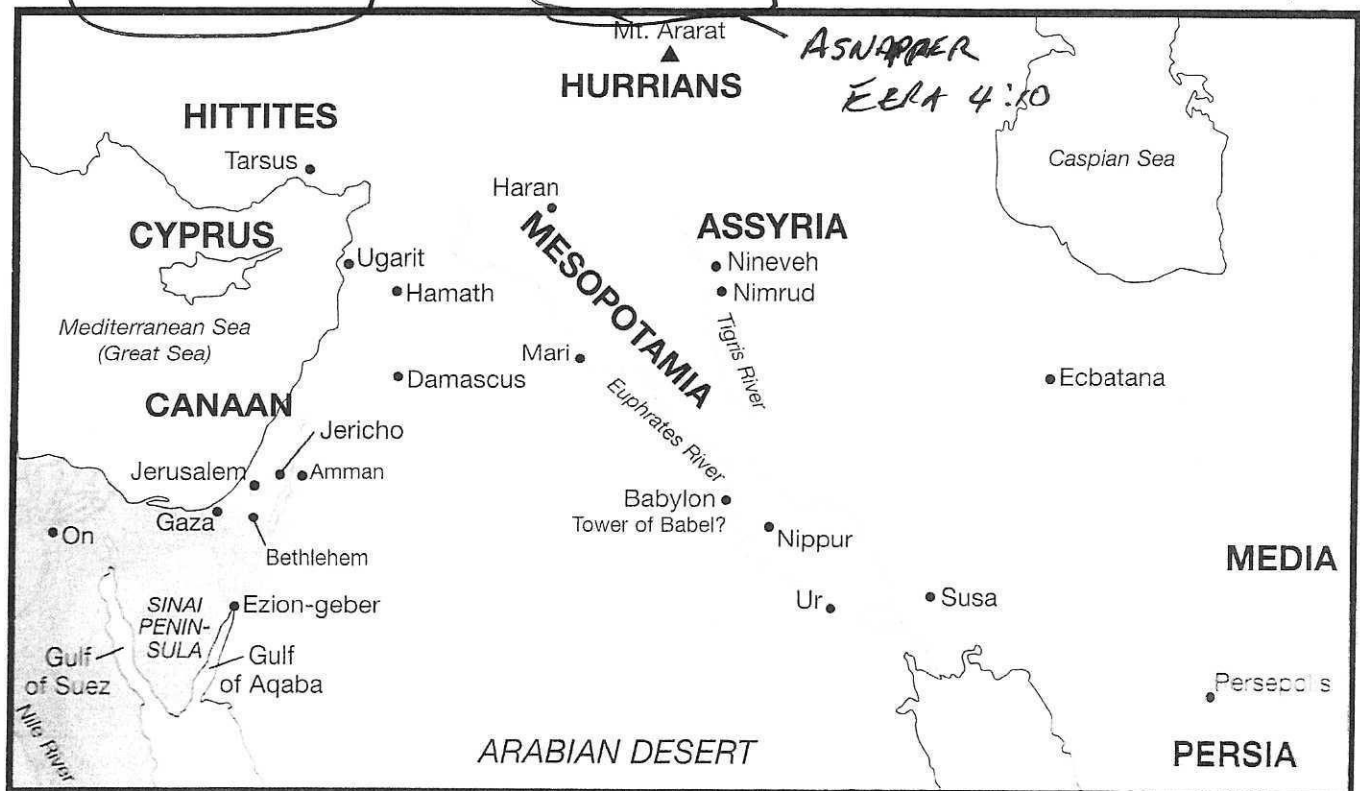
2 Kings 15: 29 Expansion of the Assyrian Empire

2 Kings 16: 7-10 Existing Empire Expansion Israel Judah

Kings: Tigleth-Pileser III (745 BC-727 BC) Sargon II (722 BC-705 BC) Israel falls to Assyria 722 BC
 Salmanser V (727 BC-722 BC) Sennacherib (705 BC-681 BC)



King: Esarhaddon (680 BC-669 BC) Ashurbanipal (669 BC-627 BC) Judah (vassal state)

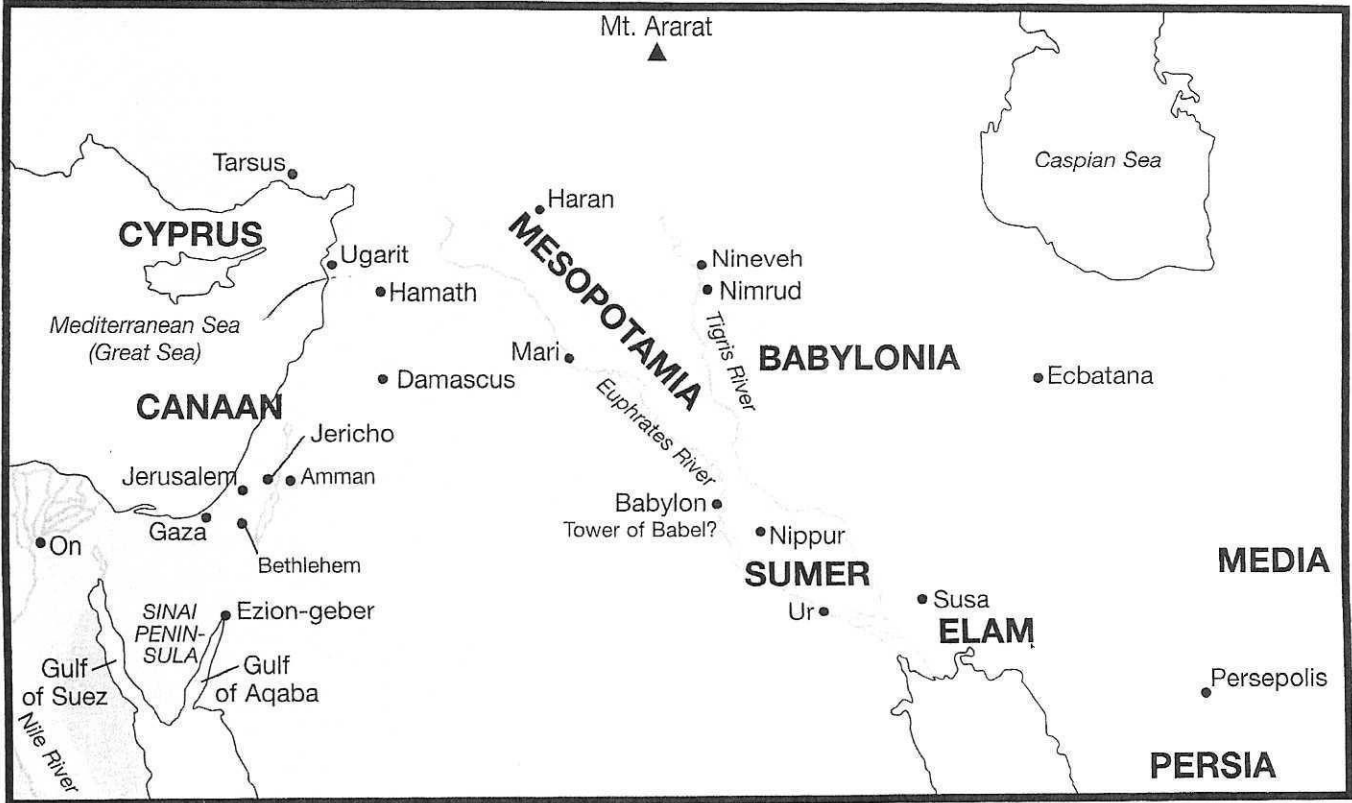


Babylonian and Persian Empires

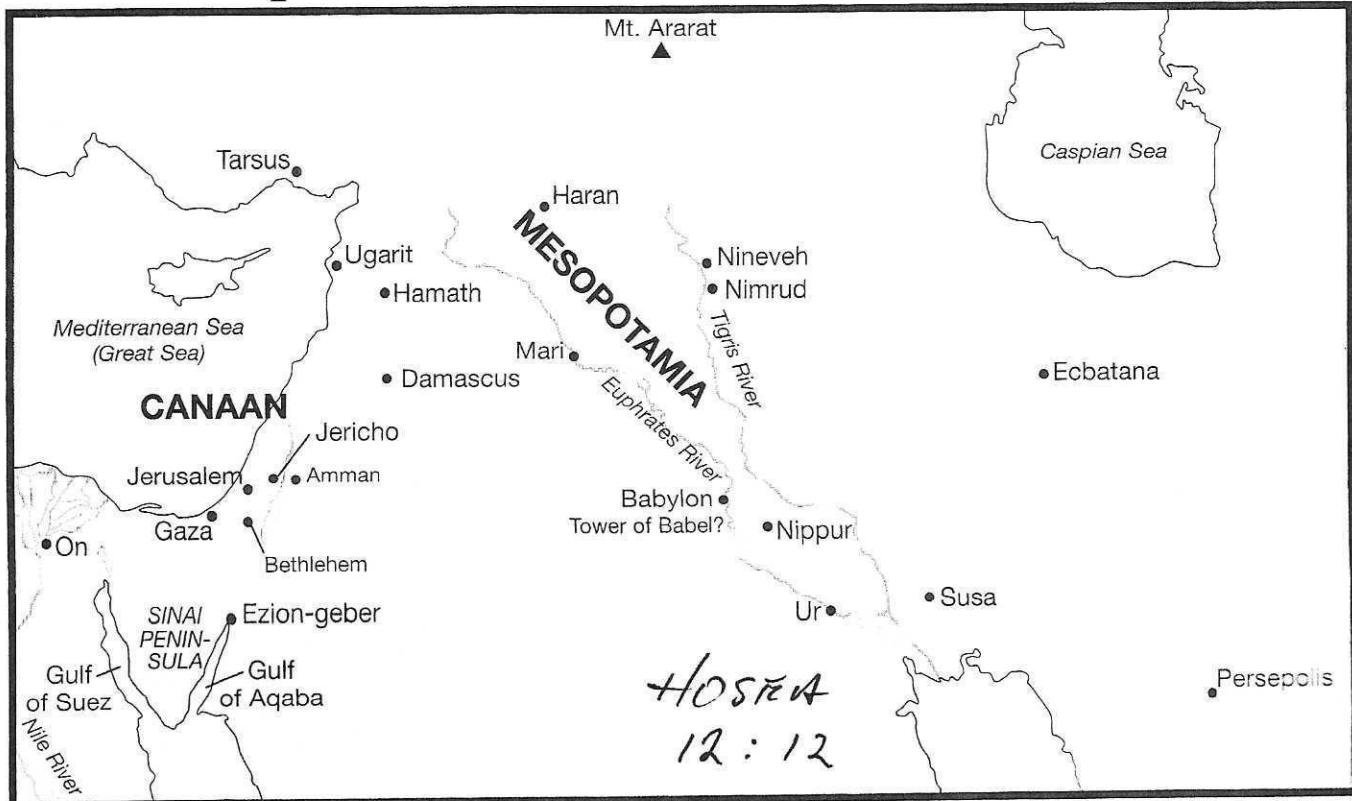
324

Babylonian Kingdom Persian (Median) Kingdom Arabian Desert

Babylonian Empire



Persian Empire



Statue in the Book of Daniel

Daniel 2:26-45



Head of Fine Gold — 3

Babylonia (626-539 BC)

Chest and Arms of Silver — 4

Medo-Persia (539-332 BC)

Belly and Thighs of Bronze — 5

Greece (332-63 BC)

Legs of Iron and Feet of Iron and Clay — 6-8?

A Divided Kingdom/Rome

The Stone — 9

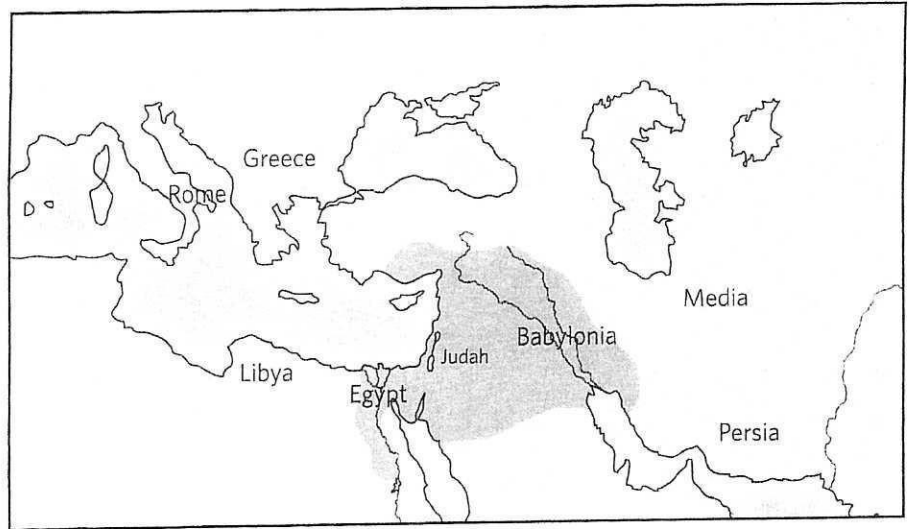
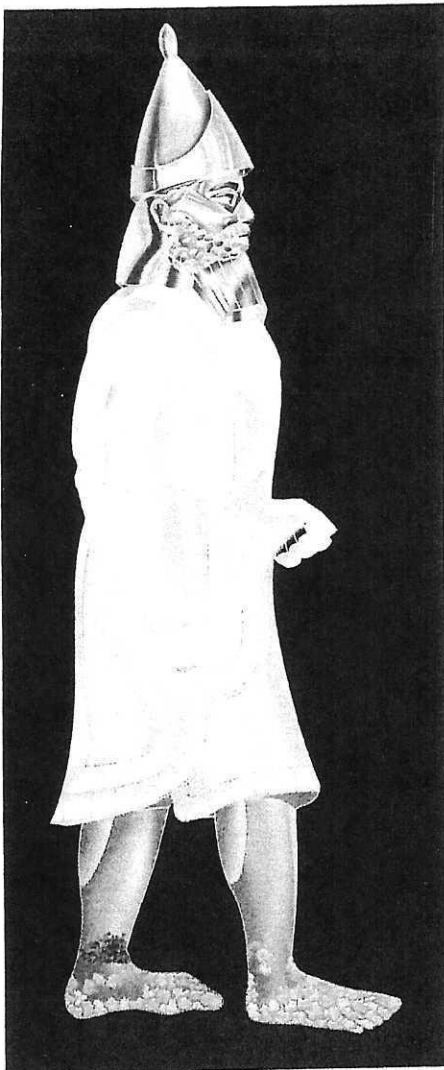
The Everlasting Kingdom of God

“There before you stood a large statue—an enormous, dazzling statue, awesome in appearance.”

—Daniel 2:31

The illustration of the statue is based on a carving of King Nebuchadnezzar's grandson, Nabonidus. It is the most accurate representation of the Babylonian style of art.

3



Historical and Bible Background

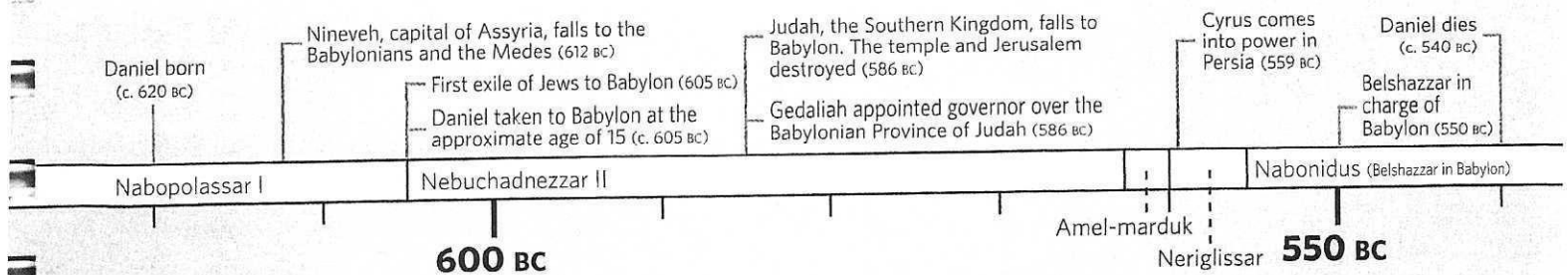
- About 600 years before Jesus was born, Babylonia (Iraq today) was the most powerful and wealthy kingdom in the Middle East.
- King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon besieged Jerusalem and took Daniel and others captive to Babylon in his court. Nebuchadnezzar also took some of the sacred objects and vessels from the temple of God back to Babylon.
- One night, Nebuchadnezzar had a dream. The king threatened to kill his advisors if they could not both tell him the dream and interpret it (Dan. 2:5-11).
- Daniel asked the king for some time to interpret the dream. After Daniel prayed, God revealed the dream and its meaning to him (Dan. 2:12-23).
- The dream showed a statue with four sections. The head was gold. The chest was silver. The belly and thighs were bronze. The legs were made of iron and the feet were iron mixed with clay. A large rock struck and destroyed the statue and became a huge mountain and filled the whole earth (Dan. 2:31-35).
- Daniel told King Nebuchadnezzar the dream and interpreted it (Dan. 2:36-45). The king made Daniel ruler over Babylon.

Head of the Statue (Daniel 2)

- The head of the statue, made from fine gold, represented the kingdom of Babylonia, which the Lord gave King Nebuchadnezzar to rule.
- The gold symbolized the superior power of Babylonia.
- Eventually Babylonia would be destroyed by an inferior kingdom.
- When King Nebuchadnezzar heard Daniel's interpretation, he said, "Surely your God is the God of gods and the Lord of kings and a revealer of mysteries, for you were able to reveal this mystery."

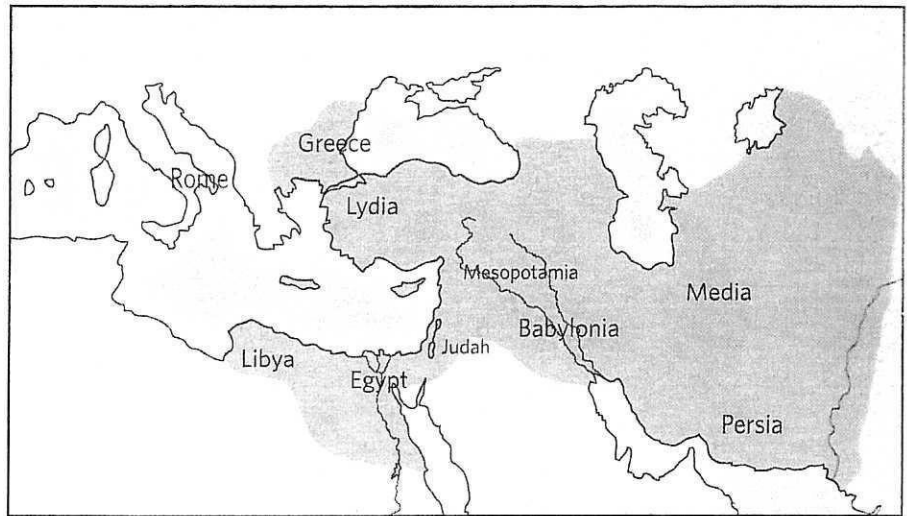
Vision of Beasts - Lion (Daniel 7)

- More than 50 years after King Nebuchadnezzar's dream, Daniel had a vision about four great beasts (that were like a lion with eagle's wings, a bear, a leopard, and a terrifying powerful beast).
- The four beasts are four kingdoms. Nebuchadnezzar of the Babylonian kingdom is compared to a lion in Jeremiah 4:7; 50:44, and to an eagle in Ezekiel 17:3,11-12.
- Images of lions with eagle's wings were popular in Babylonia, and can be found on ancient Babylonian architecture and currency. (Daniel 7:4)



4

Chest and Arms of Silver—Medo-Persia (539-332 BC)



Historical and Bible Background

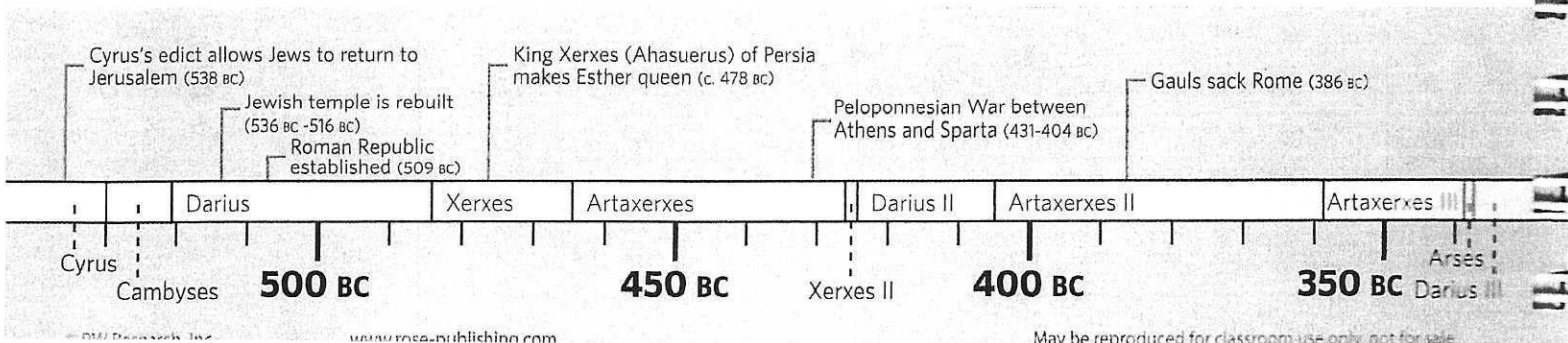
- In 539 BC, Darius the Mede (from Media) took Babylon without a fight.
- By 538 BC, Mesopotamia and Judah were under Persian rule. Later the Persians gained control of Egypt and Libya.
- King Cyrus and the other kings of the Persian empire developed a policy that allowed all people the freedom to worship their own gods, and live their own ways.
- In 538 BC, Cyrus issued a decree ordering the restoration of the Jewish community. Jews were allowed to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the temple (Ezra 1:2-4).
- The Persians paid to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem (Ezra 6:8).
- The vessels taken by King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon were returned to their rightful place in Jerusalem (Ezra 1:7-11).
- In 457 BC, King Artaxerxes of Persia sent Ezra to Judah for religious reform and spiritual guidance (Ezra 7:1-6).
- Nehemiah governed Judah from 444-430 BC. While in Judah, Nehemiah rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem.

Chest and Arms of Statue (Daniel 2)

- The chest and arms made of silver represented the kingdom of Medo-Persia, which is the second power that would rise after Babylonia.
- Silver, which is of lesser value than gold, symbolized the inferior status of Medo-Persia to Babylonia.
- Eventually Persia would be conquered by another kingdom.

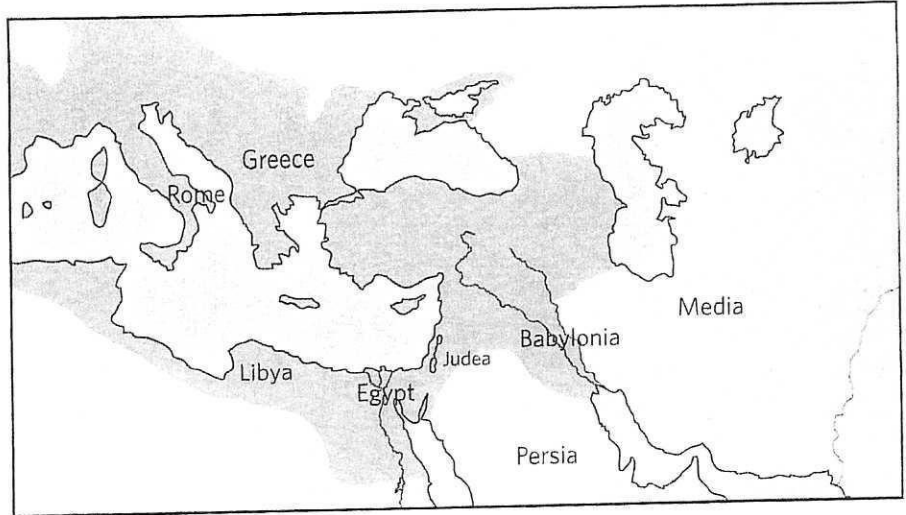
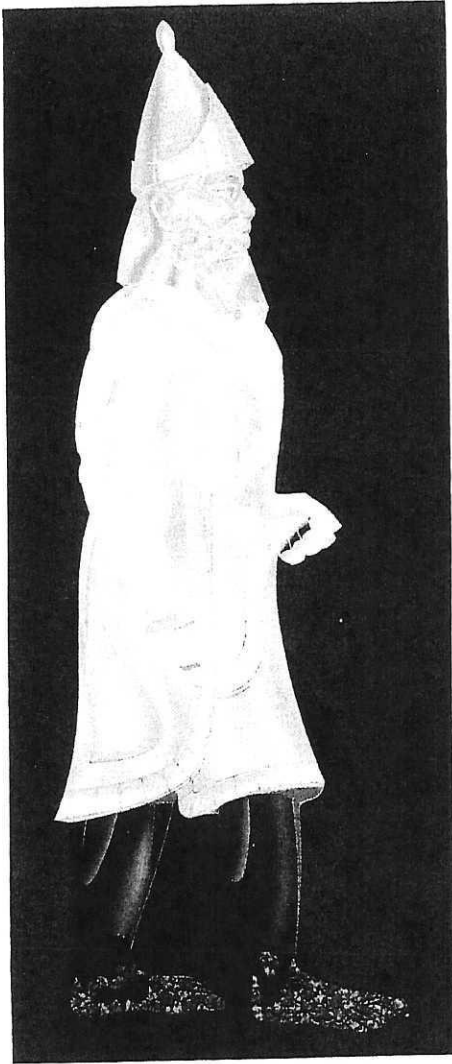
Vision of Beasts - Bear (Daniel 7)

- Daniel's vision of the beasts had shown a beast that looked like a bear.
- The bear was raised on one side, which may illustrate the dominance of Persia over Media.
- It had three ribs in its mouth, which may have illustrated the three major empires Persia conquered (Babylon, Egypt, and Lydia).
- The bear was commanded to devour much flesh, which may have been a reference to Persia's military expansion throughout the ancient world.



5

Legs of Iron and Feet of Iron and Clay—Rome



Historical and Bible Background

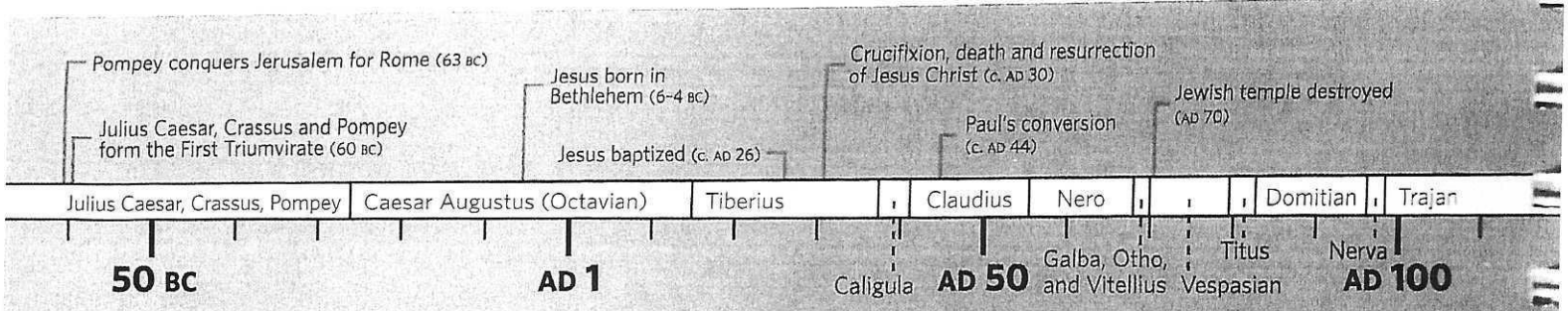
- Scholars suggest that the fourth kingdom is the Roman empire, however the Bible does not specifically identify this kingdom as Rome.
- In 63 BC, Roman General Pompey conquered Jerusalem.
- On March 15, 44 BC, Julius Caesar was assassinated by Brutus and Cassius, who fled to the East. Two years later, Octavian and Mark Antony defeated Brutus and Cassius at the Battle of Philippi.
- In 37 BC, Herod the Great was appointed king of Judea by Octavian and Mark Antony.
- In 27 BC, Caesar Augustus (Octavian) became the first Roman Emperor.
- During his reign, Herod the Great began to refurbish the temple in Jerusalem.
- Jesus was born in Bethlehem, c. 6-4 BC.
- In AD 6, Judea became a Roman province ruled by a governor.
- Jesus Christ was crucified by the governor of Judea, Pontius Pilate. Three days after his death, Jesus rose from the dead and was seen by more than 500 people (c. AD 30).
- In AD 70, the Romans destroyed the Jewish temple and Jerusalem.
- Over time, the Roman Empire weakened due to conflict within its borders and invaders attacking from outside.
- The Roman Empire fell in AD 476.

Legs and Feet of Statue (Daniel 2)

- The legs were made of iron and the feet were a mixture of both iron and clay.
- The legs of iron suggest that this kingdom would be strong as iron and would break, smash and crush things.
- This kingdom would be a divided kingdom, different from the others, both strong and weak, like iron is strong and clay is brittle.
- This kingdom would have a mixture of people who would not be united (Dan. 2:41-43; 7:23).

Vision of Beasts - Terrifying Beast (Daniel 7)

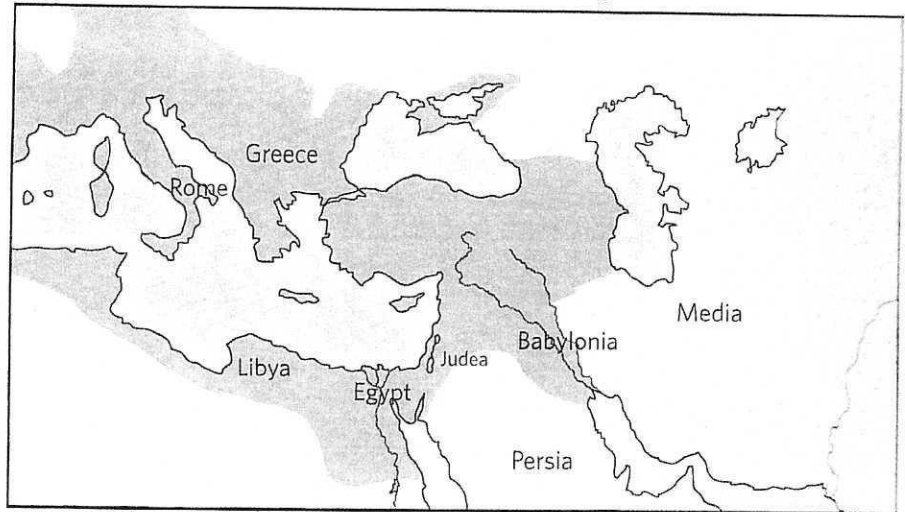
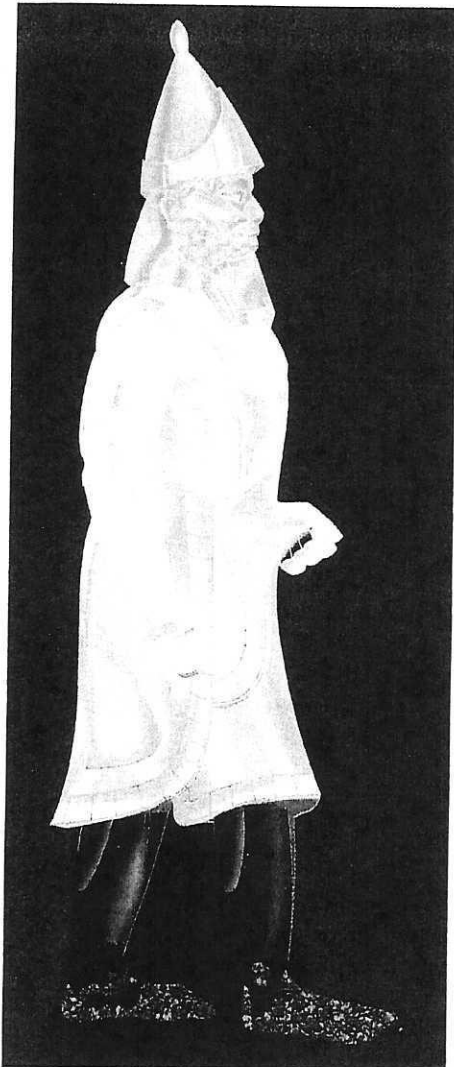
- Daniel had a vision of a terrifying beast with ten horns and iron teeth.
- The beast's ten horns are ten kings that would rise from this kingdom.
- After them, another man (the "little horn" with eyes and a mouth that boasts) would speak against God and persecute God's people. Three of the first horns (kings) would be uprooted. Eventually the terrifying beast would be thrown into the blazing fire.



6

89

Legs of Iron and Feet of Iron and Clay—Rome



Historical and Bible Background

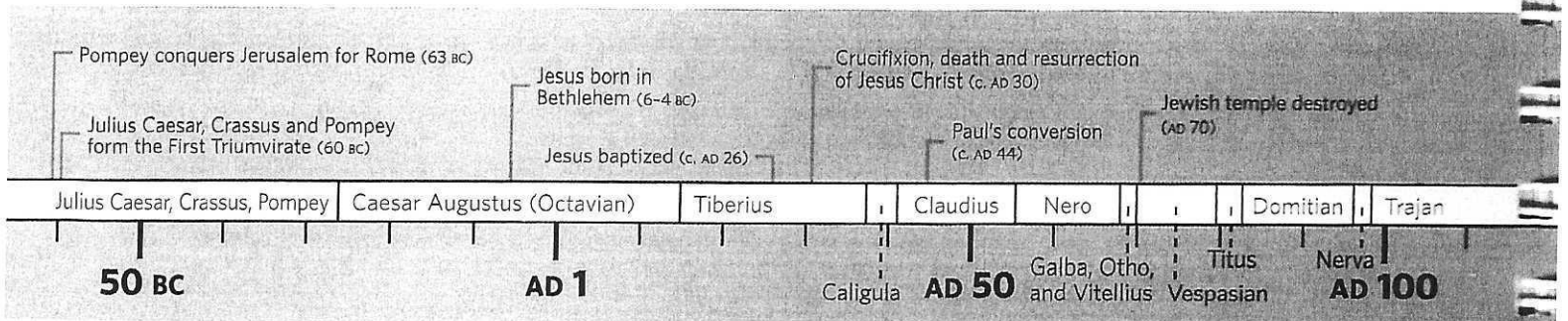
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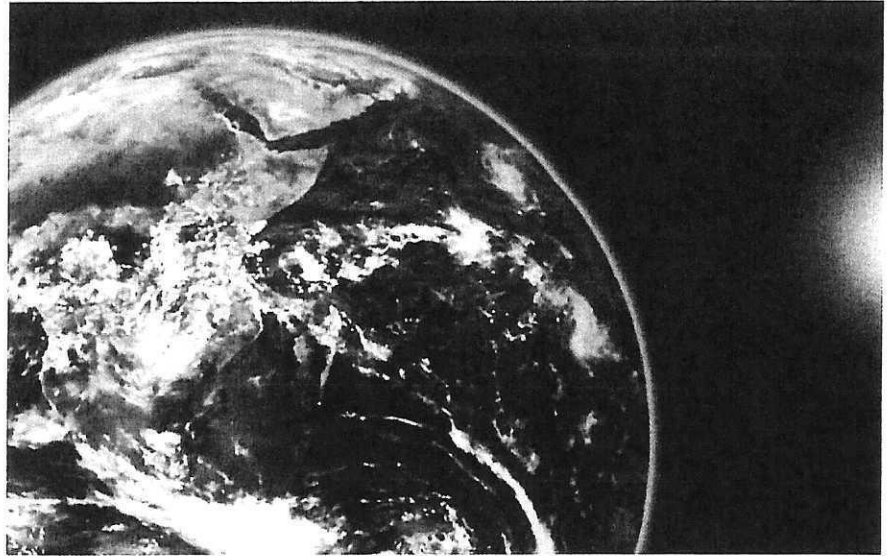
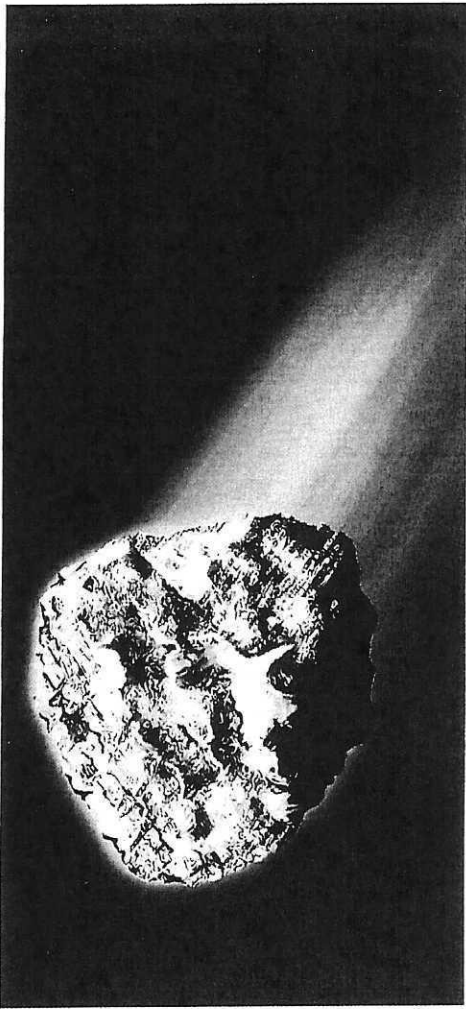
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Stone Cut Out—Everlasting Kingdom

9



Bible References & Spiritual Application

- The stone represents God's eternal kingdom that is more powerful than any other kingdom.
- At the time of Daniel, the temple in Jerusalem was in shambles and the people of Israel were placed in captivity. The defeated captives may have feared that their God was weak and unfaithful.
- Daniel's writing demonstrates that in the midst of despair, God is still present, powerful, and in control. Kingdoms and rulers come and go, but God is ultimately in charge (Dan. 2:20-21; 7:9-14, 27).
- Despite Babylonia's wealth and power, Daniel emphasized that God's kingdom is eternal and more powerful than any earthly kingdom (Dan. 2:44).
- The book of Daniel shows that God did not forget his promises. God's promises have been fulfilled in the Son of Man (Dan. 7:13-14), who established an everlasting kingdom on earth (Dan. 2:44; 7:27).

The Rock (Daniel 2)

- A stone was cut out, not by human hands, and it struck the statue on its feet of iron and clay and broke them in pieces. Then the rest of the statue broke into pieces and what remained was carried away in the wind. Then the stone that struck the statue became a great mountain that filled the whole earth.
- Daniel told the king that God will set up a kingdom that will crush all earthly kingdoms and bring them to an end.
- God's kingdom will never be destroyed and will endure forever.

Vision of Beasts The Son of Man (Daniel 7)

- After seeing the four beasts in a vision, Daniel saw one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven.
- The son of man (Jesus) approached the Ancient of Days (God, the Father) and was led into his presence.
- The son of man was given authority, glory and sovereign power.
- All peoples, nations and people of every language worshiped him.
- His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom will never be destroyed.

The Son of Man – The Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last. Revelation 22:13