



# GOD FORETELLS THE FUTURE

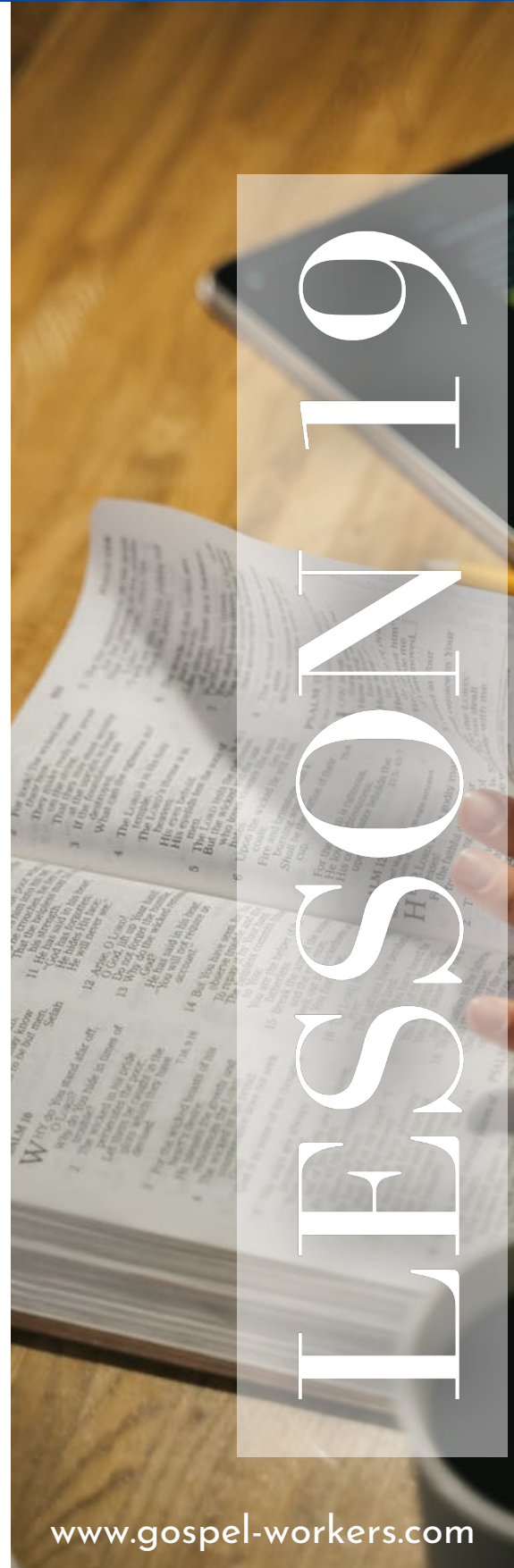
*In this study we will examine the prophecy of the kingdoms of men as represented in a dream given to king Nebuchadnezzar, the great and ambitious king of Babylon. He believed that Babylon would stand forever, but God wanted him to know that it would not stand forever. God gave the dream and its interpretation to Nebuchadnezzar, not only that the Babylonian kingdom would know, but that every king who followed him might know, and that we might know, that earthly kingdoms are all temporal at best, and must pass away and give place to an eternal kingdom, Christ's kingdom, which shall never pass away. In this dream is brought to view the whole sweep of history from Daniel's day until our own. What place we occupy in the stream of time is the focus of this lesson.*

## **1. What time period did God especially want king Nebuchadnezzar to know about?**

**Daniel 2:28-29:** "But there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days. Thy dream, and the visions of thy head upon thy bed, are these; As for thee, O king, thy thoughts came into thy mind upon thy bed, what should come to pass hereafter: and he that revealeth secrets maketh known to thee what shall come to pass."

## **2. What did the king see in his troubling dream?**

**Daniel 2:31-35:** "Thou, O king, sawest, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible. This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, His legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay. Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshingfloors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth."



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### 3. What was represented by the head of gold?

**Daniel 2:37-38:** "Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold."

#### [Further Study]

**Daniel 7:4** "The first was like a lion, and had eagle's wings: I beheld till the wings thereof were plucked, and it was lifted up from the earth, and made stand upon the feet as a man, and a man's heart was given to it."

*History tells us that Babylon was established in 626 B.C. by Nabopolassar, the father of Nebuchadnezzar, and became the ruling power of the world and remained so until its defeat in 539 B.C.*

### 4. What was represented by the breast and arms of silver?

**Daniel 2:39:** "And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, . . ."

#### [Further Study]

**Daniel 7:5** "And behold another beast, a second, like to a bear, and it raised up itself on one side, and it had three ribs in the mouth of it between the teeth of it: and they said thus unto it, Arise, devour much flesh."

*Babylon was succeeded by Medo-Persia under Cyrus the great in 539 B.C. and was the world ruling power until 331 B.C. For a description of the defeat of the Meds and Persians read Daniel chapter 5.*

### 5. What kingdom is represented by the belly and thighs of brass?

**Daniel 2:39:** ". . . and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth."

#### [Further Study]

**Daniel 7:6** "After this I beheld, and lo another, like a leopard, which had upon the back of it four wings of a fowl; the beast had also four heads; and dominion was given to it."

*In 331 B.C., Darius III fought with Alexander the Great at the battle of Arbela, and Alexander the Great became the world's next ruler. For a description of this great battle see Daniel 8:1-8, 20-21. The Grecian empire ruled until 168 B.C.*

#### **Daniel 8:1-8, 20, 21**

**1** In the third year of the reign of king Belshazzar a vision appeared unto me, even unto me Daniel, after that which appeared unto me at the first.

**2** And I saw in a vision; and it came to pass, when I saw, that I was at Shushan in the palace, which is in the province of Elam; and I saw in a vision, and I was by the river of Ulai.

**3** Then I lifted up mine eyes, and saw, and, behold, there stood before the river a ram which had two horns: and the two horns were high; but one was higher than the other, and the higher came up last.

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**4** I saw the ram pushing westward, and northward, and southward; so that no beasts might stand before him, neither was there any that could deliver out of his hand; but he did according to his will, and became great.

**5** And as I was considering, behold, an he goat came from the west on the face of the whole earth, and touched not the ground: and the goat had a notable horn between his eyes.

**6** And he came to the ram that had two horns, which I had seen standing before the river, and ran unto him in the fury of his power.

**7** And I saw him come close unto the ram, and he was moved with choler against him, and smote the ram, and brake his two horns: and there was no power in the ram to stand before him, but he cast him down to the ground, and stamped upon him: and there was none that could deliver the ram out of his hand.

**8** Therefore the he goat waxed very great: and when he was strong, the great horn was broken; and for it came up four notable ones toward the four winds of heaven.

**20** The ram which thou sawest having two horns are the kings of Media and Persia.

**21** And the rough goat is the king of Grecia: and the great horn that is between his eyes is the first king.

### **6. What kingdom is represented by the legs of iron?**

**Daniel 2:40:** "And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things: and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise."

#### **[Further Study]**

**Daniel 7:7-8** "After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it: and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns. I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things."

*Rome, represented by the legs of iron conquered Greece at the battle of Pydna in 168 B.C. And was the ruling power until 476 A.D. when it was invaded by the Barbarians from the north and east; and Rome, the iron monarchy, was broken forever. Jesus was born in the days of the fourth kingdom (Rome). Augustus Caesar was then emperor. Luke 2:1 "And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed."*

### **7. What can we learn about this fourth kingdom as represented by the feet and toes of the image?**

**Daniel 2:41-43:** "And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potters' clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay. And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken. And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay."

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*In the night visions of Daniel (Daniel 2:19 "Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a night vision. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven." Daniel 7:1-2 "In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon Daniel had a dream and visions of his head upon his bed: then he wrote the dream, and told the sum of the matters. Daniel spake and said, I saw in my vision by night, and, behold, the four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea.") it was shown that after Rome there would be no more world empires. As iron and clay are partly strong and partly weak, so it was to be with the nations that made up the feet. When Rome fell, Europe was divided into ten divisions (symbolized by the ten toes): (1) Alemanni (Germany), (2) Franks (France), (3) Burgundians (Switzerland), (4) Suevi (Portugal), (5) Anglo-Saxon (England), (6) Visigoths (Spain), (7) Lumbards (Italy), (8) Heruli, (9) Vandals, (10) Ostrogoths. The last three peoples, represented by the three horns plucked up by the roots (Daniel 7:8), were destroyed by the little horn power (the papacy) because of their opposition to the false teachings and claims of papal Rome. Daniel chapter 7 describes the same successive kingdoms as Daniel chapter 2, but in different language and greater detail and separated by 65 years. Instead of kingdoms being represented by different metals of the image they were represented by four beasts, the fourth being pagan Rome and later papal Rome. At this time we will not go into detail about the claims of the papacy, but will reserve them for future lessons.*

### **8. How does the Bible say men would try to reunite the fallen Roman empire?**

**Daniel 2:43:** "And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay."

*There have been mighty efforts put forth to weld the nations of Europe, the divisions of Rome, by intermarriage of the various divided kingdoms, referred to in the prophecy as mingling themselves with the "seed of men", but they have failed. Charlemagne and Napoleon sought by force to build a united kingdom but they failed. In more recent times attempts have been made by Kaiser Wilhelm (William II), and Adolph Hitler which have also failed. At times the goal of a united Europe has seemed almost within reach and attempts will no doubt be made in the future, but God's word says, "they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay."*

### **9. What event will take place in the days of these divided kingdoms?**

**Daniel 2:44:** "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever."

*The next kingdom to dominate world history is the kingdom of God as mentioned in Daniel 2:34-35, the stone that was "cut out without hands", that is, unaided by human agencies. Since it is true that God can foretell future events with 100% accuracy, it is also true that we can place 100% confidence in all the promises of His word. One of the reasons God gives prophecy is so we will learn to trust Him explicitly for the perfecting of our characters, which will result in the salvation of our souls.*

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**Daniel 2:34, 35** "Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshingfloors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth."

*It is plain to see that we are living in the last days just prior to the second coming of Jesus in the clouds of heaven (Revelation 1:7 "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen."). Can we be sure that the next kingdom to be set up is Christ's kingdom?*

**Daniel 2:45:** "Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure."

### [Further Study]

**Daniel 7:27** "And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him."

**Matthew 25:31** "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory:"

**Revelation 21:5** "And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful."

**Revelation 22:6** "And he said unto me, These sayings are faithful and true: and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to shew unto his servants the things which must shortly be done."

### 11. Who will and who will not be subjects of God's eternal kingdom which shall not pass away?

**Revelation 21:7-8:** "He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death."

### [Further Study]

**Galatians 5:19-21** "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God."

**2 Peter 3:10-14** "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, Looking

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for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless."

### **Matthew 25:31-46**

**31** When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory:

**32** And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats:

**33** And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.

**34** Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

**35** For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in:

**36** Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.

**37** Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink?

**38** When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee?

**39** Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?

**40** And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.

**41** Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:

**42** For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink:

**43** I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not.

**44** Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee?

**45** Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me.

**46** And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.

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“Hundreds of years before certain nations came upon the stage of action, the omniscient One looked down the ages and predicted the rise and fall of the universal kingdoms. God declared to Nebuchadnezzar that the kingdom of Babylon should fall, and a second kingdom would arise, which also would have its period of trial. Failing to exalt the true God, its glory would fade, and a third kingdom would occupy its place. This also would pass away; and a fourth, strong as iron, would subdue the nations of the world. . . .

“In the history of nations the student of God’s word may behold the literal fulfillment of divine prophecy. Babylon, shattered and broken at last, passed away because in prosperity its rulers had regarded themselves as independent of God, and had ascribed the glory of their kingdom to human achievement. The Medo-Persian realm was visited by the wrath of heaven because in it God’s law had been trampled under foot. The fear of the Lord had found no place in the hearts of the vast majority of the people. Wickedness, blasphemy, and corruption prevailed. The kingdoms that followed were even more base and corrupt; and these sank lower and still lower in the scale of moral worth. . .

“. . . Here it is shown that the strength of nations, as of individuals, is not found in the opportunities or facilities that appear to make them invincible. It is not found in their boasted greatness. It is measured by the fidelity with which they fulfill God’s purpose.”

***Prophets and Kings, pages 501, 502.***