

Nebuchadnezzar's Vision of a Prophetic Clock—Part Two

Why does it seem that so many events, no matter how trivial they may be, are thought to have some prophetic significance? The tendency to over focus on the details of current events has caused some to make a religion out of watching world events, rather than to understand the world from the perspective of the Bible.

If we observe the historical evolution of those empires represented by Nebuchadnezzar's image, we would discover that all of these empires had something in common—the Commonwealth of Israel—more specifically the Davidic dynasty. This is in many respects the main focus of these empires from the biblical perspective, which in the overall historical scope of these empires would really seem quite narrow when viewed from the larger picture of world history.

We could say then that if it weren't for the involvement of these empires in the affairs of Israel as a nation, and a commonwealth of tribes, that we would not likely find them sequentially recorded in biblical history.

Simply, there would be little reason to have them recorded in biblical history if they had

no interaction with the people of Israel, and in particular with the Davidic dynasty.

This, of course, gives us a realistic application of the vision given to Nebuchadnezzar.

Now, the Assyrians and Babylonians were instrumental in the separation of the peoples of Israel and Judah from their homeland. It came about, according to what is recorded in the Bible by the prophets, as a result of their continual rebellion against the covenant they had made with God at Mt. Sinai. A covenant they had confirmed with memorial sacrifices and the sprinkling of blood, which were continually given to remind the people of their promise to keep the covenant, and to remind the people of future events related to the Davidic dynasty, that is to say the Christ.

Meaning that from a biblical viewpoint the Assyrians and Babylonians (mutually inclusive kingdoms) became the beginning of something that would continue for a determined amount of time through history. But it was Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom that represented the end of national Israel and the removal of the Davidic dynasty from Jerusalem (Isa. 23:13; Jer. 50:17). (Remember that David's kingly dynasty was given a perpetual covenant by God.)

Thus, we have in Nebuchadnezzar's vision a "prophetic clock"—so to speak—that is related to the Davidic dynasty, which tells us when its removal from Jerusalem occurred in history, because the vision was given to Nebuchadnezzar during the period that marked the fall of Jerusalem.

What came next was the Persian Empire under Cyrus the Great, and this empire influenced Israel's migration to the north and to the west, as did the Greco-Macedonian Empire that was developed under Alexander the Great. Keeping in mind that these two successive empires also did not allow for the restoration of the Davidic dynasty to rule at Jerusalem (Jer. 50:17).

Now, there was, of course, a minimal restoration of Jerusalem in relationship to the rebuilding of a temple during the time of the Persian Empire. However, it was by no means a reconstruction of the city-state of the kingdom of Judah or the former Commonwealth of Israel or its capital at Jerusalem. Because we have to remember that in the time of Jesus' ministry even his disciples asked if he would at that time "restore again the kingdom to Israel?"

Importantly, though, what did occur under the rule of Cyrus was that some families were allowed to return to the areas surrounding Jerusalem. And, at some point in time, this included families related to King David. We

have a genealogy related to this with Jesus as recorded in the accounts of Matthew and especially the physician, Luke.

As an aside it is thought by some that the migration of the ten-tribed house of Israel, according to ancient annals related to the Norsemen and the Celts, brought them into Northwestern Europe, and their descendants became rivals to the power of Rome, which was the fourth kingdom represented by the image in Nebuchadnezzar's vision. Notably, it is worth mentioning that the political and military might of the Northwestern European nations superseded that of Rome, and influenced not only Western Europe, but in modern times the entire world (Gen. 12:1-3; 49:1-28).

How then do we relate the empires of Nebuchadnezzar's vision with the feet and toes of the image, and how does this relate to world events today?

The common method has been to juxtapose secular history with the account in the Bible regarding the vision of Nebuchadnezzar II.

Thus, Nebuchadnezzar's Babylon—the head of gold—represented the beginning of many world changing events, and in particular the removal of the Davidic dynasty from Jerusalem. Then came the Persian Empire, and then the Greco-Macedonian Empire, each in turn altering the makeup of tribes and

peoples in both Europe and the Middle East. Finally, we come to the Roman Empire that eventually became split into two distinct political entities, with the one in the East becoming known as the Byzantine Empire.

(It was the Romans who brought a final end to the political makeup of the Commonwealth of Israel, giving us the historical impression that the Davidic line was forever lost to history).

However, it should be noted that when Daniel recalled the dream for Nebuchadnezzar he spoke of the feet and toes being made of a mixture of iron and clay, and it should be pointed out that we are assuming there were “ten” toes even though the number is not mentioned by Daniel. And it is worth commenting on the fact that the number of kingdoms spoken of by Daniel makes no reference to there being only four kingdoms to be accounted for in relationship to the image in the vision. (People assume there were only four kingdoms by relating the vision of the image to Daniel’s vision of the four beasts, but even in Daniel’s vision there are more than ten kings to be accounted for in that particular vision.)

Notably, then, Daniel speaks of the feet and toes as a kingdom, but that does not mean they were of necessity related directly to the Roman Empire. For there are some who have interpreted the “toes” of the image to represent a succession of States related to the

ancient Roman Empire, but this is unwarranted by Scripture.

Bringing us to consider that according to the image in Nebuchadnezzar’s vision, there would be a separate time when a kingdom would arise that would have the nature of the feet and toes of iron and clay, because Daniel tells us that “in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed” (Dan. 2:44).

Implying that not only are they a part of the timeline of events—yet future—but these “ten” kings are also contemporary, and not to be mistaken for successive revivals of the Roman Empire. Noting also that it is obvious that the kingdom of God was not established under any of the ancient empires from Babylon to Rome. (One may consider that all of these empires were gaining strength politically and militarily over time, but the expanse of these empires made them more diverse socially, ethnically, culturally and in terms of religion, which made them increasingly unable to “cleave [adhere] one to another” as Daniel wrote.)

Meaning that the political entity represented by the feet and toes is cast forward in time and is associated with events that take place before the establishment of the kingdom of God. From a prophetic point-of-view we could say that the “prophetic clock” brings us through time from the Babylonian Empire to

a time when we shall have the return of the Christ, who is a descendant of David and an heir to the throne of David.

Now, there is another common assumption that a final empire would be in Western Europe, and possibly also in Eastern Europe, because of the link being made between the “kings” of the feet and toes and the empire represented by the legs of iron that preceded them.

This is also not warranted from Scripture.

Which should cause us to rethink things differently.

The reasoning is that for those who look for prophetic events to occur at any time, or believe they are occurring at this time, the tendency is to only focus on looking for ten kings, and only in the European theater, and sometimes only in the past as successive empires related to the image of the vision.

Bringing us then to examine something about the vision given to the Apostle John, who was told that the horns of a beast that he saw “are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast. These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are

with him are called, and chosen, and faithful (Rev. 17:12-14).

In this context it is reasonable to make a connection between the latter kings of Nebuchadnezzar's vision with the kings spoken of by John, for the simple reason that the singular event of Christ's return and the establishment of the kingdom of God occurs at this time.

Also, it is important to point out that at the time John wrote this prophecy we see that even at that time these “ten kings” did not as yet have kingdoms in alliance with a “beast,” which is reasonably expected to be a political power representing a significant centralized alliance of States apart from these ten kings,

and so we are talking about a time when more than ten kings are involved overall at the time of Jesus' return.

Consequently, if we can reasonably compare the ten horns of Daniel's vision with the “ten” toes of Nebuchadnezzar's vision, and these kings are aligned with a larger political structure, then we are brought to realize that such an alliance is not immediately apparent in our current globalizing world. Yet, it is possible to begin to see changes in the international structure worldwide today that show us several nations leaning toward the development of an unprecedented economic, political and military (not social or cultural)

block that can change the very character of our current notion of globalization and balance of power in the world.

Now, we may glean from Scripture that the issue of focus is not on the number of kings involved in relationship to Nebuchadnezzar's vision, but it is the time when this political structuring takes place—when a certain ten kings appear—just before the return of the Christ and the establishment of the kingdom of God.

Simply, it's not just that there are ten kings, there are more than ten represented in the visions of Nebuchadnezzar, Daniel and John, but it is when these kings do what they do before the return of the Christ that makes them significant to current events, and consequently relative to Nebuchadnezzar's vision of a great image. Therefore, Nebuchadnezzar's vision was more about a timeline and how that period of time related to the Davidic dynasty.


Now, people who watch world events with a scrutinizing eye do, at times, lose the bigger picture, and by misunderstanding biblical prophecies, some believe that all these events will somehow catch people unaware. In reality, the development of significant spheres of global economic and political influence will catch no one unaware of these events. It is the biblical significance of these events that

won't be understood or heeded by peoples and leaders of the world.

So, if Nebuchadnezzar's head of gold represented the removal of the Davidic dynasty, what does the period of the feet and toes represent?

The significance prophetically is that this period represents the end of what began during Nebuchadnezzar's reign. Or, we could just as easily say, Nebuchadnezzar's reign marked the removal of the Davidic dynasty, and the period and events of the final alliance of powers will represent the time of its restoration to its rightful place at Jerusalem with the return of the Christ. For Daniel wrote: "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" (Dan. 2:44).

Therefore, we can reasonably conclude that the image Nebuchadnezzar saw in his vision was something akin to a "prophetic clock," by which we are able to generally measure the period of time from the displacement of the Davidic line to its restoration under the returning Jesus, and with his coming the establishment of the kingdom of God, and also the restoration of the houses of Israel and Judah in their promised homeland according

to the promises given to Abraham. (End of two-part series.).  **(End of two-part series.)**