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A New World Order is Coming - Who Will Usher It In?

The monarch of the world sat in the throne room of earth's most brilliant palace. Before him stood a captive prince. The youth was pleading for his life, pleading for time. Again and again the king demanded, "Tell me what I dreamed last night!"

Who could answer such a question? Not you or I. The prince begged for time, and the ruler granted his request. Retiring from the presence of the king, Daniel turned from pleading with the monarch of the world to plead with the Monarch of the universe. Joined by three godly companions, he prayed for the God of heaven to reveal to him the king's secret dream. In answer to their prayers God allowed Daniel to dream the same dream King Nebuchadnezzar had had. Only by revelation from God could it have been known, for the king himself had completely forgotten it.

What a tide of gratitude must have welled up in the hearts of those four when they realized that their lives had been spared by a miracle, for the king's decree was that unless the dream was made known to him, Prince Daniel and his companions together with all the wise men and astrologers of ancient Babylon should be slain.

This Eastern monarch, who lived twenty-five hundred years ago, was accustomed in his religious worship to bowing down to images of gold, silver, stone, and other materials. One evening as he lay on his bed he began thinking about the future and what would take place after his time; so God gave him a dream which used symbols familiar to him. In his dream Nebuchadnezzar saw a great image of such giant size he was filled with awe. The head of the image was pure gold; its chest and arms of silver; the thighs were of brass; and the legs were made of iron. Looking at the feet, the king saw they were composed of iron mixed with clay.

While the king watched, a stone cut out of a mountain without any human help came whizzing through the air and struck the image, not upon its head but upon its feet. The effect was like that of an atomic bomb, for the gold, silver, brass, iron, and clay were not only shattered and broken, but "became like the chaff of the summer threshingfloors" (Daniel 2:35), and the wind blew them all away. And then, wonder of wonders, the stone began to grow. Soon it became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.

And what was the meaning of all this? Daniel explained to the king that God has shown him what was to happen in the future. The different parts of the image represented four world empires which would rule the world in turn. Daniel pointed out to King Nebuchadnezzar of ancient Babylon, "Thou art this head of gold" (Daniel 2:38). The golden head represented the world kingdom of Babylon ruled by Nebuchadnezzar. The then explained that succeeding kingdoms would be inferior and there would be a total of four - a prediction fulfilled in Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome.

Some years later when Nebuchadnezzar's grandson, Belshazzar, sat on the throne, the Babylonian kingdom fell to the armies of Medo-Persia. It happened on a night in which Belshazzar and his court were holding a drunken feast. The party grew more reckless, and Belshazzar decided to mock the God of heaven by drinking wine from the sacred cups taken from the temple of God when Jerusalem had been captured by his grandfather. This, he thought, showed his superiority over the God of heaven. But while the court rang with drunken laughter, a supernatural hand appeared, writing on the wall the mysterious words: "Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin." The meaning as given by God in the Bible is: "God has numbered the days of your kingdom and brought it to an end;....you have been weighed in the balances and found wanting;....your kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians" (Daniel 5:26-28, RSV).

It happened just as God declared; that very night Darius overthrew Babylon, killed Belshazzar, and Medo-Persia ruled the world.

Likewise the overthrow of Medo-Persia was accomplished by the Greeks at the battle of Arbela in 331 B.C. Greece, which succeeded Medo-Persia, was divided into four parts at the death of Alexander, and she finally lost world dominion, being overthrown and succeeded by Rome at the Battle of Pydna in 168 B.C.

"There shall be a fourth kingdom," Daniel had told Nebuchadnezzar, "strong as iron, because iron breaks to pieces and shatters all things; and like iron which crushes, it shall break and crush all these" (Daniel 2:40, RSV).

The voice of history confirms the voice of prophecy, for Rome was the fourth kingdom from the days of Daniel, and it has come to be known as the iron monarchy. Says the historian Edward Gibbon: "The empire of the Romans filled the world, and when that empire fell into the hands of a single person, the world became a safe and dreary prison for his enemies. The slave of Imperial despotism, whether he was condemned to drag his gilded chain in Rome and the senate, or to wear out a life of exile on the barren rock of Seriphus, or the frozen banks of the Danube, expected his fate in silent despair. To resist was fatal, and it was impossible to fly" (The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, Vol 1, pp. 99, 100).

But Daniel, through the knowledge given him by God, added more details to this remarkable prophecy. "And as you saw the feet and toes partly of potter's clay and partly of iron, it shall be a divided kingdom; but some of the firmness of iron shall be in it, just as you saw iron mixed with the miry clay. And as the toes of the feet were partly iron and partly clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly brittle. As you saw the iron mixed with miry clay, so they will mix with one another in marriage, but they will not hold together, just as iron does not mix with clay" (Daniel 2:41-43, RSV).

Daniel told the king that the fourth world empire, Rome, would be divided as represented by the ten toes of the image. Some of the resulting nations would be strong and some would be weak. This has been perfectly fulfilled as the nations of Europe today are the successors to the Roman Empire. And just as God predicted, some are weak and others strong. He also predicted that there would be attempts through marriage to weld these divided nations into a union, but that would not be successful.

In an endeavor to bring about harmony and unity, the crowned heads of Europe married and intermarried. Before two world wars shook the crowns off the heads of most of the

European monarchs, the sons of daughters of Haakon VII of Norway and of Queen Victoria of England either occupied thrones or were the consorts of monarchs throughout nearly all of Europe. And so intimately and intricately interlaced was the relationship between these numerous kings and queens that the royalty of Europe was for the most part related. To the last detail they had fulfilled the Word of God. They had mixed with one another in marriage, but they had not held together.

And as century after century swung into line, rulers of wealth and power attempted to weld together the broken fragments of the iron monarchy. Charlemagne, Charles V, Louis XIV, Napoleon Bonaparte, Kaiser Wilhelm, and Hitler all tried it. History bears thunderous testimony as to how hard they tried and how ignominiously they failed.

The kaiser hoped to build a railway from Berlin to Baghdad and to become, eventually, ruler of all Europe. Hitler and Mussolini, with the help of Japan, expected and intended to reestablish the Holy Roman Empire on an even grander scale. Mussolini's Abyssinian campaign was begun with the same idea in mind. High in his mountain fastness, surrounded by the battlements of nature, Haile Selassie, emperor of Ethiopia, awaited the onslaught of the invader. Below him to the northeast and southwest a quarter of a million Italian troops sweltered under a tropical sun. They had flares for night attack, liquid fire for mass attack, machine guns, gas, and hand grenades for attack upon the enemy's trenches, and foot-burning chemicals to prevent the Ethiopians from ascending the steep and hazardous mountain trails.

They had airplanes and bombs, tanks and guns, rifles and bayonets. They had plenty of trucks, road-making machines, and trench diggers. Besides all this, the Italian troops had steel helmets, gas masks, shoes, and fine uniforms. But in spite of every wartime convenience which inventive knowledge could supply at that time, they sickened by the thousands upon the scorching plains, and were invalided home. Not less than thirty thousand were sent back to Italy through the Suez Canal before a single shot was fired.

And against this enemy army, organized and equipped for battle, the emperor of Ethiopia had his troops of barefoot and poorly armed soldiers, his mountain fortress, and God's prophecy that there would not be another world empire.

Then came the overthrow of Republican Spain. And while the League of Nations toyed with the idea of sanctions, Hitler seized the Rhineland, invaded Poland and Czechoslovakia, and repudiated the Versailles Treaty.

But where Kaiser Wilhelm failed, Woodrow Wilson, with his League of Nations, expected to succeed; and where Hitler failed, Franklin D. Roosevelt hoped to find a way. Mr. Wilson, while President of the United States, speaking before a large audience at the Colosseum in St. Louis, February 3, 1916, said: "I do not believe that the world will see another great war. I think at the end of this war the world will have advanced further toward permanent peace than at any time in history."

Again, speaking in the Chamber of Deputies at Rome, Mr. Wilson was reported by the Associated Press, January 3, 1919, as having elicited, "What we are going to provide is a new cement to hold the people together."

Every scheme and plan and pact and organization which humanity has tried, in an effort to weld together the broken fragments of the human race, has failed. Within our memory

the League of Nations collapsed. Mr. Wilson's predictions of "the war to end war" collapsed. Mr. Roosevelt's four freedoms have failed, and each statesman since has pursued the vision of world peace and solidarity only to find it dissolve into the reality of divisiveness. Today feverishly, urgently, diligently, world leaders are pounding on the anvil of the United Nations, struggling with almost superhuman effort to weld scores and hundreds of discordant elements into one cohesive mass.

The God of heaven foresaw our day, foresaw man's futile efforts, foreknew the world problems, the animosities, the hatreds, the lust for power and wealth, the dishonesty, intrigue, and double dealing. And so through Daniel He predicted, "They will not hold together." These things, said Daniel, are "what shall be in the latter days" (Daniel 2:28).

One ray of hope, and only one, shines through the thickening gloom. Prophesied Daniel, " And in the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed, nor shall its sovereignty be left to another people. It shall break in pieces all these kingdoms and bring them to an end, and it shall stand for ever; just as you saw that a stone was cut from a mountain by no human hand, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold. A great God has made known to the king what shall be hereafter. The dream is certain, and its interpretation sure" (Daniel 2:44, 45, RSV).

God's kingdom will not be ushered in through the gateway of politics. A kingdom which will stand forever must have subjects who will live forever, and eternal life is to be bestowed only at the second coming of Jesus Christ. The stone which smote the image was not quarried by human hands. Schemes, plans, devisings, pacts of men, did not bring its crushing blow. It was supernatural. It was heaven-sent.

What a day to be living in! God says that in the days of "these kings," the current time, He will set up His eternal kingdom. Won't you ask Him now to reserve you a place in that wonderful life?