

Revelation's Biggest Surprise

Revelation's Biggest Surprise



1

My topic for this meeting is **Revelation's Biggest Surprise**



2

What parent hasn't looked into the eyes of their newborn child and asked the question, "What will the future hold for my little one?"



3

"Will the world be a safe place for my children and grandchildren to grow up in?"



4

Is there anybody in control of this world?
Is there any place we can find reliable information about the future?
Who can we really trust?

The Bible tells us in Deuteronomy 29:29 that, "The secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, . . ."



5

Over 2500 years ago God revealed one of His secrets to an ancient, pagan king and the message that He revealed is for us and for our children today. It gives us hope and confidence that the destiny of this world is in the hands of God and one day He will put an end to sickness, suffering, war, poverty and death.

Tonight we will take a journey through history and discover God's plans for this world.

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Our theme for these meetings is:
**If it's in the Bible, I believe it.
If it disagrees with the Bible,
It's not for me.**



6

The study tonight will demonstrate that truth. The word of God is absolutely reliable.

Let's go back in time to about 600 years before Christ to an ancient king's bedroom.



7

One night king Nebuchadnezzar, the king of the ancient Babylonian empire had a dream. When he woke up he could not remember the dream, but he knew it must be more than an ordinary dream. Indeed it was a dream given by God. Outlining history for the next two and half millennia.

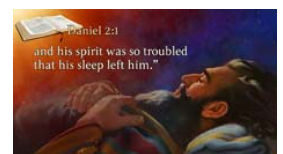
Daniel 2:1

“Now in the second year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign, Nebuchadnezzar had dreams;



8

and his spirit was so troubled that his sleep left him.”



9

The king was greatly troubled.
He called his wise men: the magicians, astrologers, sorcerers, and Chaldeans to the royal palace.



10

He said to them, “Tell me what I dreamed last night and tell me its significance.” “What's the meaning of my dream?”
The wise men replied:

Daniel 2:4

“O king, live forever! Tell your servants the dream, and



11

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we will give the interpretation.”

King Nebuchadnezzar was upset. “I don’t know what I dreamed.” God mysteriously took it from his mind.
The king goes on—

Daniel 2:9

“Therefore tell me the dream, and I shall know that you can give me its interpretation.”



12

In other word, he’s saying, “Don’t pretend you know when you really don’t know.

You’re supposed to be able to see into the future!
Prove it to me now! Tell me what I dreamed.”

The Chaldeans protested:

Daniel 2:10

“There is not a man on earth who can tell the king’s matter.”



13

And it was true. There was no one on earth that could do what the king asked.

Only the God of heaven could reveal what a king dreams in his bedroom.

Only the God of heaven can accurately, precisely reveal the future.

News of the king’s command reached Daniel.

Daniel was not a psychic, but he was one of the king’s wise men.

When Daniel asked why he was to be killed as well, Arioch, the executioner, told him the story of the dream.



14

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So Daniel went in before the king and said “King, give me time. Let me go and pray and ask the God of heaven, and the God of heaven will reveal the dream that you had in your bedroom.”



15

The God of heaven will reveal the future to me. I will return and explain to you what you dreamed.

In the night vision, God revealed the dream and its interpretation to his servant Daniel, in answer to his prayer.



16

The mysteries of God are explained to men and women who pray. Daniel prayed—

Daniel 2:23

“I thank You and praise You, O God of my fathers; You have given me wisdom and might.”



17

And then Daniel went in to see the king and he told him that while it is true that no wise man, no astrologer, no magician, nor soothsayer could reveal the dream.

Daniel 2:28

“... there is a God in heaven who reveals secrets, and He has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what will be in the latter days.”



18

So this prophecy takes us down the stream of time. It takes us from Daniel's day down through the nations of Babylon, Media Persia, Greece and Rome. It takes us down to the divided empires of Europe.

It takes us down to what days?

The latter days.

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Daniel 2:31

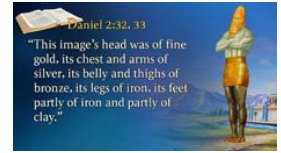
“You, O king, were watching; and behold, a great image! This great image, whose splendor was excellent, stood before you; and its form was awesome.”



19

Daniel 2:32, 33

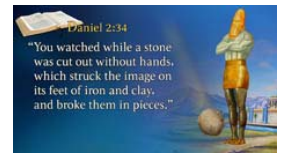
“This image’s head was of fine gold, its chest and arms of silver, its belly and thighs of bronze, its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay.”



20

Daniel 2:34

“You watched while a stone was cut out without hands, which struck the image on its feet of iron and clay, and broke them in pieces.”



21

Daniel 2:35

“Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold were crushed together, and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors;



22

the wind carried them away so that no trace of them was found.



23

And the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.”



24

Daniel 2:36

“This is the dream. Now we will tell the interpretation of it before the king.”



25

Daniel 2:37, 38

“You, O king, are a king of kings . . . you are this head of



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gold.”

26

The **head of gold** represented **Babylon** or Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom. Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom ruled the world from **605 BC to 539 BC**.



27

Nebuchadnezzar established one of the most fantastic empires in the entire world. His kingdom was lavishly adorned with gold.



28

Babylon was the wealthiest kingdom in the world at that time. It had luxurious gardens including the hanging gardens, a wonder of the ancient world.

Babylon

10 Miles (16 km) around.

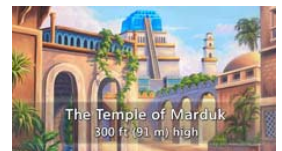
Rome was only 6 miles (9.6 km), and Athens 4 (6.4 km).



29

The temple of Marduk was 300 ft (91 m) high.

Outside it was covered with blue glazed tile. Inside, it was overlaid with gold.



30

In that one temple alone, Nebuchadnezzar used **18 tons (16,000 kg) of gold**.



31

Do you see why God used the symbol of gold to describe Babylon because its chief God, Bel-Marduk, was sitting in a lavish golden temple?

Bel-Marduk, the chief god of Babylon, was a golden image on a golden throne before a golden altar beside a golden candlestick.

8 ½ tons (7700 kg) of solid gold were used for the altar and throne alone. No wonder God said to Nebuchadnezzar, “you are this head of gold.”

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Daniel's prophecy goes on.

Daniel 2:32

“ . . . Its chest and arms of silver. . . ”

After Babylon another kingdom would arise
The Medes and Persians overthrew the Babylonians.

You don't have to guess at the meaning of prophecy.
Just look at it in **Daniel 2:39**.
What do the breast and arms of silver represent?

“ . . . After you shall arise another kingdom. . . . ”

Bible prophecy predicted the nation of Babylon would not last forever. Another kingdom would arise.
History reveals exactly how this happened.

In Daniel Chapter 5, King Belshazzar, grandson of King Nebuchadnezzar, hosted a drunken feast for a thousand of his lords.

As the wine was flowing, the music was playing; long robbed men held close lavishly dressed Babylonian women.
In the midst of the drunken debauchery, the enchanting music and the seductive immorality, God interrupted Belshazzar's feast. A bloodless hand wrote upon the wall these words.

Mene

“God has numbered your kingdom and finished it.”

Tekel

“You have been weighed in the balances, and found



32



33



34



35



36

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wanting.”

Peres

“Your kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians.”

Daniel’s interpretation can be verified by any good history book on Babylon. Cyrus, the general of the armies of the combined countries of Media and Persia, overthrew the proud kingdom of Babylon.

Daniel however was not the only one who predicted this, in fact:

God named Cyrus approximately 150 years before he was born.

Look at this amazing prophecy written by Isaiah the prophet sometime around 680 B.C.

Isaiah 45:1

“Thus says the LORD to His anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have held—to subdue nations before him

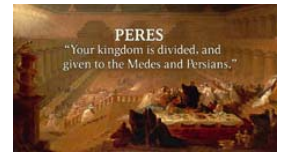
and loose the armor of kings, to open before him the double doors, so that the gates will not be shut:”

Here is exactly what happened. His soldiers dug canals to divert and dryup the river Euphrates and marched under the walls of Babylon and came up inside the city.

The Bible is not an ordinary book.

When you and I open the word of God we are opening the word of the living God. Its prophecies are indeed true.

Next, a third empire depicted by the thighs of brass would arise.



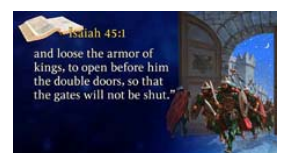
37



38



39



40



41

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Daniel 2:39

“. . . then another, a third kingdom of bronze, which shall rule over all the earth.”

Alexander the Great led his armies with their bronze armor. With their bronze helmets, bronze breastplates, bronze shields, bronze handled swords, the Greek armies dominated the world.



42

Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece – but would Greece rule the world forever?



43

Daniel 2:40

“And the fourth kingdom shall be as strong as iron.”



44

The great English historian **Edward Gibbon**, though not a Christian or Bible-believer himself wrote in **“The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire”**

“The images of gold, silver, or brass, that might serve to represent the nations and their kings, were successively broken by the iron monarchy of Rome.”



45

Indeed, that happened. Rome dominated the world, from 168 B.C. to 476 A.D.



46

It was **in the days of Rome** that Jesus Christ was born as a baby.



47

Joseph and Mary fled from an oppressive Roman Empire and traveled down into Egypt.



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48

Jesus was tried by a Roman governor and crucified by Roman soldiers.



49

For more than 500 years, Rome appeared to be invincible – her flag waving from the British Isles to the Persian Gulf.



50

From the North Sea to the Sahara Desert
From the Atlantic to the Euphrates and beyond.
One of the largest empires in the world. What did the Bible predict?

Daniel 2:41

“Whereas you saw the feet and toes, partly of potter’s clay and partly of iron, the kingdom shall be divided.”



51

The Bible did not predict a fifth ruling empire which would rise after Rome. It predicted a divided empire.

Another single world empire would not follow Rome.

The feet of iron and clay represent the divisions of the Roman empire. This is exactly what happened.

Europe was divided like the prophecy described it would be.



52

The Barbarian tribes attacked Western Europe in the middle of the fourth century.

During their ravaging attacks the Roman Empire was divided exactly as the Bible predicted



53

A man in Europe once asked a preacher,
“How do you know the Bible is true?”

“Well, sir you are standing on it,” he responded.

“What do you mean?”

“The earth beneath your feet proves it.”



54

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The preacher explained.

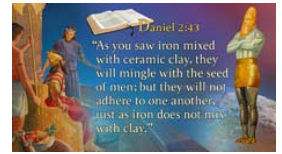
“The Bible predicted that Europe would be divided. Europe today exactly fulfills that prophecy.”

The skeptic was astounded.

The Bible goes on, it says—

Daniel 2:43

“As you saw iron mixed with ceramic clay, they will mingle with the seed of men; but they will not adhere to one another, just as iron does not mix with clay.”



55

Throughout history the kings of Europe attempted through inter-marriage to unite the empire.

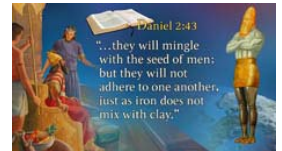
One famous example of this was when Napoleon divorced his wife Josephine and married Louise of Austria secure relations with that country and further his goal to unite all of Europe.



56

As prophecy predicted he utterly failed.

The Bible says, ***“...They will mingle with the seed of men; but they will not adhere to one another...”***

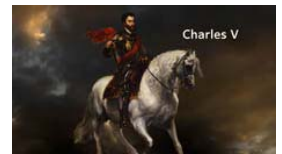


57

Besides intermarriage there was a second way political leaders attempted to unite Europe.

They attempted to accomplish their goals through military conflict and war.

Charles the fifth wanted to unite Europe. He failed.



58

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Charlemagne wanted to unite Europe. He failed.



59

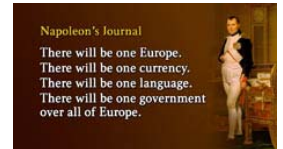
Napoleon tried to unite all of Europe. He failed.



60

Napoleon wrote in his journal a description of his ambitious plans.

**There will be one Europe. There will be one currency.
There will be one language. There will be one
government over all of Europe.**



61

But when Napoleon was defeated in the Battle of Waterloo in June of 1815 he said,

“God, Almighty is too much for me.”

The echoes of an ancient prophecy written hundreds of years before speak to hearts in our day.

The Bible is accurate.

And all attempts to unite Europe for any length of time will have to deal with these few words from an ancient Bible prophecy: —



62

“... they will not adhere to one another...”



63

Indeed, this prophecy has proven true.

Europe has been **divided**.

It has been divided down through the centuries.



64

Charles the fifth, Charlemagne [*pronounced Shar'-la-main*]
Napoleon, Hitler, Stalin - were **would-be world leaders** -
and they have failed.



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65

Consider **Hitler**. His fiery speeches whipped up the masses.

His motto: **“One people, one empire, one leader.”**

It appeared he was going to accomplish his ambitions and unite all Europe.



66

The allied forces were trapped. Defeat seemed certain. But remarkably Hitler ordered his tanks to stop and re-supply.



67

What stopped Hitler's tanks?

An ancient prophecy in Daniel chapter 2 declares that from the days of the Roman empire, Europe would never be united.

The Bible predicts in the Book of Revelation a final last attempt to unite Europe.

This time under a religious political union.



68

Revelation 17:12-14

“The ten horns which you saw are ten kings who have received no kingdom as yet,



69

but they receive authority for one hour as kings with the beast.



70

Here is the significance of this prophecy.

For a short period of time the nations of Europe and the rest of the world will enter in to a religious, political confederation just before the coming of Jesus.

Notice how Revelation describes this temporary unity.

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These are of one mind, and they will give their power and authority to the beast.



71

So here is a prediction that for one hour, a short period of time, the nations of Europe would come together.

Are there movements to unite Europe today?

The flag that is the symbol of the common market of Europe is **“Many voices, one people.”**



72

The **Euro** is the result of an effort that seeks to establish a common currency for Europe.

Revelation tells us there will be this attempt to unite peoples politically to prepare for the beast power that unites them religiously and politically under one great system.

What if war, conflict, strife around the world combined with famines and economic failures? And the idea is so sweetly presented: A united world. A united society. We all become one.



73

The Bible says “these are of one mind and they give their power and authority to the beast.”

These will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them,

The reason why we are not interested in an earthly kingdom is because Jesus has promised us a heavenly one.

This prediction in Revelation 17 says—



74

... for He is Lord of lords and King of kings; and those who are with Him are called, chosen, and faithful.”



75

History has followed the prophecy of Daniel chapter 2 like a blueprint and will continue to do so.



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The political workings of this planet are not random.

76

Events happening in the world this very minute are a sign that Jesus Christ the King of Kings will soon come.

His return is the only hope for a world standing on feet of iron and clay ready to crumble.

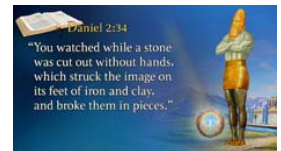
Daniel's prophecy of the image and Revelation's prophecies point us forward to a new time.



77

Daniel 2:34

“You watched while a stone was cut out without hands, which struck the image on its feet of iron and clay, and broke them in pieces.”



78

Daniel 2:44

“ . . . the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed . . .

What is the rock that smashes the image?
The rock of ages, Jesus Christ.

We can have no confidence in earthly kingdoms that rise and fall. They are temporary. They are illusionary.

But we can put our trust in God's kingdom that will never fall.



79

it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.”

There is hope on the way. There is help on the way.
The stone cut out without hands.

Christ's supernatural kingdom will come and smash down the kingdoms of this world.



80

Revelation 11:15

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“And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, ‘The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!’”



81

Babylon rises and falls, but He shall reign forever.
Media Persia rises and falls, but He shall reign forever.
Greece rises and falls, but He shall reign forever.
Rome rises and falls, but Christ shall reign forever and ever.

The Roman empire is divided.
The European common market rises and falls.

One world government attempts to rise, but it falls—
Because beyond it all is God and He shall reign forever and ever.

He will reign. The kingdoms of this world will crumble.

The great longing of the human heart is for peace and security. We long for a stable society where we can bring up our children without the fear of war, poverty and devastating diseases. We want a future filled with hope not fear.



82

Pastor George Fisher was a missionary to West Africa during the horrible slaughter of the **Liberian Civil War**. He tells this interesting experience that took place one day as he was teaching African ministerial students about the Second Coming of Christ. He had just quoted those amazing words in **1 Thessalonians 4:16**



83

“For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout with the voice of the archangel and the trumpet of God



84

and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the lord in the air.



85

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And thus we shall always be with the Lord” (vs 16,17)



86

One of his students asked “Pastor, **What will he say when he shouts?**” Pastor Fisher said, “The question took me by surprise.” The student repeated the question “Pastor, I Thess. 4:16 says that Christ will descend from heaven with a shout and loud command. I would like to know what that command will be.”



87

Pastor Fisher continues, “I wanted to leave the question unanswered, to tell him that we must not go past what Scripture has revealed, but my mind wandered to an encounter I had earlier in the day with a refugee from the Liberian civil war.

The man, a high school principal, told me how he was apprehended by a two-man death squad. After several hours of terror, as the men described how they would torture and kill him, he narrowly escaped. After hiding in the bush for two days, he was able to find his family and escape to a neighboring country. The escape cost him dearly: two of his children lost their lives.



88

The stark cruelty unleashed on an unsuspecting, undeserving population had touched me deeply.

I also saw flashbacks of the beggars that I pass each morning on my way to the office. Every day I see how poverty destroys dignity, robs men of the best of what it means to be human, and sometimes substitutes the worst of what it means to be an animal. I am haunted by the vacant eyes of people who have lost all hope.



89

"Pastor, you have not given me an answer. What will he say?" The question hadn't gone away.

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"**Enough**" I said. "He will shout, 'Enough' when he returns."

A look of surprise opened the face of the student. "What do you mean, 'Enough'?"

"Enough suffering. Enough starvation. Enough terror. Enough death. Enough indignity. Enough lives trapped in hopelessness. Enough sickness and disease. Enough time. Enough"



90

One day He will come.
One day He will stream down the corridor of the sky.
One day He will blaze past all the planets.
One day the earth shall shake.



91

And one day we shall look up and see Him and say,
"This is our God, we have waited for Him and He will save us."

One day He will come and we will be caught up in the sky for that ultimate space trip.

One day we shall behold Him. Far beyond the sky.

We'll be taken up and we will reign with Him forever and ever.

I want to be ready for that event, don't you?

Jesus reaches out to you tonight. He invites you to ask Him to sit on the throne of your heart so you can sit with him on a throne eternally. Choose today, to make the commitment to seriously discover what Christ and His kingdom are all about.

Just raise your hand right where you are to invite Jesus to sit on the throne of your heart. Let us pray

[PRAYER]

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