

Ir-ot-46
A Kingdom Which Shall Never Be Destroyed
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(Overwhelmed by Daniel? This material shows the Great Image in Daniel 2, which our prophets have correctly interpreted, is a key to understanding all other visions. Due to the importance of this material, I have shared many years of research and study, and all the visions of Daniel are here explained).

I. Many Bible readers avoid *Daniel* because of its strange “visions.” It is unfortunate if members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints do, because “**Daniel**” is **prophesying about this Church**. Furthermore, our prophets have explained the vision of the Great Image. **And that image is the key to all other visions in *Daniel***.

A. The reason the visions were made unclear is the same as Jesus’ parables. The Lord did not want certain groups to understand them. In the case of Daniel, they were left unclear so that those in apostasy would not remove them from the scriptural record.

B. But truth is restored! All visions in Daniel repeat, verify, and give further details of the apostasy and the coming thereafter of Christ’s Latter-day Kingdom and Church!

II. The interpretation by Latter-day prophets of The Great Image is true. And this interpretation is consistent with the true powers of history.

A. The gold head was Babylon, the power in Daniel’s time, ruling from about 605 to 538 B.C.

B. The silver breast & arms were the Medes and Persians, 538 to 333 B.C.

C. The brass belly & thighs, the Greeks, split into four separate powers but were dominated by Ptolemies and the Selucids who ruled 332 to 161 B.C.

D. The kingdom of iron was Rome, its two legs showed eventual division into an eastern and a western empire. Rome ruled 161 B.C. to 476 A.D.

E. The feet with their ten toes represent the modern kingdoms which arose out of the Roman Empire, most of them existing down into our own modern times.

III. The time of the establishment of God’s Kingdom is given: “And in the days of these kings [the many modern kingdoms] shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom” (Dan. 2:44). This puts its beginning in modern times.

A. It would begin as a stone cut out of a mountain without hands.

1. “Without hands” signified a work of God, not of men.

2. Jesus Christ is its source. He began His Kingdom by sending revelation and restored priesthood keys from the Heavens.

3. It has begun to roll forth throughout the earth. It is gathering God’s scattered people, once in exile, like Daniel.

4. At His Second coming, Christ will reign over His never-failing Kingdom.

The rest of the visions given to Daniel contain the same basic truths as the Great Image, though presented in different imagery. They verify its truths. Note that all other visions give special attention to **the Fourth Kingdom [which I will highlight throughout in red]**. Each additional vision adds new details about the fourth Kingdom, **or the apostasy**.

Then each vision shifts final focus to the Last Days, and God's Kingdom, or the Restored Church of Jesus Christ. [To aid understanding, I will present details of it in blue).

IV. (Daniel 7): The Four Beasts

A. This vision teaches the same truths as the Great Image, but uses "beasts" as symbols in place of "kingdoms."

1. This vision begins by shedding more light on the fourth kingdom's power and its final fall. It is described as "dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; ... [with] iron teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet" (Daniel 7:7-8).

2. Its power to destroy is emphasized because it was the Romans who not only conquered most of the known civilized world, but actually crucified Christ, killed the apostles and many saints, destroyed the temple, and eventually scattered the Jews.

3. Significant in this vision is a little horn [horns were often symbols of religious power] arising within Rome, making "war with the saints" (v. 8, 21); also changing times and laws (v. 25). This and other witnesses teach that this is a false religious power which arises and would eventually take over Christianity, and corrupt it. This religious power, unlike the Roman Empire itself, will continue to rule until the end time (v. 25-6).

4. The close of this vision, speaks of the coming of the "[most] ancient of days," (7:9-12) or Adam, who will return at the End as patriarch of all the earth. He will be part of a "judgment" who will "take away dominion" of all the corrupted powers that previously ruled, and will deliver dominion "to the people of the saints of the most High" [The newly arisen *religious* Israel]. This kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom. Those in it shall serve and obey Christ who will come "with clouds of heaven" (Dan. 7:12-4, 18, 26-7. See also D&C 116).

V. (Dan 8):The Vision of the Ram and Goat

A. The Bible *verifies* that the beasts used here signify the same four Kingdoms as in the Great Image.

1. A ram with 2 horns represents the Medes and Persians (8:20).

2. A goat, as is explained, represents Greece, who conquers them (8:21).

3. Greece is divided into four powers (v.22).

4. A Fierce King (or Rome) replaces Greece (v. 23). Again, more detail is given about this fourth power: "[Rome] cast down some of the host and of the stars to the ground, [those foreordained in Heaven as Christ's leaders] and stamped upon them [killed them]... *magnified himself even to the prince of the host, [killed Jesus the Christ]* and by [Rome] the daily sacrifice was taken away, and the place of his sanctuary was cast down [Rome destroyed the Jewish temple] ... and [Roman power] cast down the truth to the ground" [i.e., eventually takes over truth, then corrupts it] (Daniel 8:10-12).

5. This vision also says Rome would “destroy the mighty and the holy people [Israel].” And through its policy also shall cause “craft to prosper;” and “he shall magnify himself in his heart” [Many Roman emperors considered *themselves* as Gods]; and “by peace shall destroy many:” [That is, not by war but by false teachings. Obviously Rome’s military might at first destroyed many things pertaining to Israel and Christianity. Later false *religious powers* within it destroyed the true form of Christianity.]
6. “... but he shall be broken without hand” (8:5). That this *religious power* would be “broken without hand” shows it would continue to endure until the Last Days, with the coming of Christ’s Latter-day kingdom, as is shown in the Great Image which uses the same phrase. At Christ’s coming, *Christ will now be King*,

- B. Now that we see that Roman power and their time period of the apostasy is a major focus of these visions, we can look at the other visions, which also refer to the same things, but using different imagery.
 1. Remember that many events of ancient Israel were patterns of future events. When Babylon took the Jews into captivity, they destroyed the temple and took its treasures. These events pointed to the Romans, who did the same thing, physically and spiritually. Believing Gentiles within the Roman Empire became the inheritors of Christ’s Gospel. However, through a later apostasy, the Church they established became like a New Babylon. (That is, powers within Rome corrupted their spiritual inheritance).
 2. Daniel’s visions give the same truths found in Romans 11 and Jacob 5. Those scriptures, given in clarity, help to understand the following visions.

VI. (Daniel 4): Image of the Great Tree.

- A. *This vision is not about Nebuchadnezzar. He is being used as a symbol.*
This is possible because it was Nebuchadnezzar who inherited the Jews’ treasures in Daniel’s time. The Lord uses him as a symbol for *the future believing Gentiles (in the Roman Empire after Christ) who inherit Israel’s treasures and for a time become the new “Israel”* (See Romans 11:12-25).
- B. *It could only be Israel under Christ, (Gentile or other), who is a tree whose height reaches to Heaven sheltering and nourishing all flesh* (Dan 4:11-12; Mat. 13:31-2).
- C. Unfortunately for them, in time, this new Israel [Gentile Church] also became apostate (Romans 11:16-28; Jacob 5:18, 29-37).
- D. This is shown in this vision by the negative changes described as happening to Nebuchadnezzar (vs. 14, 15, 16).
- E. Yet the root [of Israel] from which the Gentile church sprang, who is actually Christ, will retain His strength. “Seven Times” passes by, leading to the Time of the Last Days (Dan 4:23).
- F. [Still using Nebuchadnezzar as a symbol, but now for the Restored Israel, that Latter-day Israel re-arises. “I lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, ...and excellent majesty was added unto me”

(Dan. 4:34-6). Though the vision began by referring to Gentile Israel, there is a change. The change in Nebuchadnezzar represents a change in Israel. It is a latter-day religious Israel which arises [which is consistently prophesied by all the prophets], consisting mostly of natural branches grafted in again onto their own deep Root (See Romans 11 and Jacob 5).

- G. This vision testifies that Jesus Christ, the true cut-down-tree, will always be the Center Root to which any one of His Kingdom must be grafted.

VII. (Daniel 5): Belshazzar's Feast [Another important vision showing the Apostasy].

A. Belshazzar is also used as a symbol to represent the future Gentiles who receive Israel's blessings after Christ. [i.e., the Gentiles in the Roman Empire who become Christians].

1. They would obtain Israel's vessels of worship. However, in time, they would become apostate, described here as "*drinking from the sacred vessels while praising the gods of gold and of silver (Daniel 5:2, 4).*"

2. So God judges them. "God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it... Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting (5:26-8)." (The Gentile Christian Church would lose God's authority. See the clear warning of such in Rom. 11:19-22).

3. Anciently, the Medes and Persians replaced Old Babylon. That event prophesied of the future. For this event was another prophecy that a "Restored Religious Israel" would replace the "Apostate Christian Babylon." That's why John's "Revelation" speaks so much of the fall of Babylon in the Last Days (Rev. 14:8; 17:5; 18:2, 21).

4. While the "Apostate Christian Babylon," as a religious power, would continue to control some men until the Last Days, it would be bereft of God's power, and finally completely fall.

B. Those in the Lord's Latter-day Kingdom would be blessed, like Daniel, to have power to clarify prophecy not understood by others, to "make interpretation, and dissolve doubts... [and] read the writing" (5:16-7). Teachings of Latter-day Saint prophets do make clear more than any other source, the understanding of the Bible, as is often joyfully discovered by new converts.

C. That corruption entered into the Christian Church after Christ is no longer disputed. Even leaders of the original, remaining Church have in recent years acknowledged and *publicly apologized for the corruptions of the past.*

D. But the question must arise: "*what did the Lord do when the Gentile Church became corrupt, as admitted?*" Romans 11:17-25 and all the prophets make it clear that such a corrupted church would be cut off, just as genetic Israel, the original branches, were cut off for pride and corruption.

E. In Romans the Lord Himself testified that, in fact, the Gentile Church would fall and "Israel shall be saved: ... there shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob (v. 26)." A renewed, religious Israel, genetic descendants from the roots of Jacob, would arise and return to establish the Lord's Church and Kingdom. And that has indeed occurred.

VIII. Daniel 9: Not only has this Kingdom been restored, but this amazing prophecy told precisely *when* God would set it up. This prophecy reveals not only the time of Christ's first coming, but the time when His Latter-day Kingdom would be restored. And it happened, just when it was prophesied.

- A. Daniel's life was a pattern of what would occur to Israel in the Last Days. He was taken captive in Babylon, He longed for the restoration of Israel as a free people and as God's people. He discovered Jeremiah's prophecy that Israel's captivity in Babylon **would last 70 years** (Jeremiah 25:12). He knew that period was nearly over and prayed that God would bring about the restoration of His people as promised.

As a result, Gabriel came to him and confirmed that Israel would be freed at the end of 70 years. But he showed this time period also had meaning for Israel's future, which would come in two parts. (1) Christ would come and offer a greater freedom, from the bondage of sin and death. But because many in Israel would reject Him, they would again go into captivity until the Last Days. (2) Then God would restore His Kingdom among those who repented and believed.

Gabriel showed that these future deliverances would occur on multiples of Israel's 70 year captivity (Daniel 9:24-27).

The Time of Christ's First Coming

Israel's deliverance from Babylon at seventy years was a pattern for the future. Thus **seventy, multiplied by seven**, would be the time of Israel's greater deliverance from sin by Jesus the Christ.

Gabriel prophesied Christ would come in "seventy-weeks." That figure actually meant seventy times seven years, or 490 years. Gabriel showed this time would lead to Christ's atoning works: "to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness.... and to anoint the most Holy" (Daniel 9:24).

Many Christian scholars have shown how Gabriel's prophecies were in fact fulfilled by Christ's coming. Sir Isaac Newton was the most respected among them. He had a remarkable knowledge of the scriptures, and was a genius in mathematics. He wrote:

"Now the dispersed Jews became a people and city when they first returned into a polity or body politick: and this was in the seventh year of Artaxerxes Longimus, when Ezra returned with a body of Jews from captivity, and revived the Jewish worship; and by the King's commission created Magistrates in all the land, to judge and govern the people according to the laws of God and the King, Ezra vii. 25.... Now the years of Artaxerxes began about two or three months after the summer solstice, and his seventh year fell in with the third year of the eightieth Olympiad; and the latter part thereof, wherein Ezra went up to Jerusalem, was in the year of the Julian Period 4257. Count the time from thence to the death of Christ,... It [is] just 490 years." (1)

After Gabriel revealed the time of Christ's first coming, he also revealed events following Christ's life, such as the destruction of Jerusalem, its temple, and the scattering of the rest of Israel --- its ultimate desolation (Daniel 9:26-7).

Gabriel gives in several visions **a coded formula for how long this final desolation, or the apostasy, of Israel will last** (Daniel 7:19-25; 8:10-14; 12:7,11).

Later, John gives the same formula for the same reality --- the time when the Gentiles, who will eventually fall into apostasy too, will possess Israel's spiritual inheritance (see Revelation 11:2; 13:5). So both Gabriel and John reveal the precise time when Israel's Kingdom will finally be restored.

The Prophesied Time of the Restoration of God's Kingdom in the Last Days

Such prophecies about the restoration have caused amazingly intense study and a great diversity of opinion as to their exact meaning, because they are in coded form. Nevertheless, centuries of study have produced some agreement on three main points. When all three points are taken together, they actually show when Israel's Restoration, like Christ's first coming, would begin.

And Israel's Restoration began exactly when it had been prophesied!

When the codes Gabriel used are understood, the explanation of how Gabriel's prophecy foretold the precise time of the Restoration is simple. (Although, there are many details, clarification, and verification which are much more complex, but highly supportive.)

The simple explanation.

1. Many scholars through the centuries agree Gabriel's prophecy of the seventy-weeks (490 years), which led to Christ's first coming, would also lead in some way to the Last Days and the Messiah's Coming Kingdom (Daniel 9:24). So we begin again with the figure of 490 years.

2. Many scholars through the centuries also agree that Gabriel and John gave another set of time codes signifying Israel's last time of bondage. These codes all equal $3 \frac{1}{2}$. One of the chief forms of this code is "time, times, and half a time." This is now understood by most scholars as simply a formula for a basic time period (time), a doubling of the period (times); and one-half the period, or half-a-time, which equals $3 \frac{1}{2}$. *The New English Bible* uses this understanding as did Sir Isaac Newton. Other time periods these scriptures give can all be shown to equal $3 \frac{1}{2}$.

Most scholars make a major mistake in not relating the two codes for time periods given by Daniel and John, using one *or* the **other**. **But a few have felt that the "seventy-week" period is to be multiplied by $3 \frac{1}{2}$ --- and that will bring in the Messiah's Last Days Kingdom.**

Let's consider this possibility: 490 years multiplied by $3 \frac{1}{2}$.

3. But before we do, very recent research, caused by findings in the Dead Sea Scrolls, which shed great light on the writings of Daniel, show that a missing part of the puzzle is Jubilee. Jubilee was a **50th year Holy Observance** the Lord commanded Israel to observe **after each 49 year period.** (2)

And what the Lord said about **Jubilee shows it had significance for the return of Israel from captivity:**

"And thou shalt number seven... times seven years;... [until] forty and nine years. Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubilee to sound... And ye shall hallow the **fiftieth year**, and **proclaim liberty** throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof; it shall be a **Jubilee** unto you, and ye **shall return every man unto his possession**, and ye **shall return every man unto his family**" (Leviticus 25:1-4, 8-10; emphasis added).

So we see that Jubilee was a time for Israel to receive and celebrate Liberty, and "Restoration." It signified a time when Israel's inheritance would be restored. They were to be **reconnected to their lost family.** This means **persons once "lost" from their Israelite roots, would be restored again!**

This new information shows Daniel's seventy-week period in regard to the Restoring of the Kingdom should not be considered without its Jubilee years. That is, a **jubilee year should be added for every 49 years in the 490 year pattern.**

When the above three points, each supported by a significant number of scholars, are all brought together, they do indeed lead to the beginning of Israel's Restoration.

For when the ten corresponding Jubilee years are added to the 490 years, the actual figure would be 500 years. If 500 years are multiplied by the $3 \frac{1}{2}$ formula given by Daniel and John, the total is 1,750 years ($500 \times 3 \frac{1}{2} = 1,750$).

Israel's **final captivity began in 70 A.D.** This date is well known, for it is when the Roman armies captured Jerusalem, destroyed the city and the temple, and exported the bulk of its residents to other parts of the world. Thus began that final Israelite bondage spoken of by both Daniel and John.

- B. But in the distant future, Israel would be re-gathered, God's Kingdom restored among them, according to the time periods both Daniel and John gave.

70 A.D.
+1750 years
=1820 A.D. 1820 A.D. was the year God the Father and His son, Jesus the Christ appeared to Joseph Smith, the Latter-day prophet, in a Sacred Grove and thus ***began to restore Israel and His Latter-day Kingdom among them.***

The Significance of the Number Seventy

A final point we should make is *why* the Lord based these prophecies and His works

upon the number seventy (70). It is because that number is very meaningful, and supports the validity of all these prophecies.

The number seventy is consistently used in the scriptures to symbolize **the Gentile nations or all the nations of the world**. Both the Jews themselves and Early Christians understood this. "Seventy" was also used to represent the Gentile nations in "Jubilees" a Hebrew writing not contained in the Bible.

In John's "Revelation" the beast of unrighteous dominion, called Babylon, has seven heads with ten horns each bearing a crown, [equaling Seventy], and signifying the government of all the earth's kingdoms. **It is these kingdoms of the world which the Lord, as King of Kings, would come to replace!**

"Seventies" were called by Christ, and in the Latter-days to take the word of the Lord **to all of the nations** of the world.

From all these references we see the figure "seventy," and its multiples, represent the **Gentile kingdoms, the time of the power of the Gentile Kingdoms, and the dominion and time of all those kingdoms which are not "God's Kingdom." They would have dominion for a time, but after their time, Christ would eventually replace them with His own Kingdom, which would never be destroyed.**

Why God Multiplied 70

"Seventy -weeks [of years] are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression..." The Lord uses each time period to teach Israel the need for obedience. It was, after all, their disobedience which resulted in their captivity among the Gentiles. Seventy years was assigned to the first captivity due to its symbolism for the Gentile nations. But after seventy years Israel was to be restored as a people. Their past transgressions were forgiven and new hope offered. Israel was released from exile in Babylon after seventy years.

That time period was then multiplied to seventy sevens of years, or 490 years. It would be after this time that Christ would come and offer them freedom from **spiritual bondage**. This certainly would be time of a Great **Jubilee**, when Israel would be offered true spiritual Freedom from both Sin and Death.

However, most of Israel rejected Christ, and they were soon taken again into captivity. It was likely no accident that this final act of returning to bondage under the Gentiles occurred at **70 A.D.**

But this time, their bondage would last far longer than 70x7 years, but 3 ½ times that number! Why the multiplication? Likely, as in our own laws, **the degree of consequence for disobedience are multiplied** with each time of transgression.

Nebuchadnezzar's Dream is a Final Key

Many scholars have understood Daniel's 70 x 7 prophecy speaks of the coming of Christ's Kingdom in the Latter-days. But their efforts to make it reach have

failed. They have mostly failed for the following reason:

A great error arises from believing the time formula leads directly to Christ's Second Coming. Such efforts failed to connect Nebuchadnezzar's Dream and its prophecies **that God's Kingdom would begin with the pre-establishment of a physical church and kingdom, over which Christ would take rule when He comes. (Thus the prophecy of the kingdom beginning "small" and "without hands)."**

This and other of Gabriel's prophecies repeatedly show the four kingdoms which would conquer and rule over Israel are Babylon, Persia, Greece and Rome. It is after this last kingdom, during the time of ten new nations which arise out of it, (the time when all the modern nations has arisen), that the kingdom of God would be finally set up --- but only as a small stone, without hands. It would slowly roll forward, gathering into that Kingdom descendants of Israel and any who would covenant with Christ.

This would be the kingdom over which the returning Christ will take control at His coming.

The Time of the beginning of this Restoration of Israel and of Christ's new Kingdom among them was clearly revealed by the prophets to begin in 1820. And it did!

IX. (Daniel 11, 12): Daniel's final vision and promise

A. Here is the meat of this vision. And it ends gloriously!

“... Michael [or Adam shall] stand up... And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake... *And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever*” (Dan. 12:1-3).

(1) S.J. Barnett, ed., *Isaac Newton's Observations upon the Prophecies of Daniel and the Apocalypse of John* (Lewiston, NY: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1999 Reprint), p. 173.

(2) These findings about Jubilee are discussed most particularly in Devorah Dimant, "The Seventy Week Chronology (Daniel 9:24-27) in the Light of New Qumranic Texts," and in A.S. Van Der Woude, ed., *The Book of Daniel in the Light of New Findings* (Leuven, Belgium: Leuven University Press, 1993).