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# Origin and Goal of Western Civilization, Part 1

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Read the accompanying [Newsletter for March 2011](#)



**There is an essential truth which is vitally important to make the meaning of Bible prophecy and history intelligible. There is a central theme and a prime goal which has dominated the thinking of people within Western civilization since the time of Nebuchadnezzar in the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC. It is a truth that can help unlock an understanding of history and prophecy over the past 2,600 years.**

We will examine what the central goal of Western civilization has been, how it is very much in action today, and how it will find a complete fulfillment just prior to the second advent of Christ back to this earth. What was that goal? Simply this:

- (1) to bring in a one-world government that has political, economic, and religious unity among all the peoples of the world and
- (2) that the one true God of heaven and earth would be worshipped.

This may sound strange to state the goal that way, but these are exactly the concepts developed in the time of Nebuchadnezzar.<sup>1</sup> It took a little time for him and others who succeeded him to understand. This concept was first conceived as being essential in a practical way, with Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon.

To be sure, individuals long before had seen the benefits which could come from one-worldism, but there was no political power before the time of Nebuchadnezzar with the means or the desire to accomplish it. Assyria, among other nations, would have loved to have conquered the world and make slaves of everyone

<sup>1</sup> This name has two forms in the King James Version: Nebuchadnezzar and Nebuchadrezzar. His name may mean “O Nebo, protect your servant,” “Nebo his protector” or “Nebo protect the crown.” Nebo was a Babylonian and Assyrian god and idol of informing or foretelling, the god of literature and science, referred to only once in Isaiah 46:1. The term likely has connection to “nabi” which is the common Hebrew word for “prophet.” Mount Nebo was the vantage point where Moses viewed Israel’s inheritance of the land promised to them by YHWH. DWS

on earth, and bring in a one-world government that they themselves would control, ruling over all. But this is not what is meant by one-worldism. It is not the concept that Nebuchadnezzar and those who succeeded him finally arrived at.

Even when conquest of another nation occurs, if the people conquered do not want to adhere to what the conqueror orders, there will be disquietness, difficulty, and a chance, a potential for rebellion. The ancient Assyrians would have loved to control the entire ancient world, and I suppose the ancient Egyptians would have as well. Indeed, most nations or peoples in ancient times would have wanted to do that.

But that is not the means by which one-worldism was introduced to Nebuchadnezzar. At first, even Nebuchadnezzar thought the best way to have one world government was to simply conquer people and then coerce them to believe the ways he did and bring a type of unity in philosophy, economics, politics, and, of course, a new religion. Once Nebuchadnezzar learned lessons over a period of over 40 years about this new age beginning in his time, he tried to pass it on to his descendants, to Belshazzar, and to others.

The one-worldism that we are talking about here is something far different than that conceived of before in the ancient world. In actual fact, if you look at the time before the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC, most of the nations of the world had their own gods and their own type of religion.

The Assyrians, for example, worshipped various gods, but they had a prime god. The man Asshur was an ancient patriarch of theirs, one of their progenitors (Genesis 10:11, 22). He was worshipped as a god by the Assyrians.<sup>2</sup> They had various names for him as time went on, but the religion of the Assyrians was peculiar to themselves and they were very jealous of their religion.

They would not allow just anyone to worship their top gods, because their gods (so they thought), gave them power to conquer a large part of the Middle East. If other people would take up worship of their gods then perhaps they too could have access to that power and authority.

### *The Nations and their gods*

Most nations in the ancient world had their own separate gods. The Assyrians understood that the God of Israel was YHWH. They stated so in front of all Jerusalem (2 Kings 18:22, 25, 35, 19:10, 22–23; 2 Chronicles 32:11–12, 16–17; Isaiah 36:7, 10, 15, 18, 20). But the Assyrians did not think of YHWH as being the supreme God, but merely a local god. They thought that Asshur was the supreme god. So too, the Babylonians before Nebuchadnezzar recognized that there were various gods of the nations.<sup>3</sup>

The ancient Moabites and Ammonites, who were the children of Lot (nephew of Abraham in the 18<sup>th</sup> century BC), established two nations east of the Jordan River. Lot had a basic understanding of an Abrahamic type of faith in existence at that time. The Moabites and the Ammonites each recognized their own gods. The ancient god of the Moabites was Chemosh, then Milcom, and then others. The Ammonites had their gods. The Edomites (descendants of Esau) had their gods, but they had a tendency to look upon YHWH as having greater power than others, even while recognizing that YHWH was the God of the Israelites.<sup>4</sup>

The nation of Israel, after the time of Solomon, divided into two nations: Israel in the north with the ten tribes, and the three tribes in the south which had their capital at Jerusalem in Judea.<sup>5</sup> They all worshipped

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<sup>2</sup> See Dr. Martin's article "[The Secret of Ancient Religion Revealed – Part 1](#)" that demonstrates that the ancient peoples knew that most all of their gods were originally men and women who were made to become gods in the opinions of their descendants. While deification (becoming like God, like YHWH) is the ultimate goal of creation and salvation (1 John 3:2–3), Christ alone has been resurrected from the dead to spiritual life, declared as the Son of God, the firstfruits of mankind (Romans 1:4; 1 Corinthians 15:20–24). At present Christ alone has immortality (1 Timothy 6:16). Believers at this present time only have the promise of immortality by virtue of possessing God's gift of His Holy Spirit (Ephesians 1:13–14). "[The Secret of Ancient Religion Revealed – Part 2](#)" shows how the ancient myths arose in pagan cultures. DWS

<sup>3</sup> The Syrians believed that YHWH was a "god of the hills" and that He was weak in the valleys (1 Kings 20:23, 28). DWS

<sup>4</sup> Dr. Martin's article "[The Most Significant Gentile Nation in the Bible](#)" discusses the history and future of the Edomites. DWS

<sup>5</sup> Israel at Sinai originally covenanted with YHWH to worship Him and Him alone (Exodus 20:3–5, 34:14; Deuteronomy 5:7, 6:5, 12–15). Israel and Judah were judged because they did not worship YHWH exclusively. They sinned by worshipping gods of

YHWH. So the people of the ancient past looked upon the God of the Israelites as being YHWH, but each of the nations had their own gods.

### *The Example of Assyria*

When the Assyrians in the 8<sup>th</sup> century BC achieved a type of suzerainty over many of the nations of the Middle East by conquest and subjugation, they attributed their power and authority to their gods, to their deities. When they conquered the northern kingdom of Samaria, they believed that their gods had defeated the Israelite God YHWH. They did not really understand (or had forgotten) that YHWH was the God who came to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, and then led the children of Israel out of Egypt under Moses.

They also did not understand that He was the supreme God over all, the Creator, and that He represented the God of gods. They did not want to consider that to be the case because they looked upon their own gods, family gods, and national gods as being in power and authority over the other nations around the world who each had their own gods. They looked upon a multiplicity of gods and, although they had an idea that there may be a supreme god,<sup>6</sup> at the same time they considered their own national gods as being more important than the gods of other nations. When Assyria would conquer a nation, and this is made clear in the Bible, it was supposed that the Assyrian gods were conquering the gods of other nations. This was the philosophy that had developed at that time.

We read also at the end of the 7<sup>th</sup> century BC that YHWH called Jeremiah to be a special prophet. God gave him a special commission when he was about 17 years old. Note his commission to all the nations of the world at that time:

**“See, I have this day set you over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down [and] to build and to plant.”**

**• Jeremiah 1:10**

A new type of civilization was to be introduced to the world through Jeremiah. He accomplished the task absolutely. We find this revealed in the Scripture and even historians today realize that something very dramatic took place in the history of the world in the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC, and in the two centuries leading up to it, that absolutely transformed and revolutionized the way that people began to think about religion, economics, politics, and other matters.<sup>7</sup>

With the introduction of the man named Nebuchadnezzar, the Gentile King of Babylon, there began what historians call the Neo-Babylonian Empire which came on the scene at the very end of the 7<sup>th</sup> century BC and began to flourish powerfully at the beginning of the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC. Nebuchadnezzar conquered Judah, destroyed Jerusalem and the Temple, and took the Jews captive out of Israel to Babylon. Jeremiah prophesied they would be there for about 70 years. After that the Jews would be able to go back to Palestine

[continuing note from previous page]

other nations in addition to worshipping YHWH, their own God. This violated Israel’s covenant with Him. The three tribes in the south were Judah, Levi, and the small tribe of Benjamin, collectively called the kingdom of Judah after the leading tribe. Dr. Martin’s article “[The Tribe of Benjamin](#)” goes into the location of the southern tribes. The northern 10 tribes of Samaria were the remaining tribes. The tribe of Joseph increased to such great numbers that the division of Joseph into separate tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh (who are Joseph’s sons) was understood to have taken place. They lived in contiguous areas in western central Palestine, although half of Manasseh lived east of the Jordan River (Numbers 27:1). (**Note:** Ephraim and Manasseh are not the United States, Great Britain, or any other European nation.) DWS

<sup>6</sup> This is clear from the response and repentance of the people of Nineveh to YHWH’s message of warning to them by the prophet Jonah. See Jonah chapter 3. DWS

<sup>7</sup> See Dr. Martin’s article “[The Prophetic Birth of Our Civilization](#)” which explains Jeremiah’s commission in detail. More information on this subject can be found in his article “[The Basics of Old Testament History](#)” where Dr. Martin describes how the ancient civilizations were destroyed by seizing and destroying their histories, literature, traditions, economies, and religions, and how the new civilization was built up. The same would have happened to the literary works of Israel if they had not been preserved by Jeremiah and Daniel, later canonized by Ezra the priest after the Jews returned from Babylon. DWS

and rebuild the Temple, which they did. Nebuchadnezzar was the ruler God chose to originate the new civilization. We should not underestimate the power that God granted to Nebuchadnezzar. Daniel said that God made him the total master and ruler of the world:

**“You, O king, are a king of kings: for the God of heaven has given you 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 has he given into your hand, and has made you ruler over them all. ...”**

• *Daniel 2:37–38*

### *Nebuchadnezzar’s Dream and Daniel*

The Jews had to stay in Babylon for the required decades while the land of Israel and Judea remained virtually vacant of people. What this means is that Nebuchadnezzar becomes the head of a new system of civilization. The beginning of this system is recounted very well by Daniel because he was one of the first captives taken by Nebuchadnezzar to Babylon. He was a very young boy at the time, part of the royal seed of Judah, a descendant of King David. As a captive from Judah he was trained in the wisdom, knowledge, and language of the Chaldeans. He was then brought before Nebuchadnezzar.

In Daniel chapter 2 we read about this great image that Nebuchadnezzar saw in a dream. It had a head of gold, the upper breast part was of silver, and the middle was of brass and copper. Finally the legs were of iron and the feet were made up of 10 toes comprised of mixed iron and miry clay. Then Nebuchadnezzar saw a mountain. Out of that mountain a stone **“was cut out without hands”** (Daniel 2:34). It rolled down the slope of the mountain and struck the image on its toes. The image fell over. Nebuchadnezzar was deeply affected by the dream but he could not remember its contents.

Daniel told Nebuchadnezzar what he dreamed and then told him what the dream meant. When that image fell over, the stone cut out of the mountain began to pummel the gold, silver, brass, iron, and the clay into powder. The wind came and blew the powder away into oblivion. The stone itself became a mighty mountain representing the Kingdom of God that would occur at the end of the age.

We have not even come to that period yet today. We are getting close to the time of the 10 toes, but the image itself was described by Daniel as having a future reality to it. By the interpretation given to Daniel, the image showed consecutive powers that would arise from the time of Nebuchadnezzar until the Kingdom of God would be finally established on earth. Daniel said that Nebuchadnezzar was that head of gold (Daniel 2:38). He was to be succeeded by a kingdom inferior to his, and it was represented by the silver portion. Then would come another inferior kingdom represented by brass or copper, and carrying on down to the iron, then iron mixed with miry clay, and finally the Kingdom of God coming on this earth.

Nebuchadnezzar needed to learn about becoming this head of gold. The prophet Jeremiah was commissioned to tear down and also to build up, but Jeremiah said that YHWH called Nebuchadnezzar the King of Babylon, a Gentile king, **“My servant”** (Jeremiah 25:9, 27:6, 43:10). He was the builder.

God is capable of working in the minds of men no matter if they are Israelites or Gentiles. This Nebuchadnezzar was a Babylonian king of the first world-ruling empire, but God used him to bring in a brand new system of government. It was to be philosophically different to what had been there prior, economically as well, politically, and certainly religiously different, because this is the most important.

### *God Initiates through Nebuchadnezzar*

The element of religion is the most significant development that took place at that time. This is because Nebuchadnezzar through a series of events over a 40 year period finally came to realize that YHWH was not a local god of the Israelites or the Jews alone, but He represented the God of gods, the Elohim of the family of Elohim, with the Father being YHWH. Nebuchadnezzar had to learn who that God was. The Babylonian gods took on a very inferior position as far as Nebuchadnezzar was concerned, after a series of events took place back in the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC that convinced Nebuchadnezzar that he needed to change his attitude,

change his mind, and bring in a system that would in fact result in a one-world government under the auspices of the one true God.

Believe it or not, that was what was in Nebuchadnezzar's mind at the end of his life. When Jeremiah said (and he was the one commissioned to do all this) that Nebuchadnezzar was the servant of YHWH to bring this in, and when Daniel said Nebuchadnezzar was the head of gold, that meant that YHWH Himself had picked Nebuchadnezzar out to introduce this new type of civilization which would last until the Messiah and the inauguration of His messianic kingdom. That has not yet happened.

- The design and plan of God regarding the Babylonian image of Daniel chapter 2 began at the time of Nebuchadnezzar. It will continue until it ends at the emergence of the Kingdom of God.
- Some 6 centuries after this design and plan of God began, the **“Messiah the Prince”** came on the earth. This is described in the 9<sup>th</sup> chapter of Daniel. This prophesied Messiah provided salvation to all mankind through His death and resurrection (1 Corinthians 15:20–24).
- Still later the Messiah will return with all power and glory at the very end of this Babylonian system, when at that time would be established that kingdom on earth that all the Jews, Israelites, and others had been looking forward to as described in the prophets.

We have not yet come to the 10 toes period. We are very near to it. At present we are still within this time frame known as the Babylonian period.

Yes, Nebuchadnezzar had some things he had to learn. This new concept is that of one-worldism, requiring a new type of philosophical and religious belief that we might call Western civilization today. The reason I say Western civilization is because the entire world was influenced, including the Indus Valley or the Yellow River in China. We have evidence to show that much of the Babylonian teachings of religion spread throughout the entirety of this world, even into North and South America. There is evidence to show a contiguous type of universal belief on some of the fundamental teachings that stem out of the Neo-Babylonian Empire in the time of Nebuchadnezzar the Great.

According to the prophecy of Nebuchadnezzar's dream, his kingdom was to be succeeded by an inferior one. We find that is the Medo-Persian Empire. Then the third kingdom of brass or copper was to be identified with a Western kingdom which turned out to be that of Alexander the Great and his successors. The main influence of this Babylonian image spread from Babylon in the Mesopotamian area and went toward the west. Once it got into the west with Alexander the Great, it stayed there for all practical purposes. The centers of civilization from then on depicting this image which was to be successive on down to the coming of the Kingdom of God on earth, found themselves resident at later times in Europe, and finally throughout what we call Western civilization today.<sup>8</sup>

## **One World**

At the end of the age this image will have a worldwide influence. All systems that developed from the time of Nebuchadnezzar on down to our time today would finally coalesce into a unified group of nations that will represent one-worldism at its apex.

That one-worldism would be controlled by a man who would have the number 666 upon him. Six is the number of man. When you have three 6s, it means man at his apex. That number is not necessarily one which is ominous, it simply means that it represents man at the highest form of glory. That will come in the years just in advance of us when these 10 toes, these 10 nations, these 10 kings, are united together to control the entirety of this world — and that truly means all the world. They will have a headquarters which

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<sup>8</sup> To read how the Babylonian religion moved west from Babylon, to the lands bordering the eastern Mediterranean Sea to Rome and beyond, see Dr. Martin's book *The People That History Forgot: The Mysterious People Who Originated the World's Religions* (Portland, OR: ASK Publications, 1993/2003). It is available online at <http://www.askelm.com/people/index.asp>. DWS

will be called **“Mystery Babylon the Great”** (Revelation 17:5). That is when Babylon will finally come into its own at the end of the age, and we are fast approaching that period right now.

When Daniel began to interpret what the image was going to be, he showed that the influence of the image would be moving westward by the 3<sup>rd</sup> kingdom. That portion of the image began with Alexander the Great, the Macedonian from north of Greece, who conquered the East. He was going to conquer the West as well if he had not died at just over 30 years old. It was in his mind to do so.

The image’s influence moved in the West toward Europe. From Europe, the image’s influence also embraced Egypt, Palestine (and Jerusalem). By the New Testament period we find that many people began to accept the teachings of the God of the Bible.

### ***Nebuchadnezzar’s Education***

The head of gold of the image was Nebuchadnezzar: **“You are the head of gold”** (Daniel 2:38). This needs to be properly understood if we will know what this Babylonian system is all about. Over about a 40 year period Nebuchadnezzar had some lessons to learn. What he finally had to learn was who the God of gods and the Lord of lords was.

Nebuchadnezzar was finally able to determine by a number of miraculous events that took place in the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC — events involving him directly — that YHWH was not merely a local god of the Israelites, but He was the supreme God. Indeed, He was the only God; there were no others. This is what Nebuchadnezzar at the end of his life came to fully realize.

Major events took place in Nebuchadnezzar’s life, experiences he had in association with Daniel, that all helped Nebuchadnezzar learn who God was. He finally learned his lesson. Near the end of his life when he really became the head of gold, he told people they had better worship the true God, who was YHWH the God of Israel, but also the God of the whole world.

This is what Nebuchadnezzar had to learn. It says in the prophecies of Jeremiah that a new civilization was to be introduced to this world, and Jeremiah was the chief prophet to do that, backed up by the dreams given to Nebuchadnezzar and interpreted by Daniel about the head of gold and these other parts given in the 2<sup>nd</sup> chapter of Daniel. This all centered upon Nebuchadnezzar and the Neo-Babylonian Empire being the vehicle by which a new type of philosophical and religious beliefs would be perpetrated throughout the entirety of this world. [Daniel knew Jeremiah’s prophecies, see Daniel 9:2.]

What is not comprehended by many people today is that the main basis of that Babylonian image and its teachings is that there is one God and that there should be one world, one religion, one government, one political force on this earth. Since the time Nebuchadnezzar learned these lessons, the leaders of Western civilization in succeeding ages had in their consciousness (with variations, because they also had to grow in knowledge) to put this concept into effect. The main thing that has prevailed in the march of history from Nebuchadnezzar onward was the trend toward believing that there was only one God.<sup>9</sup>

Nebuchadnezzar learned this before the end of his life. He gave that information as a legacy, you might say, to the silver portion, and then the silver portion gave to the brass portion, and the brass portion to the iron, and the iron to the mixed iron and miry clay — the legacy was that there was only one God. Do you know who that one God was? Nebuchadnezzar found out and so did those who succeeded him.

That God was not just the God of the Jews, He was the God of the universe. He was the God who came to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He was the God who selected Israel to be in covenant relationship with Him. He was the God who finally brought in a Messiah, the Christ, and brought Him into the world at a particular time for a particular reason. That Messiah is coming back to this earth in a few years ahead of us.

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<sup>9</sup> I know that a multiplicity of gods were believed in after Nebuchadnezzar. The Egyptians had them galore. In the republican period of Rome they had many gods. By the time that Christ came on the earth, the time of the emperors Augustus and Tiberius, most of the ancient Roman gods had gone by the wayside. They were beginning to understand that there was one central God, one primary God. The nations were beginning to realize that although it took time for them to understand these things. *ELM*

Gentiles around the world, particularly in the areas of Western civilization, came to understand these things, and this is what Nebuchadnezzar was able to leave to the world. This is what Cyrus was able to leave. This is what Darius of the Persians was able to leave. Believe it or not, this is what Alexander the Great was able to leave to the world.

They had many variations of understanding on these matters. They did not know how to put it together. They did realize from the time of the Neo-Babylonian Empire, from the time Nebuchadnezzar became the head of gold, that there was one God and His name was YHWH. They knew who YHWH was. They called Him the God of the Jews, but they recognized He was not simply the God of the Jews. They needed to learn He was the God of the universe.

This concept, this understanding, has not been realized by most scholars today, and that goes for theologians and preachers as well. Most do not know that the concept of one-worldism was introduced when YHWH Himself commissioned Jeremiah to change civilization from one that existed since the time of the flood of Noah. All those cultures and civilizations were to be wiped out and only one was to remain, and that was to be the culture, civilization, and commerce of Babylon.

Jeremiah fulfilled his commission, and Daniel interpreted Nebuchadnezzar's dream that he was the head of gold, and that a new civilization was coming on the scene. One-worldism began back then. Since that beginning, it has been God's intention for civilization to move toward that goal for the past 2500+ years.

### *One World Achieved*

Soon after the beginning of the Neo-Babylonian Empire, the people of that empire were told by proclamations from King Nebuchadnezzar himself that there was only one God, and they already knew who that God was. He was the God who had been in covenant relationship with the Jews and the Israelites. From then on people, step by step in a variety of ways, began to modify their ancient religious beliefs to be able to bring in this one-worldism with one God being over all — one political unity on earth made up of men under the auspices of the Almighty God.

You might say that sounds beautiful and wonderful. It absolutely is that. It is the very thing that this world needs. This world will attain it in a few years ahead of us when Christ Jesus comes back to this world and establishes the Kingdom of YHWH in this world. It is beautiful if the One ordained to be the king, Christ Jesus, is sitting in the throne. But people since the time of Nebuchadnezzar have wanted to use the power of YHWH, wanted to use the authority of the Old Testament Scriptures, as they were finally canonized by Ezra the priest in the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC, to develop their idea of one-worldism. They do not want Christ Jesus, the one who has been ordained to rule over the world, they have not wanted Him to do it.

At the end of the age a man will come on the scene. The apostle Paul calls him **“the man of sin”** and **“the son of perdition”** (2 Thessalonians 2:3, and also John 17:12). In the Book of Revelation he is known as **“the beast”** (Revelation 17:8, 11). At that time the world will want him to rule them, as he poses as Christ. There are two beasts mentioned in the 13<sup>th</sup> chapter of the Book of Revelation. One of them is the political beast. He is supposed to be the king. The second is a beast that looked like a lamb. He will also look like a prophet. He will support the first beast.

Those events in the 13<sup>th</sup> chapter of Revelation are about how all the world will finally come to one-worldism, with one religion, and one basic philosophy, and one political system. This will occur in all areas of this world, and it will transpire just prior to the second coming of the true king back to this earth, Christ Jesus. It will be a glorious time for mankind.

Two days before He was crucified up on the Mount of Olives, Christ Jesus took His disciples aside and began to tell them consecutively what would be happening in the world until He would finally arrive back on this earth (Matthew chapter 24; Mark chapter 13; Luke chapter 21). He said there would be a time when false Christs would come, and one in particular. He would sit in the Temple of God, calling himself God, and the people of this world would begin to believe him. Revelation chapter 13 also says that all the world

will worship this man who will be this false christ, the antichrist, who will arise at the end of the age, just as Christ foretold on the Mount of Olives.

Jesus said if you did not know better, even you disciples would be susceptible to believing that this antichrist, who will come near the end of the age, this 666 man, was Christ Himself. Jesus said: **“Behold, I have told you before [i.e., beforehand]”** (Matthew 24:25). And even the apostles, when they would look at what will develop at the end of the age which we are fast approaching now, they would think that the world system was indeed the messianic system prophesied by God the Father to occur on this earth.

### ***The Scripture and World Rule***

The first world ruler to come will not be the proper one. He will be the apex of the Babylonian system started at the time of Nebuchadnezzar, continued through the Medo-Persian period, down to Alexander the Great and his successors, then into the Roman period, the Mohammedan period, and into our modern period with Britain and America, the Soviet Union [now Russia], and China today. This kingdom that is coming shall use all of the evidences of the Scripture to bring in a one-worldism. Yes, the antichrist will actually use the Scripture to substantiate his right to rule.

Back then Nebuchadnezzar had to learn who the God of gods was, who the Most High was through miraculous dreams and experiences. It took a 40 year period for him to learn that lesson, but he finally understood. Today the world can access the Holy Scriptures to learn who the God of gods is.

This is most important for us to understand:

- **The origin of Western civilization came in the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC with the head of gold, Nebuchadnezzar.**
- **The goal of Western civilization from that time forward was to have one-worldism, meaning one world government and one world religion.**
- **The one true God will be the head of the one-world government and religion.**

If the true God were to be the head of that government (and eventually He will be), that would be beautiful and wonderful, but God has ordained that the antichrist must come first as a wicked world ruler.

Since the time the Scriptures were ordained in the Old Testament, and since the New Testament was ordained in the time of the apostles Paul, Peter, and John in the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD, we have the complete biblical revelation in front of us. We have the Word of God so clear and plain, backed up by many miracles, especially the death and resurrection of Christ, which should be recognized by anyone who will pay attention to it.

We have had Christ Jesus in our midst since the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD, by virtue of the written Word of God being available to us today. Do you know what people have done in this entire Babylonian period? They have tried to adopt that biblical revelation. They have also tried to adopt the God of the biblical revelation to be their own God to bring in a one world, and to bring it under His auspices, but to do so through their methods, through their ways, through their ideas and philosophies, and not properly in the way of the Old or New Testaments.

- The thing that made Nebuchadnezzar to be the head of gold and to bring in a new civilization of one-worldism, was that he finally found out that you had better worship the true God.<sup>10</sup> Once Nebuchad-

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<sup>10</sup> Since that time, that is the way it has been in Western civilization. Go to Europe today, to South America, Central America, or here in North America, most people in these areas of Western civilization accept in one way or another the biblical revelation, or what we might call Christendom or Christianity today. Most people recognize it as a powerful force in the world, and give at least lip service that the Bible is the Word of God. The Bible has been misused throughout the time from Nebuchadnezzar to our day. This powerful work will be misused even more in the next few years in advance of us.



nezzar finally learned who God was, he died a few months later, unable to put into action what Daniel could have told him to do.

- The next kingdom to come on the scene was that of the Medes. It only lasted a few years, and they were unable to put the knowledge of the one true God into action.
- Then along came Cyrus of the Persians. He was a noble man; there is no question about that. It is even prophesied in Scripture that he was to be a shepherd and an anointed man of YHWH (Isaiah 44:28–45:1), but he was unable to put everything into operation back at that time, because he died before long as well. He did not have all of the essential tools to be able to know how to do it.<sup>11</sup>

Today in what we call modern Christianity, the Bible is used all the time. Believers know who the God of gods is. Most of them know who Christ Jesus is. I am talking about the intellectual people, and certainly the preachers and theologians. But do they go by what the biblical revelation says? The answer is, they want to use the Bible; they want to use the God of the Bible, who is YHWH; they want to use His authority, His power, but they want to make slaves of people through that use.

This is where the civilization that has existed since the time of Nebuchadnezzar to our time today, until the second coming of Christ, differs remarkably from those civilizations that were on earth before the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC. Before that time the gods were mainly local. Each nation had their own gods, usually a multiplicity of gods. But with Nebuchadnezzar something changed. This was when one-worldism came in. Finally, at the end of Nebuchadnezzar's life, he tried in his last few months to bring in a true religion as he saw it, under the guidance of Daniel. Nebuchadnezzar died soon after, and then Daniel died. It was not the time to bring the one world in at that time.

Western civilization had its origin with Nebuchadnezzar, but the goal since then has been to establish a one-world government on this earth. That government would have the same political powers governing it, the same economic principles motivating it, the same philosophical ideals would be in the minds of people everywhere, and certainly there would be one religion with the true God of heaven and earth (as they conceive Him) being worshipped. That is what world leaders have been after (even today). That is what Nebuchadnezzar wanted to do. That is what Darius wanted to do. That is what Cyrus wanted to do. That is what Alexander the Great wanted to do.<sup>12</sup>

Even some of the later emperors of Rome and kings wanted to do it as well. Certainly by the 4<sup>th</sup> century AD the Roman government adopted wholesale the Christian faith and brought it into a type of marriage relationship with the imperial forces of Rome. Christianity was the official religion and from that time we have Christendom spreading all over Europe and northern Africa, to the place today that Christianity, as we call it, is dominant in the world. But it is part of this Babylonian image, according to the Scripture.

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[continuing note from previous page]

I have often said I have never been upset with Christ Jesus that I really know of, but I have wondered sometimes about what He has allowed to happen to me or to you. I have wondered on such things, but I never really criticized Him too much for things that happen in this world. But I have criticized lots of people who have come into my life claiming to be Christ's administrators, or claiming to be Christ's apostles or His prophets. They have affected me tremendously. Perhaps you have thought the same. *ELM*

<sup>11</sup> Christ Jesus had not yet come on the earth (which was to happen some 500+ years later), to give us the fullness of the teaching of what this Kingdom will be, both the heavenly component and the earthly component of the Kingdom that will exist once Christ Jesus comes back to this earth. Cyrus and others did not have all of the tools that were necessary. *ELM*

<sup>12</sup> With mankind unified (in everything but language, but even there English will be the *lingua franca*) just before the time of Christ's second coming, the situation will be as described in Genesis 11:6 at Babel:

**"And YHWH said, 'Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do.'"**

DWS

## *The Rise of Islam*

After the Romans in the 4<sup>th</sup> century AD married the Roman Empire with the Church, three centuries later we see Muhammad coming along, the founder of one of the three great religions that we have on earth today. Muhammadism is called Islam. Muhammad, although he came from Arabic stock at Mecca and Medina in Arabia, east of the Red Sea, what he tried to do was to get rid of all the idols of his ancient ancestry, the Arabs. He wanted to bring in a religion of one God. That is exactly what Nebuchadnezzar said should be done, and what others were trying to develop. That is what Muhammad did in the 7<sup>th</sup> century AD. With all of its various sects and divisions at the present time, Islam represents a major force in world politics today.<sup>13</sup>

Who do Muslims worship? In the Arabic they worship Allah. That is nothing more than Eloah, or El, or Elohim, or as they would say by extension, the YHWH of the Old Testament. The Islamic people represent Christ as a prophet. They do not look upon Him as divine, as the Bible says certainly He was. He is secondary in importance to Muhammad.<sup>14</sup>

Islam controls a vast number of peoples today throughout Africa, the Middle East and into Bangladesh, Pakistan, Burma, Indonesia, and even into Mindanao in the Philippines. There are tremendous forces today which acknowledge Muhammad, with Allah as the only God to worship. In several Islamic countries today governmental and political systems (though there are divisions) use as a basic concept the Koran, which is a written revelation (they claim) coming from the one God.

In the world today in Western civilization we mostly have been trained to accept one God. Christ Jesus is a part of that and the Holy Spirit is part of that (so they say), they have the Holy Scripture in front of them. Most all Christendom is based upon the biblical revelation and a concept of one God. That is what Nebuchadnezzar had to finally find out.

## *Nebuchadnezzar's Dream and Image*

Since this topic is on the origin as well as the goal of Western civilization, let us look at the beginning in Daniel chapter 2 when Daniel interprets the dream for the Babylonian king. Nebuchadnezzar's dream probably occurred in his 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> year rule, before Judah was destroyed. The Temple was still in existence and Jerusalem still intact. We do not know exactly the year, but it has been estimated sometime around 603 BC. After his dream was interpreted by Daniel, here is what the text says:

**“Then the king Nebuchadnezzar fell upon his face, and worshipped Daniel, and commanded that they should offer an oblation and sweet odors unto him. The king answered unto Daniel, and said,**

**'Of a truth it is, that your God is a God of gods, and a Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, seeing you could reveal this secret.'**

**Then the king made Daniel a great man, and gave him many great gifts, and made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon, and chief of the governors over all the wise men of Babylon. Then Daniel requested of the king, and he set Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, over the affairs of the province of Babylon: but Daniel sat in the gate of the king.”**

• ***Daniel 2:46–49***

Daniel becomes a very important government official in Babylon along with his three friends Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. But notice the underlined verse 47. The first thing Nebuchadnezzar had to learn in

<sup>13</sup> See Dr. Martin's excellent background article "[Special Historical Report on Islam](#)." DWS

<sup>14</sup> Muhammad, they claim, was able to go to heaven on his white horse called Beka. Supposedly he left from Jerusalem and went to heaven. He does not have to come back to earth because of the power that he has with God in heaven. Christ Jesus is inferior to Muhammad, as they look at it, because He has to come back to this earth and Muhammad does not. I realize that this is a superficial way of looking at it, but at the same time that is the theology of Islam. ELM

the 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> year of his reign (and he did not fully understand this all at once) was that the interpretation of this dream showed him that something was powerful with Daniel. Verse 47 again:

**“Of a truth it is, that your God is a [the] God of gods, and a Lord of kings [including Nebuchadnezzar himself], and a revealer of secrets, seeing you could reveal this secret.”**

Remember that statement. Nebuchadnezzar needed to be reminded later who was Supreme.

Later, in Daniel chapter 3 we have another incident. Step by step Nebuchadnezzar is coming to realize that the Babylonian system of government established before, or was in existence in the old Assyrian time before that, was not sufficient. There were many deficiencies to it.

**“Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold, whose height was threescore [60] cubits, and the breadth thereof six cubits: he set it up in the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon.”**

• **Daniel 3:1**

Dr. Bullinger in his book *Number in Scripture*, on page 285, says that if you take the Hebrew letters, and each of the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet has a numerical value to them, and if you add up all the letters of Daniel 3:1, it comes to a very interesting number: 4,662. That of itself may not seem significant, but that number is exactly 7 x 666. That is most interesting. The image was 60 cubits high so you get 10 x 6 there. The breadth of it is 6 cubits. We have the number 6 coming out.

Nebuchadnezzar was the head of gold in his dream (Daniel 2:38). At the end of the age there will come a king who will rule over the entire world, just like Nebuchadnezzar. He has a number on him as well. The number is 666 (Revelation 13:18) which represents the **“man of sin”** (better **“man of lawlessness,”** 2 Thessalonians 2:3), the beast who will live at the very end of the age who Christ Jesus will destroy with the brightness of His coming (2 Thessalonians 2:8).

At the very time that Nebuchadnezzar is becoming the head of gold (beginning the system we have in existence today), in Daniel 3:1 the number 6 coming out prominently. It seems to identify this system as a system of man.

The Babylonian system has the number 6 all over it. These numbers have importance to them and we should pay close attention to them because they are identifying signs to help us understand what was going on in those days.

In Daniel 3:1 this image that Nebuchadnezzar made was 3-score cubits high, 6 x 10, and its breadth was 6 cubits, and he set it up in the plains of Dura in the province of Babylon. He did this after his experience of the dream of the image, with himself as the head of gold, when he began to understand a bit more about God, that there was one God. He readily acknowledged at that time that Daniel’s God was God (Daniel 2:47). Yet Nebuchadnezzar did not quite have adequate understanding yet.

So Nebuchadnezzar sets up his image:

**“Then an herald cried aloud, ‘To you it is commanded, O people, nations, and languages, That at what time you hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of music, you fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king has set up: And whoso falls not down and worships shall the same hour be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace.’”**

• **Daniel 3:4–6**

It says in verse 7 that this went out to all nations and peoples and languages in the province of Babylon. The image was set up but the three friends of Daniel: Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego did not bow down to that image. They were caught and put into the fiery furnace. Nebuchadnezzar watched them go in. Remember, it had been heated seven times more than usual (Daniel 3:19). What happened? They came out, alive, without their hair being singed. Nebuchadnezzar saw someone else in there with them who was protecting them.

This was another experience teaching Nebuchadnezzar who God really was, and that he had to get rid of the old Babylonian system that existed up to this time:

**“Then Nebuchadnezzar spoke, and said, ‘Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who has sent his angel, and delivered his servants that trusted in him, and have changed the king’s word, and yielded their bodies, that they might not serve nor worship any god, except their own God.’”**

• *Daniel 3:28*

Notice what Nebuchadnezzar says. Here he is the head of gold. He is beginning to learn what to do and he establishes something to show who the God of gods really is and where the power really rests as far as the Deity is concerned.

**“Therefore I make a decree, That every people, nation, and language, which speak any thing amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made a dunghill: because there is no other God that can deliver after this sort.’ Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, in the province of Babylon.”**

• *Daniel 3:29–30*

This is a second incident by which Nebuchadnezzar is learning much more than what he knew before.

### ***Nebuchadnezzar’s Proclamation of Daniel Chapter 4***

[*By David Sielaff*] All the words of Daniel chapter 4 are from King Nebuchadnezzar. They are the words of a public proclamation by the king himself telling about a humbling experience that happened to him when he was at the pinnacle of his power as king. The episode was so profound that Nebuchadnezzar forgot any personal humiliation and with proper humility thought it “good” to tell all his subjects in all the world what happened from his point of view. Note who this lengthy proclamation went to:

**“Nebuchadnezzar the king, unto all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth; Peace be multiplied unto you. I thought it good to show the signs and wonders that the high God has wrought toward me. How great are his signs! and how mighty are his wonders! his kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and his dominion is from generation to generation.”**

• *Daniel 4:1–3*

Nebuchadnezzar expresses justifiable amazement and awe of his experience. He gives **“the high God”** great praise, even while he submits and subjects himself to the lordship of that same God. He does so again when he concludes his proclamation at the end of chapter 4.

[*Back to Dr. Martin’s text*] This entire episode began with another dream: **“I Nebuchadnezzar was at rest in mine house, and flourishing in my palace: I saw a dream which made me afraid, ...”** (Daniel 4:4–5). He dreams of a great tree. This tree spreads out all over the world, but he does not know how to interpret the dream. He again calls upon Daniel to help him. Daniel explains that the king himself was to be the tree. The tree was to be cut down and **“seven times”** were to pass over him in that cut-down condition. It was finally interpreted that the seven times meant 7 years. It started being fulfilled almost immediately:

**“At the end of twelve months he walked in the palace of the kingdom of Babylon. The king spoke, and said, ‘Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honor of my majesty?’”**

**While the word was in the king’s mouth, there fell a voice from heaven, saying, ‘O king Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is spoken; The kingdom is departed from you. And they shall drive you from men, and your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field: they shall make you to eat grass as oxen, and seven times shall pass over you, until you know that the most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomsoever he will.’”**

• **Daniel 4:29–32**

The great tree that he saw and the great band to be put around its trunk were to last for seven times, which means for 7 years. That very judgment was applied to Nebuchadnezzar. For seven years he went around eating grass like oxen and the wild beasts. At the end of that period Nebuchadnezzar was given back a man's heart:

**“And at the end of the days [the 7 years] I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the most High, and I praised and honored him that lives for ever [Aramaic, *alam*, “for the age”], whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation: And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he does according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, ‘What are You doing?’**

**At the same time my reason returned unto me; and for the glory of my kingdom, mine honor and brightness [also] returned unto me; and my counselors and my lords sought unto me; and I was established in my kingdom, and excellent majesty was added unto me [by the most High].**

• **Daniel 4:34–36**

This was when he really became the head of gold. He learned some lessons.

**“Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honor the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment: and those that walk in pride he is able to abase.”**

• **Daniel 4:37**

This last episode occurred very near the end of Nebuchadnezzar's life so far as we have an account in Daniel. It is most interesting that step by step Nebuchadnezzar begins to realize that a new age was coming. Now we will not have a multiplicity of gods everywhere, but there is only one God. By the end of his life Nebuchadnezzar understood that. Nebuchadnezzar, the king of all the known world (and God's servant), said it was so. He passed that information on to his successors, and they should have realized it.

### ***Belshazzar Learns about YHWH***

In Daniel chapter 5 Nebuchadnezzar's son, Belshazzar, has a great feast. By this time Nebuchadnezzar is dead. For the feast they take out the gold and silver vessels which were from the Temple at Jerusalem and they have a great party, drinking in jest out of these Jerusalem Temple vessels of gold (Daniel 5:1–3).

**“They drank wine, and praised the gods of gold, and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone. In the same hour came forth fingers of a man's hand, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaister of the wall of the king's palace: and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote.”**

• **Daniel 5:4–5**

Belshazzar did not know what it all meant. He asked the Chaldean astrologers and the wise men of Babylon to explain. They could not do so. They called in Daniel and he was able to explain what it meant. The hand had written on the wall: **“MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN”** (Daniel 5:25). It was a cipher that explained how the kingdom of Belshazzar was to be taken from him and given over to the Medes and Persians to begin the silver portion of Nebuchadnezzar's dream image of Daniel chapter 2.

**“Then commanded Belshazzar, and they clothed Daniel with scarlet, and put a chain of gold about his neck, and made a proclamation concerning him, that he should be the third ruler in the kingdom. In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain.”**

• **Daniel 5:29–30**

After Daniel's promotion, Belshazzar was soon killed by Medo-Persian invaders. The reason that all this was bad as far as Belshazzar was concerned was because Daniel made it quite clear that Belshazzar had

been told by Nebuchadnezzar the truth of who the Almighty God was. He knew clearly that it was YHWH who had His Temple formerly in Jerusalem. Daniel said to Belshazzar:

**“Oh you king, the most high God gave Nebuchadnezzar your father a kingdom, and majesty, and glory, and honor: And for the majesty that he [God] gave him, all people, nations, and languages, trembled and feared before him: whom he would he slew; and whom he would he kept alive; and whom he would he set up; and whom he would he put down.**

**... till he [Nebuchadnezzar] knew that the most high God ruled in the kingdom of men, and that he appoints over it whomsoever he will. And you his son, O Belshazzar, have not humbled your heart, though you knew all this ...”**

• *Daniel 5:18–19, 21–22*

Nebuchadnezzar knew about the most high God and Belshazzar knew also (“**you knew all this ...**”), but Belshazzar was proud and not humbled by that knowledge. This is the history of what happened in the first phases of the Babylonian image with Nebuchadnezzar as the head of gold. It seems that they learn lessons and try to apply some truth near the end of their lives, but when they die and someone else comes on the scene, they understand the principles, but do not put them into action. In the case of Belshazzar, he was slain the very night as it was prophesied.

### **Conclusion** [by Ernest Martin, 1995]

So, what was the one primary factor that changed the thinking of people from the time of the head of gold on to our time today? Among intellectuals and professional peoples (even in Gentile societies) it was becoming evident that there was really only ONE GOD, and if they had listened to Nebuchadnezzar, it was none other than YHWH, the God of Daniel and his three friends.

Note the consequence of this concept. Once the true God can be determined (as Nebuchadnezzar did), then the next step can be taken: ONE RELIGION throughout the whole world.<sup>15</sup> And if one religion, then there also ought to be one political system, one type of philosophical belief, one set of economic standards in a word, one society for people everywhere in the earth. This recognition gave the Gentile king Nebuchadnezzar the feeling that there should be a one world society. It was time to forget the various religions and political systems of the nations that had developed over the centuries, and which had caused wars and upset conditions everywhere, and concentrate on creating one world in which all humanity would live in peace and harmony with one another. In a word, ecumenicalism was inaugurated.

From that time forward, the general concept of leaders throughout the various phases of the Babylonian image was to get people to come under the auspices of a one world government, a one world society and a one world religion. And note this point. It is significant that though Nebuchadnezzar came to realize that the only God was YHWH, it does not mean, however, that Nebuchadnezzar became a true worshipper of YHWH in the sense of practicing His precepts like Daniel and other righteous Jews did. Not at all! Nebuchadnezzar just came to realize that there was one God who ruled in the kingdom of men and that he retained his political position and power as a result of the decrees from that one God. There is no evidence that Nebuchadnezzar ever became a truly converted individual. And the same goes for his successors. But the understanding that there was really only one God signified there ought to be one united religious belief for all people on earth.

Ernest L. Martin, 1986, 1995

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<sup>15</sup> The example of the Roman Emperor Constantine in the 4<sup>th</sup> century AD is useful for illustration. Constantine declared that financial support for pagan temples would be diminished while financial support for building churches and salaries for administering congregations would be increased. Eventually only Christianity would be supported and Christianity became the official religion of the Roman Empire, while pagan religions were tolerated. With political and financial support going toward Christian administration, politically astute people converted to Christianity so they could participate and advance in the hierarchy of the imperial government. DWS

**Editor's Note:** This topic will continue in Part 2 of "The Origin and Goal of Western Civilization."