



Identification of the “People” & the “Prince,” Dan 9:26b; Titus & the Siege of Jerusalem; The Antichrist; Nebuchadnezzar’s Dream, Dan 2:31-36

Encyclopaedia Britannica, 15th ed. S.v. “Zealots”:

Zealots. A Jewish sect noted for its uncompromising opposition to pagan Rome and the polytheism it professed. The Zealots were an aggressive political party whose concern for the national and religious life of the Jewish people led them to despise even Jews who sought peace and conciliation with the Roman authorities.

Extremists among the Zealots turned to terrorism and assassination and became known as Sicarii \ se-ca' ri-i \. They frequented public places with hidden daggers to strike down persons friendly to Rome. In the first revolt against Rome (AD 66-70) the Zealots played a leading role, and at Masada in 73 they committed suicide rather than surrender the fortress.

34. An historical account of the Roman campaign against Jerusalem is provided by:

Schaff, Philip. “Apostolic Christianity.” Vol. 1 of History of the Christian Church. (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1910), 393-401:

Under the governors, Felix, Festus, Albinus \ al-bī' nus \, and Florus, moral corruption and the dissolution of all social ties, but at the same time the oppressiveness of the Roman yoke, increased every year. After the accession of Felix, assassins, called Sicarians (\se-ca' re-ans\, from *sica*, a dagger), armed with daggers and endangering safety in city and country, roamed over Palestine. (pp. 393-94)

In the month of May, A.D. 66 an organized rebellion broke out against the Romans. The ferocious party of the Zealots (Sicarians) had all the fire and energy which religious and patriotic fanaticism could inspire. They gained the ascendancy in the progress of the war, took forcible possession of the city and the temple and introduced a reign of terror. They kept up the Messianic expectations of the people and hailed every step towards destruction as a step towards deliverance. The Romans recognized the Messiah in Vespasian \ ve-spā' zhēan \ and Titus.

To defy Rome in that age, without a single ally, was to defy the world in arms; but religious fanaticism, blinded the Jews against the inevitable failure of this mad and desperate revolt. (p. 394)

The emperor Nero sent his most famous general, Vespasian, with a large force to Palestine. Vespasian opened the campaign in the year 67 from the Syrian port-town, Ptolemais \ ta-le-mā' us \, and against the stout resistance overran Galilee with an army of sixty thousand men. But events in Rome hindered him from completing the victory. Nero had killed himself. Vespasian, in the year 69, was universally proclaimed emperor, and restored order and prosperity. (pp. 395-96)

His son, Titus, then undertook the prosecution of the Jewish war, and became the instrument in the hand of God of destroying the holy city and the temple. He had an army of not less than eighty thousand soldiers, and planted his camp on Mount Scopus and the adjoining Mount Olivet, in full view of the city and the temple. The valley of the Kidron divided the besiegers from the besieged. (p. 396)

In April, A.D. 70, immediately after the Passover, when Jerusalem was filled with strangers, the siege began. The zealots rejected, with sneering defiance, the repeated proposals of Titus; and they struck down every one who spoke of surrender. They made sorties down the valley of the Kidron and up the mountain, and inflicted great loss on the Romans. As the difficulties multiplied their courage increased. The crucifixion of hundreds of prisoners (as many as five hundred a day) only enraged them the more. Even the famine which began to rage and sweep away thousands daily, and forced a woman to roast her own child, the cries of mothers and babes, the most pitiable scenes of misery around them, could not move the crazy fanatics. (pp. 396-97)



At last, in July, the castle of Antonia was surprised and taken by night. This prepared the way for the destruction of the Temple in which the tragedy culminated. The last and the bloodiest sacrifice at the altar of burnt offerings was the slaughter of thousands of Jews who had crowded around it. (p. 397)

Titus intended at first to save that magnificent work of architecture, as a trophy of victory. But the destruction was determined by a higher decree. His own soldiers, roused to madness by the stubborn resistance, and greedy of the golden treasures, could not be restrained from the work of destruction. At first the halls around the temple were set on fire. Then the firebrand was hurled through the golden gate. The legions vied with each other in feeding the flames. Soon the whole structure was in a blaze and illuminated the skies. It was burned on the tenth of August, A.D. 70, the same day of the year on which according to tradition, the first temple was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar. (pp. 397-98)

The Romans planted their eagles on the shapeless ruins, over against the eastern gate, offered their sacrifices to them, and proclaimed Titus *Imperator*. (p. 398)

Jerusalem was razed to the ground; only three towers of the palace of Herod together with a portion of the western wall, were left as monuments of the strength of the conquered city, once the center of the Jewish theocracy and the cradle of the Christian Church. (pp. 398-99)

The number of the Jews slain during the siege, including all those who had crowded into the city from the country, is stated by Josephus at the enormous and probably exaggerated figure of one million and one hundred thousand.

Eleven thousand perished from starvation shortly after the close of the siege. Ninety-seven thousand were carried captive and sold into slavery, or sent to the mines, or sacrificed in the gladiatorial shows at Caesarea, Berytus \ be-rī' tus \, Antioch, and other cities. The strongest and handsomest men were selected for the triumphal procession in Rome. (p. 400)

Vespasian and Titus celebrated the dearly bought victory together. No expense was spared for the pageant. Crowned with laurel, and clothed in purple garments, the two conquerors rode slowly in separate chariots ... amid the shouts of the people and the aristocracy. They were preceded by the soldiers in festive attire and seven hundred Jewish captives. The images of the gods, and the sacred furniture of the temple—the table of show-bread, the seven-armed candlestick, the trumpets which announced the year of jubilee, the vessel of incense, and the rolls of the Law—were borne along in the procession and deposited in the newly built Temple of Peace, except the Law and the purple veils of the holy place, which Vespasian reserved for his palace. The Temple of Peace was afterwards burned under Commodus, and it is not known what became of the sacred furniture. (pp. 400-401)

35. The “people” who “destroyed the city and the sanctuary” are the Romans under Vespasian and Titus on August 10, A.D. 70.
36. Therefore Daniel 9:26a reveals that the Antichrist will be a Roman—a citizen of the Revived Roman Empire of the Tribulation. He will be the ultimate blasphemer and is described in great detail in Daniel 7 where he is called the “little horn” and in Revelation 13 where he is referred to as the “beast.”
37. A description of this dynamic personality is provided by:

Unger, Merrill F. *Unger's Bible Dictionary*. (Chicago: Moody Press, 1966), 68:

Antichrist. (An) individual who, before being destroyed by Christ, should utter horrid blasphemies against the Most High, and practice great enormities upon the saints. This view is Scriptural and comes from connecting the passages in John's epistles with the description in Daniel and the Apocalypse (Revelation) of the great God-opposing power that should persecute the saints of the Most High.



Early Christians looked for Antichrist as a person and not a polity or system. The general opinion ... was that he would be a man, in whom Satan would dwell utterly and bodily and who would be armed with Satanic and demonic powers. In the Old Testament he is prefigured under “the little horn” (Daniel 7 and 8) and “the prince that shall come (Daniel 9:26). In the New Testament he is called “Antichrist” (1 John 2:18) and “the Beast” (Revelation 13:1-10).

38. Now we must document that this charismatic, dynamic, and Satan-possessed dictator is a Roman. He is a Roman in the context of the prophecy of Daniel 2. When the staff soothsayers of Nebuchadnezzar [**נְבוּכַדְנֶצְצַר ne-bu-chad-nez' ar**] refrain from interpreting his cryptic dream the king threatens to kill them all. Daniel however, is given the dream and its interpretation through a night vision (Daniel 2:19). The details of Daniels’s analysis is provided by:

Thieme, R. B., Jr. *Daniel: Chapters 1 through 6.* 3d ed. (Houston: R. B. Thieme, Jr., Bible Ministries, 1996), 44-48:

This particular vision was designed to give cohesiveness to history and to allow all mankind to realize that every historical event is a link within the plan of God. An image was used to depict the panorama of empires. During the administration of the fourth and fifth cycles of discipline to the Jews, when Israel would be neutralized in its effectiveness as a nation, we have the rise and fall of mighty gentile empires. This is delineated for us in the passage which follows and explains much of the Book of Daniel, as well as a large portion of the Book of Revelation.

The image is fashioned in the shape of a man. The human form reflects man’s domination over man in the devil’s world. Every part of the image has historical significance and is a reminder to us that man’s glory is a transient thing.

Since Nebuchadnezzar’s glory was not a passport to heaven, this was a challenge for him to face the facts about eternity.

Daniel 2:31, “You O king, were looking and behold, there was a single great statue; that statue, which was large and of extraordinary splendor, was standing in front of you, and its appearance was awesome.”

With only two phrases, Daniel gave a global description of the image: “large” means its appearance was overwhelming and “of extraordinary splendor” is the glamour of the empires represented by the various metals of the image. The word “awesome” alludes to the strength and power of the enormous figure, and by interpretation symbolized the strength and power of empires as they developed.

Daniel 2:32, “The head of that statue was made of fine gold [Chaldean Empire], its breast and its arms of silver [Meads and Persians], its belly [Graeco-Macedonian Empire of Alexander the Great] and its thighs of bronze [Hellenistic monarchies],

v. 33, “Its legs of iron [Roman Empire], its feet partly of iron [Revived Roman Empire of the Tribulation] and partly of clay [undetermined nations].

v. 34, “You continued looking until a stone [a stone so large it has never been reduced in size, i.e., Jesus Christ] was cut out without hands, and it struck the statue [Second Advent (Revelation 19:11-21)] on its feet of iron and clay, and crushed them [Armageddon].



v. 35, "Then [at the Second Advent] the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver and the gold were crushed all at the same time, and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors [baptism of fire for the unbelievers at the end of the Tribulation]; and the wind [judgment of the Second Advent] carried them away so that not a trace of them was found [they were not allowed to enter the millennial reign of Christ]. But the stone [Jesus Christ] that struck the statue became a great mountain [personal reign of Jesus Christ during the Millennium], and filled the whole earth.

v. 36, "This was the dream; now we shall tell its interpretation before the king."

An important lesson is to be learned from the very construction of this image. From the head to the toes, the materials used decrease in intrinsic value. The decline is analogous to the increasing decadence of the nations represented.

39. If you are interested you can read Daniel's interpretation of the dream in the Colonel's book, *Daniel: Chapters 1-6*, pages 48-56. There you will find the history of the first four empires mentioned in Daniel 2:32-33.
40. We want to concentrate on the fifth power symbolized by the "feet partially of iron and partially of clay." They emphasize the Revived Roman Empire of the Tribulation:

Thieme, *Daniel*, 58:

From our viewpoint the description of the image is historical; but from verses 41-44 we are dealing with future events. During the entire Church Age there have been and will continue to be power struggles among the nations of Western Europe. Near the end of the present dispensation the old Roman Empire will be drawn together again as a ten-nation power bloc emerges. When the Rapture of the Church takes place and the Tribulation begins, the "feet partly of iron and partly of clay" consolidate into the Revived Roman Empire, which shall exist during the seven years of Tribulation, the culmination of the Age of Israel.

41. It is over this kingdom that the Antichrist will rule. He is the "prince who is to come" of Daniel 9:26 and is identified by John as the "beast out of the sea" in:

Revelation 13:1 - I saw a beast coming up out of the sea, having ten horns and seven heads, and on his horns were ten diadems, and on his heads were blasphemous names.

v. 2 - And the beast which I saw was like a leopard, and his feet were like those of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. And the dragon gave him his power and his throne and great authority.