

Daniel 2

Verses 1 - 3

Now in the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuchadnezzar had dreams; and his spirit was troubled and his sleep left him. ² Then the king gave orders to call in the soothsayer priests, the conjurers, the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans, to tell the king his dreams. So they came in and stood before the king. ³ The king said to them, "I had a dream, and my spirit is anxious to understand the dream."

Now in the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, he had dreams; and his spirit was troubled and his sleep left him.

See chart 205

The Kings of Babylon			
Chapters	Kings of Babylon	Reign	Years
	Nabopolassar	626 - 605	21
1 - 4	Nebuchadnezzar	605 - 561	44
	Amel-Marduk	561 - 560	1
	Nergal-shar-usur	560 - 556	4
	Labashi-Marduk	556	< 1
5 - 12	Belshazzar	550 - 539	11

The 2nd year of Nebuchadnezzar was 603 BC right after the 4 Jewish men completed their training. But if Nebuchadnezzar had only been the king for two years how could it be after the end of the three years of training for these young men?

There are two possible explanations for this problem.

1. If there was a co-reign of Nebuchadnezzar and his father then 606 BC was the last year of King Nebuchadnezzar's co-reign and his reign as the sole king of Babylon began in 605 BC. A king sharing part of his reign with his son was also common in the southern kingdom of Judah but virtually no one knows anything about this because it hasn't been taught by most bible teachers.

2. The Babylonians of this time period used the "accession year" method (where year 1 starts the *next* calendar year) for the official dating of a king's reign. So King Nebuchadnezzar began his reign in 606 BC (when the training started) but his official reign didn't officially begin until 605 BC because of the dating system being used.

The Northern Kingdom of Israel used the non-accession system of dating which counts the partial first year of a king's reign as a full "year one" and the year of his death as a full year. Judah used the accession-year system, but switched to the non-accession method during the reign of Athaliah. So if a date appears to be off by a year or two one should not assume that it was a matter of a co-reign or that the date is incorrect.

² Then the king gave orders to call in the soothsayer priests, the conjurers, the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans, to tell the king his dreams. So they came in and stood before the king.

1. The Soothsayers were known for making predictions of the future.
2. The Conjurers applied the art of calling up a spirit or devil.
3. The Sorcerers used magical spells to harness occult forces or evil spirits.
4. The Chaldeans were the ruling class in Babylon at the time. They were widely known and esteemed as astronomers (one who studies the stars) and astrologers (someone who predicts the future by the positions of the planets)

³ The king said to them, "I had a dream, and my spirit is anxious to understand the dream."

It may seem strange that God would reveal these things to a pagan king but it had a positive effect in several ways. Because the king couldn't understand the dream it revealed to a pagan king and nation that the Lord was able to predict the future, that Daniel was far superior to all the other so called "men of wisdom" and it speaks to the people of all generations that read this book and understand the magnitude of what is revealed here.

Verses 4 - 11

⁴ Then the Chaldeans spoke to the king in Aramaic: “O king, live forever! Tell the dream to your servants, and we will declare the interpretation.” ⁵ The king replied to the Chaldeans, “The command from me is firm: if you do not make known to me the dream and its interpretation, you will be torn limb from limb and your houses will be turned into a rubbish heap. ⁶ But if you declare the dream and its interpretation, you will receive from me gifts and a reward and great honor; therefore declare to me the dream and its interpretation.” ⁷ They answered a second time and said, “Let the king tell the dream to his servants, and we will declare the interpretation.” ⁸ The king replied, “I know for certain that you are trying to buy time, because you have perceived that the command from me is firm, ⁹ that if you do not make the dream known to me, there is only one decree for you. For you have agreed together to speak lying and corrupt words before me until the situation is changed; therefore tell me the dream, so that I may know that you can declare to me its interpretation.” ¹⁰ The Chaldeans answered the king and said, “There is no person on earth who could declare the matter to the king, because no great king or ruler has ever asked anything like this of any soothsayer priest, sorcerer, or Chaldean. ¹¹ Moreover, the thing which the king demands is difficult, and there is no one else who could declare it to the king except gods, whose dwelling place is not with *mortal* flesh.”

⁵ The king replied to the Chaldeans, “The command from me is firm: if you do not make known to me the dream and its interpretation, you will be torn limb from limb and your houses will be turned into a rubbish heap.

Normally, the king would have only asked for an interpretation of his dream but something made the king demand what no man could do, tell him the dream and its interpretation. If they could not do this, they would die a horrible death and their homes would be destroyed.

⁷ They answered a second time and said, “Let the king tell the dream to his servants, and we will declare the interpretation.”

When they said this the king knew right away that they were stalling so he told them what he thought about their tactics. He knew that they had all agreed to tell the same lie in order to get out of this situation.

¹¹ Moreover, the thing which the king demands is difficult, and there is no one else who could declare it to the king except gods, whose dwelling place is not with *mortal* flesh.”

The spokesmen told the king in a very polite way that he was asking for something that is impossible for mere mortals to do.

Verses 12 - 16

¹² Because of this, the king became angry and extremely furious, and he gave orders to kill all the wise men of Babylon. ¹³ So the decree was issued that the wise men be killed; and they looked for Daniel and his friends, to kill *them*.

¹⁴ Then Daniel replied with discretion and discernment to Arioch, the captain of the king’s bodyguard, who had gone out to kill the wise men of Babylon; ¹⁵ he said to Arioch, the king’s officer, “For what reason is the decree from the king so harsh?” Then Arioch informed Daniel of the matter. ¹⁶ So Daniel went in and requested of the king that he would give him a grace period, so that he might declare the interpretation to the king.

¹² Because of this, the king became angry and extremely furious, and he gave orders to kill all the wise men of Babylon. ¹³ So the decree was issued that the wise men be killed; and they looked for Daniel and his friends, to kill *them*.

It’s not clear why Daniel and his friends were not present at the initial meeting or the one that followed but if this matter was so important to the king, and we know it was, one would think that all of the wise men would have to be present or they would have been contacted by someone in the king’s administration and informed of this matter.

¹⁴ Then Daniel said to Arioch, the king’s officer, “For what reason is the decree from the king so harsh?” Then Arioch informed Daniel of the matter.

Daniel knew that Arioch was not in favor of the king’s edict because Daniel was not immediately arrested but given some time to find his friends and beseech God for an answer.

¹⁶ So Daniel went in and requested of the king that he would give him a grace period, so that he might declare the interpretation to the king.

This was a reasonable request since Daniel had just recently heard about this matter. Daniel didn't know what the king had dreamt but he asked for more time because he knew God was able to inform him of the king's dream. This was not the case for the other wise men who believed that their gods did not dwell with mankind.

Verses 17 - 18

¹⁷ Then Daniel went to his house and informed his friends, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah, about the matter, ¹⁸ so that they might request compassion from the God of heaven concerning this secret, so that Daniel and his friends would not be killed with the rest of the wise men of Babylon.

It doesn't seem that Daniel or his friends were hard to find so why is it that they were not present at the first two meetings considering the importance that the king had placed in knowing what his dream meant? Nevertheless, Daniel believed in the power of prayer so he shared his concern with his 3 friends that were men of faith who also believed in the power of prayer.

Verses 19 – 23

¹⁹ Then the secret was revealed to Daniel in a night vision. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven; ²⁰ Daniel said,

**“May the name of God be blessed forever and ever,
For wisdom and power belong to Him.**

**²¹ It is He who changes the times and the periods;
He removes kings and appoints kings;
He gives wisdom to wise men,
And knowledge to people of understanding.**

**²² It is He who reveals the profound and hidden things;
He knows what is in the darkness,
And the light dwells with Him.**

**²³ To You, God of my fathers, I give thanks and praise,
For You have given me wisdom and power;
Even now You have made known to me what we requested of You,
For You have made known to us the king's matter.”**

¹⁹ Then the secret was revealed to Daniel in a night vision. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven;

Daniel received the answer to their prayer in a night vision. It most likely came in the form of a dream but it was clear that this was God's answer to their request.

²¹ It is He who changes the times and the periods;

He removes kings and appoints kings;

He gives wisdom to wise men,

And knowledge to people of understanding.

²² It is He who reveals the profound and hidden things;

He knows what is in the darkness,

And the light dwells with Him.

Daniel praises God for answering his prayer and he does it by proclaiming how Great God is. The following are just a few examples of God's greatness.

1. God has divine sovereignty over all events and rulers.
2. He controls the unfolding of history.
3. He establishes and removes kings.
4. God gives wisdom & understanding to people.
5. God can reveal future events.

In this dream God reveals who the next four world powers will be. This revelation covers a period of time from the beginning of the Babylonian Empire to the end of the Roman Empire (605 BC to 1798 AD). How much of this revelation Daniel understood is not clear but it was exactly what the king had dreamt and therefore the king could know that the interpretation of his dream was also accurate.

²³ To You, God of my fathers, I give thanks and praise,

For You have given me wisdom and power;

Even now You have made known to me what we requested of You,

For You have made known to us the king's matter."

The king had appointed the 4 men because of their abilities and it was no secret that Daniel had wisdom and power but he was not arrogant about it, he let everyone know that it came from God.

Verses 24 – 30

²⁴ Thereupon, Daniel went to Arioch, whom the king had appointed to kill the wise men of Babylon; he went and said this to him: “Do not kill the wise men of Babylon! Take me into the king’s presence, and I will declare the interpretation to the king.” ²⁵ Then Arioch hurriedly brought Daniel into the king’s presence and spoke to him as follows: “I have found a man among the exiles from Judah who can make the interpretation known to the king!” ²⁶ The king said to Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, “Are you able to make known to me the dream which I have seen and its interpretation?” ²⁷ Daniel answered before the king and said, “As for the secret about which the king has inquired, neither wise men, sorcerers, soothsayer priests, *nor* diviners are able to declare *it* to the king. ²⁸ However, there is a God in heaven who reveals secrets, and He has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what will take place in the latter days. This was your dream and the visions in your mind *while* on your bed. ²⁹ As for you, O king, *while* on your bed your thoughts turned to what would take place in the future; and He who reveals secrets has made known to you what will take place. ³⁰ But as for me, this secret has not been revealed to me for any wisdom residing in me more than *in* any *other* living person, but for the purpose of making the interpretation known to the king, and that you may understand the thoughts of your mind

²⁴ Thereupon, Daniel went to Arioch, whom the king had appointed to kill the wise men of Babylon; he went and said this to him: “Do not kill the wise men of Babylon! Take me into the king’s presence, and I will declare the interpretation to the king.”

The wise men were false prophets to a pagan King but Daniel wanted to save their lives because he was a man of noble character.

²⁵ Then Arioch hurriedly brought Daniel into the king’s presence and spoke to him as follows: “I have found a man among the exiles from Judah who can make the interpretation known to the king!”

Arioch wanted to look good before the king so he told him that he had found a man that could reveal the dream and its interpretation to the king. We know that this was not true because Daniel went to Arioch. Daniel, on the other hand, gave God the glory for what had happened and was not looking for any praise from the king.

²⁷ Daniel answered before the king and said, “As for the secret about which the king has inquired, neither wise men, sorcerers, soothsayer priests, *nor* diviners are able to declare *it* to the king. ²⁸ However, there is a God in heaven who reveals secrets, and He has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what will take place in the latter days. This was your dream and the visions in your mind *while* on your bed.

Daniel affirmed what the wise men had said, that no man could reveal what the king had dreamt, but there is a God in heaven that could reveal his dream. Daniel then confirms that this dream was about the latter days. It seems that we have been in the latter days for some time now.

³⁰ But as for me, this secret has not been revealed to me for any wisdom residing in me more than *in any other living person*, but for the purpose of making the interpretation known to the king, and that you may understand the thoughts of your mind

The revealing of the king's dream and its interpretation came from God alone.

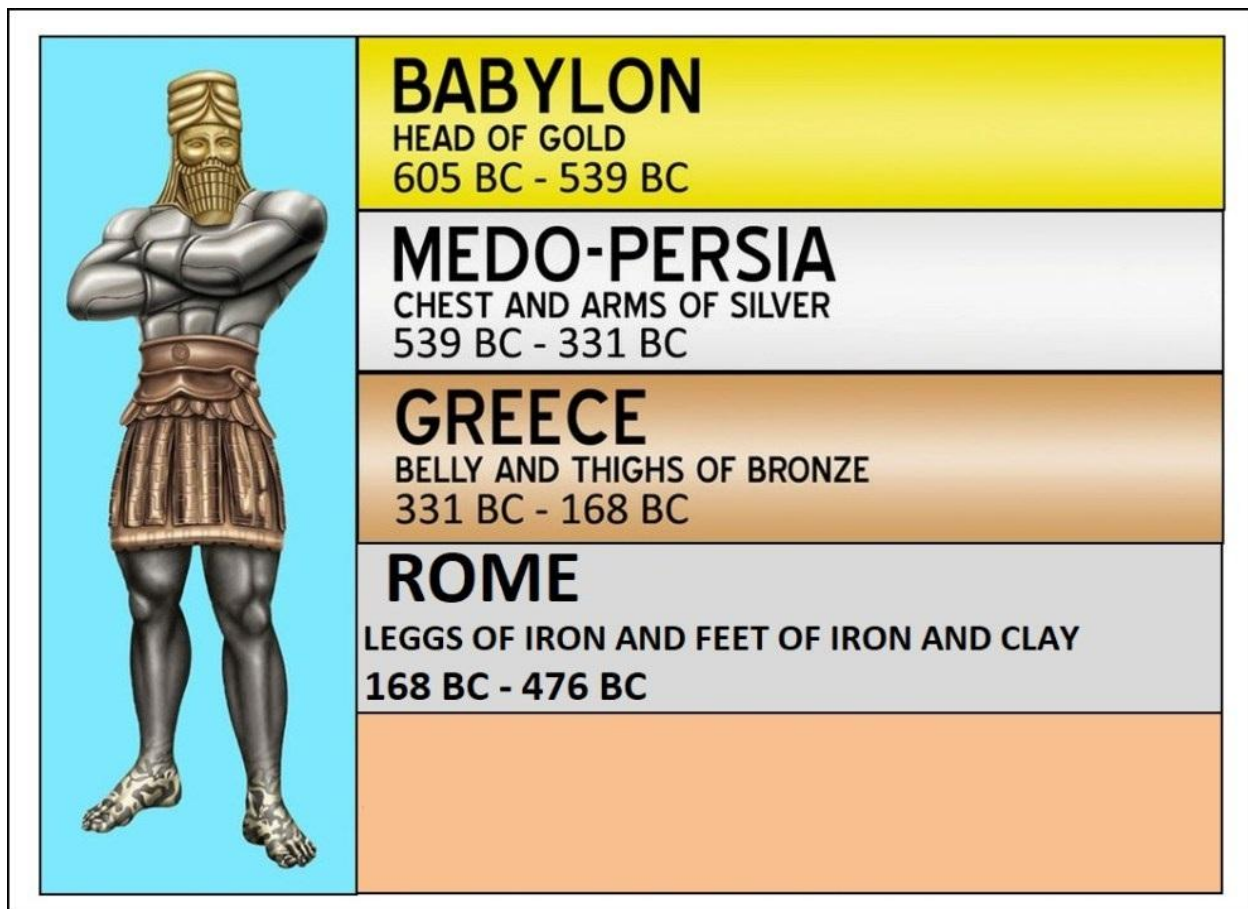
Verses 31 - 35

³¹ “You, O king, were watching and behold, there was a single great statue; that statue, which was large and of extraordinary radiance, was standing in front of you, and its appearance was awesome. ³² The head of that statue *was made of* fine gold, its chest and its arms of silver, its belly and its thighs of bronze, ³³ its legs of iron, *and* its feet partly of iron and partly of clay. ³⁴ You continued watching until a stone was broken off without hands, and it struck the statue on its feet of iron and clay, and crushed them. ³⁵ Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold were crushed to pieces all at the same time, and they were like chaff from the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away so that not a trace of them was found. But the stone that struck the statue became a great mountain and filled the entire earth.

³² The head of that statue *was made of* fine gold, its chest and its arms of silver, its belly and its thighs of bronze, ³³ its legs of iron, *and* its feet partly of iron and partly of clay.

See pic 210

4 Worldly empires



³⁴ You continued watching until a stone was broken off without hands, and it struck the statue on its feet of iron and clay, and crushed them.

This is clearly a reference to the Messiah and the effect His kingdom had on the Roman Empire.

³⁵ Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold were crushed to pieces all at the same time, and they were like chaff from the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away so that not a trace of them was found. But the stone that struck the statue became a great mountain and filled the entire earth.

The mission of Christ was continued by His church. During the 1st century it spread from Jerusalem to Rome. By 313 AD Constantine made Christianity a legal religion and ended the persecution. By the Middle Ages (476 AD to 1476) Christianity was the only recognized religion in Rome.

Verses 36 - 38

³⁶ “This was the dream; and *now* we will tell its interpretation before the king.

³⁷ You, O king, are the king of kings, to whom the God of heaven has given the kingdom, the power, the strength, and the honor; ³⁸ and wherever the sons of mankind live, *or* the animals of the field, or the birds of the sky, He has handed *them* over to you and has made you ruler over them all. You are the head of gold.

The 1st kingdom was Babylon represented by Gold

See map 215

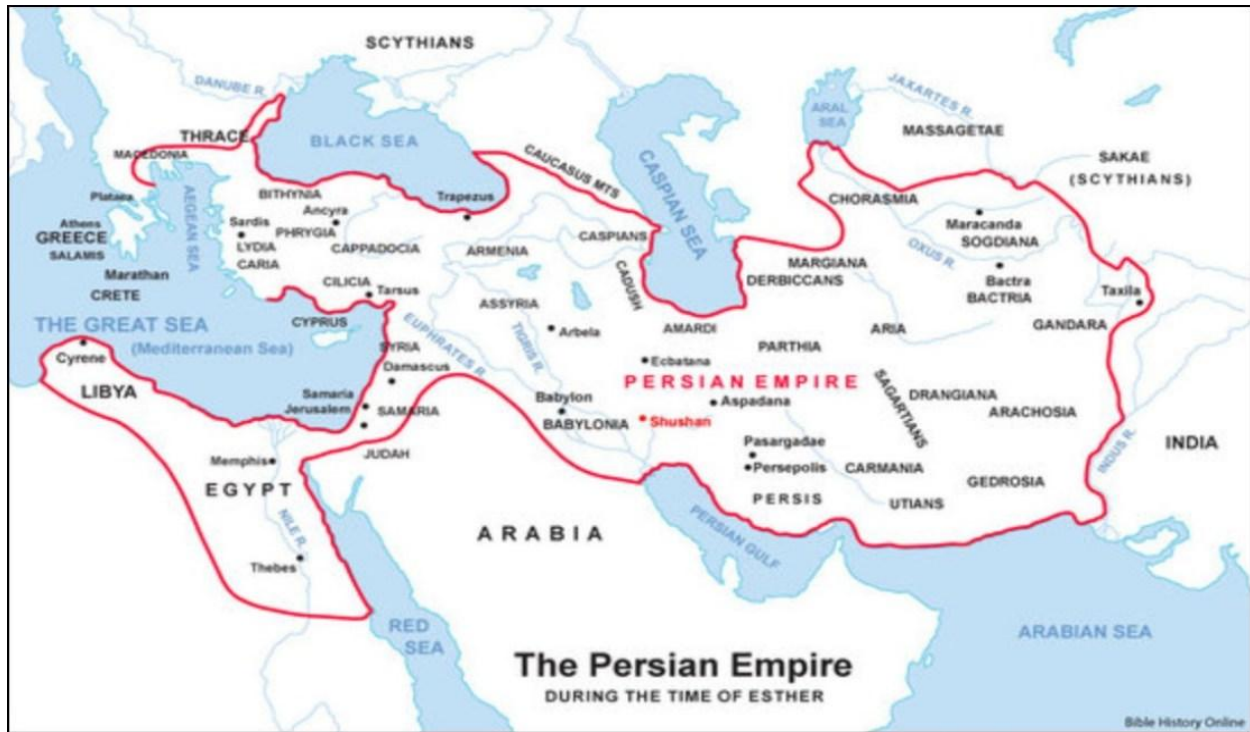


Verses 39 - 43

³⁹ And after you another kingdom will arise inferior to you, then another third kingdom of bronze, which will rule over all the earth. ⁴⁰ Then there will be a fourth kingdom as strong as iron; just as iron smashes and crushes everything, so, like iron that crushes, it will smash and crush all these things. ⁴¹ And in that you saw the feet and toes, partly of potter's clay and partly of iron, it will be a divided kingdom; but it will have within it some of the toughness of iron, since you saw the iron mixed with common clay. ⁴² And *just as* the toes of the feet were partly of iron and partly of pottery, so some of the kingdom will be strong, and part of it will be fragile. ⁴³ In that you saw the iron mixed with common clay, they will combine with one another in their descendants; but they will not adhere to one another, just as iron does not combine with pottery.

The second kingdom will be the Medo Persian kingdom

See Map 220



The third kingdom will be Greece

See Map 225



The fourth Kingdom will be Rome

See map 230




Verse 44

⁴⁴ **And in the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which will never be destroyed, and that kingdom will not be left for another people; it will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, but it will itself endure forever.**

The kingdom that God set up was established on the day of Pentecost in the year 29 AD so it was founded during the time of the forth kingdom. It is a community of believers from all around the world. Just as Israel was called to be God's chosen people but only a remnant of the people remained faithful to Him, now all people of every nation have been invited but how many of them will answer the call and how many will remain faithful to the end?

The fifth kingdom will be God's spiritual kingdom

See chart 235

	BABYLON HEAD OF GOLD 605 BC - 539 BC
	MEDO-PERSIA CHEST AND ARMS OF SILVER 539 BC - 331 BC
	GREECE BELLY AND THIGHS OF BRONZE 331 BC - 168 BC
	ROME LEGGES OF IRON AND FEET OF IRON AND CLAY 168 BC - 476 BC
	GOD'S KINGDOM WORLD WIDE 29 AD TO THE END OF TIME

Verse 45

⁴⁵ Just as you saw that a stone was broken off from the mountain without hands, and that it crushed the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold, the great God has made known to the king what will take place in the future; so the dream is certain and its interpretation is trustworthy.”

How did the Messiah who came in the 1st Century crush the four kingdoms that existed long before His coming? Since Christ has always existed, everything through all of history was, is, and will be under his control and He determines when nations will begin and end.

It is interesting that here in verse 45 the nations that were crushed are listed in a different order than the rest of this chapter. This is not the case when we look at the Septuagint.

Verse 45 from the Septuagint.

Whereas you saw that a stone was cut out of a mountain without hands, and it beat to pieces the earthenware, the iron, the brass, the silver, the gold; the great God has made known to the king what must happen hereafter: and the dream is true and the interpretation thereof sure.

Verses 46 - 49

⁴⁶ Then King Nebuchadnezzar fell on his face and paid humble respect to Daniel, and gave orders to present to him an offering and incense. ⁴⁷ The king responded to Daniel and said, “Your God truly is a God of gods and a Lord of kings and a revealer of secrets, since you have been able to reveal this secret.” ⁴⁸ Then the king promoted Daniel and gave him many great gifts, and he made him ruler over the entire province of Babylon, and chief prefect over all the wise men of Babylon. ⁴⁹ And Daniel made a request of the king, and he appointed Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego over the administration of the province of Babylon, while Daniel was at the king’s court.

⁴⁶ Then King Nebuchadnezzar fell on his face and paid humble respect to Daniel, and gave orders to present to him an offering and incense. ⁴⁷ The king responded to Daniel and said, “Your God truly is a God of gods and a Lord of kings and a revealer of secrets, since you have been able to reveal this secret.”

Presenting an offering to Daniel was not an act of worship as some commentators have implied because the king gave high praise to the God of Daniel.

⁴⁸ Then the king promoted Daniel and gave him many great gifts, and he made him ruler over the entire province of Babylon, and chief prefect over all the wise men of Babylon. ⁴⁹ And Daniel made a request of the king, and he appointed Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego over the administration of the province of Babylon, while Daniel was at the king’s court.

God put people of faith in high places within the Babylonian Empire in order to protect His people during their captivity. So Israel was being punished for their sin but the Lord made sure they would be protected from undue harm. In the same way He watches over the church for its continued success. The chart below is a short summary of His protection during the Old Testament period.

See chart 240

God's protection of Israel

Events in history	Years
Joseph became second in command over the entire land of Egypt.	1715 BC
Then the Jewish people were given their own Kingdom.	1406 - 586 BC
Daniel became 2nd in command in Babylon during the captivity.	600 BC
Mordecai became second in command to King Xerxes of Persia	470 BC
Unfortunately, we have no biblical record from 400 BC to the birth of Christ	400 - 4 BC

Daniel was made ruler over the entire providence of Babylon but with the king's permission Daniel divided that responsibility between his three friends while he was at the king's court.