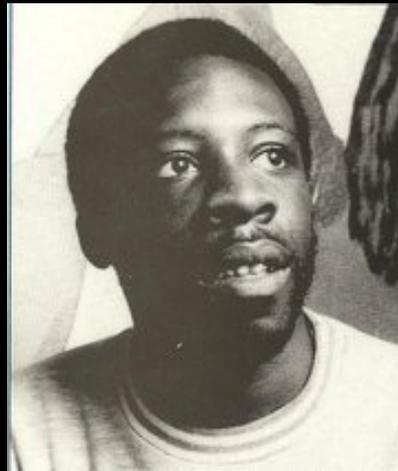


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## ***THE AGE OF IRON AND CLAY***

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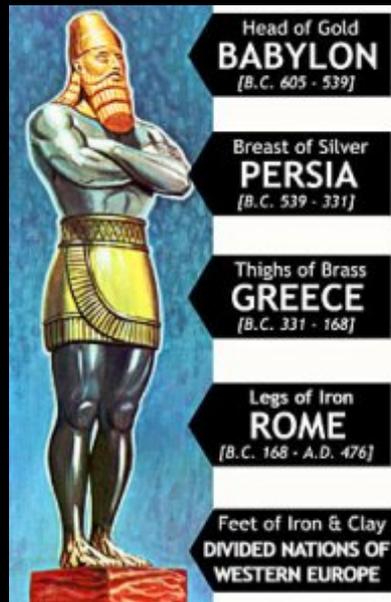


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During the past few months I have been sitting, watching and listening with interest of the European Union's economic crisis; Greece's financial melt down, now Italy's not forgetting Spain and the UK who are also vulnerable and could melt down same way. While the European leaders and their advisers meet almost every day to try and figure a way out of their predicament, it's been hard for me to resist writing about it and point out the connection of an ancient King's dream which predicted that this current world situation would happen.

One of my favourite lessons at school was Religious Education. I became fascinated with the biblical tales and adventures of the prophets of old. Stories like Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, Daniel in the lion's den and the fate of John the Baptist. One of the parables which always stands out for me is Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the statue made of Gold, Silver, Brass, Iron and Clay. While our class was studying his vision, we went on a trip to the London museum to see the treasures of Tutankhamun and a model statue which represented King Nebuchadnezzar's dream.

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***(Daniel 2: 31-35)***

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We stood in front of this structure (which was approximately twelve feet tall, its width was roughly four feet), as the curator explained to us the interpretation of the statue translated by the prophet Daniel to King Nebuchadnezzar.

The head of gold represented Babylon, the empire responsible for destroying the Jewish temple and for taking the Jews into captivity. The Babylonians were known for their gold wealth. Babylon was called the Golden City.

The chest and arms of silver, the second empire following Babylon was Media-Persia. It was the Media-Persian Empire that allowed the Jews to return to Israel and rebuild their homes and the temple. Silver was an important metal to the Persians, since their taxes were to be paid in silver. It is said that the Persians also placed silver harnesses on their horses.

The thigh of brass was the third empire which was Greece, under the command of Alexander the Great. The Grecian armies used brass helmets and weaponry in their conflicts. It was the Grecian ruler Antiochus Ephiphanes who defiled the Jewish temple, filling it with pagan idols, placing a Hellenistic priest in the temple and requiring the sacrifice of pigs on the altar.

The legs of iron represented the Roman Empire who followed the Grecians. The iron represented two things. It was a metal the Romans mastered for use in their chariots and weapons. Secondly it was used for war and fighting which was the central feature when the Romans set out to conquer new territory. The legs of iron also predicted a split in the Roman Empire and it began in AD 395

when the empire was divided between east (one leg) and west (the other leg). In AD 476, the west (Rome) fell to the Germanic tribes, but the eastern leg became the Byzantine Empire. The Byzantines ruled out of Constantinople (Turkey) and built churches in Palestine honouring many of the Christian holy sites.

While the Roman church maintained dominion through much of Western Europe through the influence of the Pope and Cardinals, the Byzantines exercised influence over much of the east, including Palestine and Jerusalem for a period of a thousand years. Eventually the eastern branch of the leg fell into the hands of Muslim Turks in 1453. An Islamic empire called the Ottoman Empire ruled from Palestine from 1517 to 1917.

During the peak of its authority, the Roman Empire stretched over three continents and housed twenty-nine provinces, if you like, the first European Union of sorts, despite the fact that most of the provinces were conquered forcibly. From when it split into two in AD 395, many empires in the west have risen and fallen. The Spanish have risen, the French Empire under Napoleon, the British Empire, right up to Nazi Germany's Third Reich under Hitler's rule. Then after World War II, we've had the Russians and the Americans scrambling for power during the cold war years. All this represents the feet of iron and clay on the statue, where nations are fighting for ultimate power but nobody can secure a firm hold.

The Common Market, The European Economic Community (EEC), later renamed the European Community (EC) in 1993 now commonly known as the European Union (EU) was formed in 1957, as an international organisation. It was created with a view to bring about economic integration, including a single market among the *'Inner Six'* which were Belgium, France, West Germany, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands. The UK joined in 1973. In 2011, the European Union's membership is at present twenty-seven provinces, two short of the Roman Empire's total at its peak. No doubt, it was Europe's way of creating peace, stability and unity in a region which for centuries since AD 395 to 1945 was plagued with continuous tribal wars; and now, economic melt down is threatening its current union.

So while the bankers, corporate investors and the world markets bite their nails nervously and speculate what the Europeans are going to do; whether they stay together, split up and cancel the Euro currency; and while the media continues to convey the respected world government's illusion of austerity and economic global doom and gloom on the *'Tel-Lie-Vision'* for years to come to the earth's populace (the everyday people), who rise each morning and go to work to put food on the table, clothe their children and pay the bills, to the unemployed who are convinced they have no foreseeable future; this is my end of year message to you Kings and Queens of Jah Kingdom. Don't believe the hype. *You control your destiny.* Ask, and it shall be given. Seek, and you will find. In this age of *Iron and Clay*, hold on and keep your faith; be of good courage and stay in positive spirits for there is abundance on Mother Earth for all of us to share and enjoy.

Believe dat.

*'Til the next time – Everyting Bless'*

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