

THE BOOK OF DANIEL

Daniel 2:29-49 | Session 6 | B.C. 603

We ended session 5 at a rather suspenseful point in the narrative (2:28) where Daniel was about to reveal King Nebuchadnezzar's dream to him: ***Thy dream, and the visions of thy head upon thy bed, are these...*** In verse 28 we received new information about Nebuchadnezzar's forgotten dream: it would concern the ***latter days***. This phrase ***latter days*** is used 12 times in the O.T. and it refers to the The Day of the Lord. The Day of the Lord is a phrase used to speak of the seven-year Tribulation. The theological term that is used for a study in the ***latter days*** is eschatology. The N.T. also uses the term "Last days" (2 Timothy 3:1). Let's look at the dream and its interpretation.

Verse 29, 30—

Secrets...secret, something that was hidden or concealed and is revealed. This secret contained in the dream was revealed to Daniel. Not because Daniel had more wisdom than anyone else; simply, God revealed it to Daniel so that he would make the **interpretation known to the king...** The king was surrounded by wise men; magicians, and astrologers and yet God would use a 17-year-old boy to reveal the secret to the king. "Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men" (1 Corinthians 1:25). This is not saying God is foolish, rather those who possess worldly wisdom consider God's wisdom foolish. Don't ever underestimate how you might be used by God. Preach Christ crucified; that message contains the *power of God, and the wisdom of God.* (1 Corinthians 1:23,24).

THE DREAM DESCRIBED.

Verse 31—

A great image...stood before thee...the form thereof was terrible. Whatever this image was, while not grotesque, it had the appearance of being something to fear. It was **great, bright, excellent, and terrible** at the same time. Although Nebuchadnezzar could not remember the dream, it had troubled him greatly and caused him to lose sleep (2:1). It was an image of some form of ungodliness. In one sense this image, as we will see was beautiful to look at, but as Satan the deceiver always does, he is able to transform himself into an angel of light. Satan will always make evil look good for a season. Later, we will see in chapter seven, Daniel has a vision which will be interpreted in much the same way as this vision (both dreams regarding the Times of the Gentiles, see below), but Daniel's vision will be about beasts that are dreadful. Whereas in the dream of Nebuchadnezzar (from his ungodly perspective) he sees the vision as *fearful yet beautiful*, in Daniel's dream in chapter 7 (from Daniel's godly perspective) it is all *terrible with no beauty*.

Now we get a description of what Nebuchadnezzar saw.

Verses 32,33—

Head was fine gold; breast and arms silver; belly and thighs brass; legs iron; feet part iron and part clay. The image was made up of metals and clay that went from valuable in the head (gold) to worthless in the feet and toes (iron and clay mixed).

Verse 34—

As the king **sawest** (or, beheld) the *frightening* image that had disturbed him, another image appeared; **a stone cut out** (presumably out of a mountain, vs. 45) and not by human **hands**. The stone struck the image **upon his feet of iron and clay** and broke **them to pieces**.

Verse 35, 36—

As the stone struck the feet the entire image of **iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold** were pulverized into dust and blown away never to be found again. **And the stone...became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.**

This is the dream; and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king. Notice the **we**; Daniel along with Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah seem to be present. Perhaps each had a part in the interpretation.

THE TIMES OF THE GENTILES.

The passage doesn't say, but let's assume that each of the four young men have a part in sharing the interpretation with the King since Daniel uses the pronoun, **we** in verse 36. "This is dream; and **we** will tell the interpretation..."

We will find as we look at the interpretation given by Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, that image represents kingdoms of the world that will rule over the Jews during

the *Times of the Gentiles*; a phrase that Jesus used in Luke 21:24. The Times of the Gentiles is a period in which Jerusalem has no king reigning from David's throne (2 Samuel 7:13,16), and in which they would be *trodden down, trampled*, and controlled by Gentiles. During the Times of the Gentiles God's glory cannot be found in Israel¹ and *The Times of the Gentiles* continue even to this day.

The Times of the Gentiles

"And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled."

Luke 21:24

The period of time when Jerusalem will be controlled (literally trodden down; trample or crush with feet). The Times of the Gentiles began with the Babylonian Captivity by Nebuchadnezzar, when the *glory of the Lord* departed from Jerusalem. The Times of the Gentiles continues to this day. God's glory will not be seen again in Jerusalem until The Lord Jesus Christ returns in the *glory of His power*.

¹ (The Glory of the Lord descended on Jerusalem, 1004 B.C., 1 Kings 8:10,11; The Glory of the Lord departed Jerusalem, 594 B.C., Ezekiel 11:22,23)

The dream reveals that period, and more importantly, and it reveals what will finally end the Times of the Gentiles.

THE DREAM INTERPRETED.

Verses 37-38—

First comes praise for the **king** from Hananiah² in whom he says **art a king of kings** (notice Nebuchadnezzar is described as **a king of kings**, not The King of kings; that title is reserved for Jesus Christ, the Son of God). It is **the God of heaven who hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory**. Verse 38 states Nebuchadnezzar **wheresoever the children of men dwell...God hath made him ruler over all**. But, his kingdom, although it covered major civilizations it was not over all men. And yet, the interpretation goes on to say **Thou art this head of gold**. Could it be that Nebuchadnezzar is the representative head of all Satanic evil during the Times of the Gentiles?³

Verse 39—

Mishael continues the second and third parts of the interpretation **After thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee**. This is shown to have happened in Daniel 5:30-31. Belshazzar who was king after his *grandfather* Nebuchadnezzar (who died in 562 B.C.), lost the kingdom to Darius the *Median* (of the Medes and Persian empire). After that kingdom, **another third kingdom of brass will rule over all the earth**. In 336 B.C. Alexander the Great became king of the ancient Greek kingdom of Macedon. By the age of thirty, Alexander the Great had created one of the largest empires in history, stretching from Greece to northwestern India.

Verses 40-43—

Azariah steps forward to describe the fourth part of the interpretation. The legs of **iron**. The Roman Empire seems to be the best interpretation of the is **fourth kingdom...strong as iron**. The Roman Empire was vast, and held a firm iron grasp on the world, and **subdueth all things**.

Those four empires; Head: Babylon, Breast and Arms: Persian, Belly and Thighs: Greek, and Legs of Iron: Roman appear to be fairly easy identify as fulfilled prophecy.

The feet and toes, part potters' clay, and part of iron, which is a **kingdom divided**, becomes more difficult. After the Roman Empire there were other (many) empires which rose to greatness, such as the Ottoman empire which controlled much of Southeast Europe, Western Asia, and Northern Africa between A.D. 1300's to the early 1900's, or even the British Empire which peaked in the 1920's, and others in between. But the dream seems to bypass the other world empires and focus on a **kingdom**

² I am speculating that all four of the youths are interpreting the dream. Note the phrase "**we will tell**" in verse 36, because of the pronoun "we" and because all four were praying for the secret to be revealed, it looks like they all have a part presenting the dream before the king.

³ Jumping ahead, Scripture is clear that Babylon will be revived in the latter days, will a *type* of the great king Nebuchadnezzar rule over all the world at that time?

divided; one that has the appearance of **strength** since it will be mixed (**mingled**) men from various backgrounds (**seed**) yet because it is made up of **iron mixed with miry clay** this kingdom will not hold together; there will be no unity. This is an unknown *future* kingdom made up of many nations. The next verse explains more.

Verses 44,45—

Perhaps it is Daniel who gives the closing interpretation with this final description of the statue. **And in the days of these kings**, that is, the kings making up the feet and (ten) toes of the statue, **shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed**: no kingdom on earth will follow it. The **kingdom** that will be set up by God **shall stand forever**. It will **break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms**, and here is how:

The stone cut out of the mountain without hands (vs. 34) will break in **pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold**.

That was the dream, and the interpretation. It has been interpreted clearly for us. And, **God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter**.

A FEW ASSUMPTIONS AT THIS POINT IN THE BOOK OF DANIEL

The interpretation of the statue in Daniel 2 is a prophetic statement about future kingdoms of the world, beginning with Nebuchadnezzar in Babylon, and continuing through the Times of the Gentiles, until the promised Kingdom of the Messiah (the Stone cut without hands) is realized. For us, the dream reveals already fulfilled prophecy, *and* prophecy yet to be fulfilled.

The Times of the Gentiles began with King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, and the Times of the Gentiles will end with the final destruction of a revived Babylonian empire ruled not by Nebuchadnezzar, but by one of whom Nebuchadnezzar is a *type*⁴, someone much more powerful; the Antichrist. The dream then shows us the history of world domination with Nebuchadnezzar presented as the head, and as the *type* of what will follow (or, “who” is to follow). This may mean that beginning with Nebuchadnezzar, the *spirit of antichrist* has been alive since that time, yet he will eventually reign physically, in bodily form, during the Tribulation. The ultimate fulfillment of the dream of Daniel 2 is that God wins in the end. His Kingdom will be established, and unlike all the others, His kingdom will never be destroyed. Not until then will Israel will be at rest in their promised Kingdom.

The passage reveals what happens at the end of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream in our Daniel passage, when the stone, not cut by human hands, becomes a mountain and covers the entire world.

⁴ By *type* I mean a figure in the Old Testament who foreshadows or corresponds to another figure in the New Testament. In this case I am making the assumption the Nebuchadnezzar is the type of *the* Anti-Christ who will rule the world during part of the seven-year Tribulation. Proving that, and showing just how Nebuchadnezzar is a *type* deserves more complete study on its own.

According to Daniel 2:44,45 the stone ***shall break in pieces and consume all*** the other ***kingdoms***. This too is prophesied in Isaiah 14:5 where it says, *“The Lord hath broken the staff of the wicked, and the sceptre of the rulers.”*

Several more passages in Daniel will address Antichrist as does the book of The Revelation.

The kingdoms of Daniel chapter 2, represented by the ten toes will be led by the powerful Antichrist. Isaiah 14 prophesies the final destruction of the revived Babylon, end to the Times of the Gentiles, and the end of Antichrist. It continues by predicting the fate of this last world ruler and describes his doom (Isaiah 14:9-24).

Developing...