

110523 Meeker Christian Church Daniel And The Statue Dream

The purpose today is to examine the statue of Daniel 2 and use it as one Old Testament prophecy as support and clarification of Bible events into the New Testament and thereby increase our faith by seeing the fulfillment of most of them to date which gives us confidence in those not yet entirely fulfilled.

However contrary to our basic curiosity and desire to know what is going to happen next in the end times – that is not the main reason for the study. Our purpose is always that we should grow in confidence and obedience and personal understanding and relationship with Jesus our Lord and Savior. A serendipity of the study may give us some encouraging insights into the events on our doorstep and our place in this time of creation. Knowledge is wonderful, but application is purposeful.

[STATUE ON SCREEN]

The setting and timing of Daniel 2 and the dream of Nebuchadnezzar and the statue was in Babylonian with Nebuchadnezzar as the ruler who reigned over much of the civilized world in 604-562 BC. He was notorious for reducing the Jewish presence in the land of Israel by exiling the vast majority of the population to Babylon and destroying the first Jewish temple known as the Solomon's temple in 586 BC. You remember the story of Daniel and his three friends who were among those taken or you can read about their exploits interspersed throughout the book of Daniel.

Nebuchadnezzar was very popular and revered in the Babylonian world, also referred to as *Chaldea* - because he was by far the most powerful and longest reigning king, sitting on the throne and ruling what was considered the civilized world of his for nearly 50 years.

The book of Daniel records how Daniel interpreted Nebuchadnezzar's dream in which God provided an overview of world events in the millennia yet to come. When God granted Daniel the wisdom to interpret the king's dream, it launched Daniel's long career as a political leader, trusted adviser, and well-known prophet.

2. Here is the story: One night, Nebuchadnezzar awoke frightened by a dream. The king called for his wise men, to interpret the dream. That was standard procedure in a culture that placed a high importance on dreams and their meaning. However, he added an unprecedented requirement for the interpreters: Daniel 2:5 *The king answered and said to the Chaldeans, "My decision is firm: if you do not make known the dream to me, and its interpretation, you shall be cut in pieces, and your houses shall be made an ash heap. ///* So, not only did the royal wise men have to provide the interpretation of the dream, they had to recount the dream itself. The penalty for failure was death: every magician, enchanter, sorcerer and astrologer in the kingdom would be executed. The distressed Chaldean wise men replied in Daniel 2:11 *It is a difficult thing that the king requests, and there is no other who can tell it to the king except the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh.*” When Daniel heard of this, he was determined to prove God’s power to the king: Daniel 2:18 *that they might seek mercies from the God of heaven concerning this secret, so that Daniel and his companions might not perish with the rest of the wise men of Babylon.*

Daniel asked the king for some time to discover the dream, and then he proceeded to pray all night with three of his fellow exiles. God revealed the dream to him, and Daniel and his friends praised God Daniel 2:19-23 *Then the secret was revealed to Daniel in a night vision. So Daniel blessed the God of heaven. 20 Daniel answered and said: "Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, For wisdom and might are His. 21 And He changes the times and the seasons; He removes kings and raises up kings; He gives wisdom to the wise And knowledge to those who have understanding. 22 He reveals deep and secret things; He knows what is in the darkness, And light dwells with Him. 23 "I thank You and praise You, O God of my fathers; You have given me wisdom and might, And have now made known to me what we asked of You, For You have made known to us the king's demand."*

The next morning Daniel went to the king and told him about the dream.

The dream featured a huge, glorious statue of a man. Daniel 2:32-33 *This image's*
3. head was of fine gold, its chest and arms of silver, its belly and thighs of
bronze, 33 its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay.” Daniel’s
interpretation given to him by God explains that the statue represents a series of coming
kingdoms, each less glorious than the one before as indicated by the decreasing value of
the metals. Daniel identifies Nebuchadnezzar as the head of gold, stating that God had
given Nebuchadnezzar much power Daniel 2:37-38 *You, O king, are a king of*
kings. For the God of heaven has given you a kingdom, power, strength, and
glory; 38 and wherever the children of men dwell, or the beasts of the field and the
birds of the heaven, He has given them into your hand, and has made you ruler over
them all—you are this head of gold. (606 BC)

Babylon fell to the kingdom of the Medes and the Persians as later described in Daniel
5:30-31 *That very night Belshazzar, king of the Chaldeans, was slain. 31 And Darius*
the Mede received the kingdom, being about sixty-two years old. The then Babylonian
King Belshazzar was an offspring of Nebuchadnezzar and had inherited the throne.

The Medo-Persian Empire as we see in a later vision interpreted in Daniel 10:20-
21 *Then he said, “Do you know why I have come to you? And now I must return to*
fight with the prince of Persia; and when I have gone forth, indeed the prince of Greece
will come. As you can see on the statue *its chest and arms of silver* are Medo-Persia,
(536 BC) *its belly and thighs of bronze* are identified as Greece (330 BC) historically
known as Macedonia because of Alexander The great’s conquests.

As you can see on the statue explained in Daniel 2:33 *its legs of iron, its feet partly of*
iron and partly of clay.” The “iron” empire though not named specifically is
identifiable by other descriptions, later Bible revelation, and the records of history as the
Roman Empire and its influence throughout the ages which is described in Daniel 2:40
And the fourth kingdom shall be as strong as iron, inasmuch as iron breaks in pieces

and shatters everything; and like iron that crushes, that kingdom will break in pieces and crush all the others.

4. Now we come to the feet of mixed clay and iron will be a divided kingdom.: Daniel 2:41 *Whereas you saw the feet and toes, partly of potter's clay and partly of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; yet the strength of the iron shall be in it, just as you saw the iron mixed with ceramic clay.* The Roman Empire lasted from 27 BC to 476 AD in the West and until 1453 in the East. It had been divided by Theodosius in AD 395 creating the Western and Eastern Roman empire also known as the Byzantine Empire. So just as declared in Daniel 2 that kingdom was divided.

Remember we are still reading Daniel's description of Nebuchadnezzar's dream: Daniel 2:34-35 *You watched until a stone was cut out without hands which struck the image upon its feet, which were of iron and clay, and broke them to pieces. 35 Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold were broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of 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 image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.*

Opinions differ on the fifth empire. However with current circumstance and having the advantage of looking back over some 2,000 years of the events fulfilling the *feet of iron and clay* and considering Daniel's explanation in Daniel 2:42-44 *As the toes of the feet were partly of iron and partly of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly broken. 43 Whereas you saw iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men, but they shall not cleave to one another, even as iron does not mix with clay. 44 "In the days of these kings the God of heaven shall set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed. And the kingdom shall not be left to another people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.*

During that 4th kingdom identified as Rome – Jesus was born with the result described in Daniel 2:45 *Inasmuch as you saw that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold,*

the great God has made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter. And the dream is certain, and its interpretation sure.”

5. Under the rule of the Roman Empire Jesus was born, His Church established, the gospel spread throughout the world. A clear distinction between good and evil was established and the intent of good forever implemented for mankind. Perhaps iron represents the goodness of the established church of Jesus and clay represents the evil influence in the world including the Jewish nation not identifying Jesus as the Messiah!!! The iron and clay feet – good and evil = are the reality of life on earth throughout the “church age” which by definition is the time between Jesus’ birth and establishment of the church - until His return when he takes the church and it’s adherents away from the earth.

I hasten to add for your consideration that the Old Testament contents are a Jewish document, written for the Jewish nation to recognize their purpose of life was to tell all others of the one true God and to guide all persons to recognize and accept the Messiah of salvation, The Lord Jesus Christ.

The specifics of exactly when that inevitable return of Jesus will happen and the exact events leading up to the results are not given to us here but hints are given elsewhere in scripture we will look at further next week. But the genuineness of this dream message based on our extra-Biblical accounts, and current world events further authenticates and verifies the absolutely credibility of Daniel’s interpretation and it’s meaning for us today. I ask very sincerely, how can anyone read this account and miss the prophetic content of the dream’s message?

During the Roman empire Jesus Christ came to earth to redeem mankind from the hopeless bondage of sin perpetuated by satan. Thus a direct combat of spiritual warfare of God’s wrath against evil ensued - and through the years that warfare has overflowed from the spiritual arena into the physical arena of the destruction of wars.

During the time of this final world empire, the “rock” will smash all the others to bits, a prophecy that “God will set up an eternal kingdom for believers that will never be

destroyed” Note the prophecy in Daniel 2:44 *And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not 6. be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.* All previous earthly kingdoms will be brought to an end. And God will establish the New heaven and New Earth.

That is where we are in the world today, and the question all Christians have is, how much are we going to have to endure until the trumpet sounds? One response is comforting, but does not really answer the question. The comfort response is: Believers who are alive when Jesus returns will be saved from the earthly wrath of God: Revelation 3:10 *Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth.*

Prophecy proclaims it, history proves it, our world is experiencing it – the message remains the same today as when Jesus extended it in Mathew 11:28 *Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*

Scripture:

Daniel 2:5

Daniel 2:11

Daniel 2:18

Daniel 2:19-23

Daniel 2:32-33

Daniel 2:37-38

Daniel 5:30-31

Daniel 10:20-21

Daniel 2:33

Daniel 2:40

Daniel 2:41

Daniel 2:34-35

Daniel 2:42-44

Daniel 2:45

Daniel 2:44

Revelation 3:10

Mathew 11:28