

Daniel's Interpretation Of The Image

Daniel 2:19, 28 to 36. 'The secret was revealed to Daniel in a vision of the night, and Daniel blessed the God of heaven ... "There is a God in heaven Who reveals secrets. He has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what it is that will be in the latter days. Your dream and the visions in your head while on your bed are these: As for you, O king, as you were lying on your bed thoughts came into your mind about what will come to pass hereafter, and He Who reveals secrets was making known to you what will come to pass. As for me, this secret is not revealed to me for any wisdom that I have more than anyone else living, but in order that the interpretation may be made known to the king so you may know the thoughts of your mind. You, O king, saw and beheld a great image. This image which was mighty and of exceedingly great brightness stood before you and the appearance of it was frightening. Its head was of fine gold, its chest and its arms of silver, its belly and its thighs of bronze, its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of baked potter's clay. As you looked, a Stone was cut out without human hands, which smote the image on its feet of iron and clay and broke them to pieces. Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver and the gold were crushed and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors, and the wind carried them away so not a trace of them could be found. The Stone that smote the image became a great Rock and filled the whole earth. This was your dream and we will tell the interpretation of it to the king."

Daniel 2:37. "You, O king, are king of the kings to whom the God of heaven has given the kingdom, the power, the might, and the glory. Wherever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the birds of the heavens, He has given them into your hand and has made you to rule over them all. You are the head of gold (Babylonian Empire, 66 years, 605 to 539 BC). After you will arise another (silver) kingdom (Medo/Persian Empire, 208 years, 539 to 331 BC) inferior to you, and still a third kingdom of bronze or brass (Grecian Empire, 163 years, 331 to 168 BC), which will rule over all the (known) earth. The fourth kingdom (Roman Empire, 644 years, 168 BC to 476 AD) will be strong as iron, since iron breaks to pieces and subdues all things and like iron that crushes; it will crush all these kingdoms. As you saw the feet and toes, partly of clay and partly of iron, it will be a divided kingdom but there will be in it some of the strength of iron, just as you saw the iron mixed with clay. As the toes of the feet were partly of iron and partly of clay, so the kingdom will be partly strong and partly broken. As you saw the iron mixed with clay, so they will mingle themselves in the seed of men, but they will not hold together as iron does not mix with clay." The feet and toes are the remnants of the failed Roman Empire and the emerging modern world to the present day and up to the return of Jesus.

Daniel 2:44. "In the days of these final ten kings, will the God of heaven set up a Kingdom which will never be destroyed, nor will its sovereignty be left to another people but it will consume all these kingdoms and it will stand forever. Just as you saw 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 will come to pass hereafter. The dream is certain and the interpretation of it is sure."

Daniel chapter 2 tells us King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon had a dream. The problem was, he could not remember his dream so he sent for his magicians and other soothsayers to interpret the dream. They said it was not fair to ask them to interpret a dream he could not remember. They told him to tell them the dream and they would give the interpretation. Nebuchadnezzar said they were just trying to buy time and if they could not tell him the dream and the interpretation, they would all be executed. When Daniel was about to be executed he asked what the hurry was. Daniel told the executioner to give him a little time because there is a God in heaven Who would tell the king his dream and the interpretation. Daniel told his three friends Hananiah (Shadrach), Mishael (Meshach) and Azariah (Abednego) to pray so they would not perish with the magicians. The Lord revealed the dream and the interpretation to Daniel who went and told King Nebuchadnezzar his dream and the interpretation. The interpretation of the dream was an accurate image or picture of the earth's history from about 600 BC to the present age, the 'Latter Days' mentioned in Daniel 2:28.

Daniel told Nebuchadnezzar of a Stone (Jesus) that would come and smash the image to pieces. Daniel's interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream outlines the history of the Gentile world powers and the setting up of the eternal Kingdom of God. The four metals of which the image was made, represented four successive Gentile empires – each with the power to rule over the whole known inhabited earth – but no empire went that far – although the Romans conquered more than any other. The four pagan empires were the Babylonian Empire (ruled by Nimrod, Genesis 10:8 to 12) followed by the Persian Empire (initially ruled by Cyrus then Darius, 2 Chronicles 36:22 & 23; Daniel 5:31), then the Grecian Empire which was divided up into four areas (Daniel 8:21) and lastly the Roman Empire. 'The ram you saw having two horns, they are the kings of Media and Persia. The shaggy he-goat is the king of Greece, and the great horn between his eyes is the first king (Alexander the Great). As for the horn which was shattered, in whose place four others arose, four kingdoms will arise out of his nation but not having his power' (Daniel 8:20 to 22).

The Roman Empire was divided into the Eastern and Western Roman Empires as represented by the two 'legs' of the image. The feet are the last form of worldwide Gentile rule – the Roman Empire. After some time, the Roman Empire was divided further into the ten 'toes' made up of ten separate provinces within the Roman Empire. Israel was one of those provinces when Jesus' first appeared on earth to set up the Kingdom whose sovereignty will never be given to another nation. It is at the feet of the image when permanent destruction came and there has not been a worldwide Gentile empire since the Roman Empire fell – after Jesus came to set up the Kingdom of God on earth. God's Kingdom has impacted on all of the earthly kingdoms and countries because there has been born-again Christians in every country on earth, of every tribe, peoples, language and nation (Revelation 5:9; 7:9). The Biblical 'latter days' or the 'last days' are the time period

from the setting up of the Kingdom of God on earth at the first coming of Jesus, right through to when Jesus returns. When Daniel referred to the latter days, he would have referred to this time of grace, between the two appearances of Jesus. The Stone is Jesus, ushering in the Messiah's Kingdom. The four great empires that dominated history for hundreds of years; Babylon, Persia, Greece and Rome, in the sight of man were very impressive but in the sight of God they were nothing. Firstly, God presented them in the form of a dream, not reality, just a dream. Secondly, the man who dreamt about them could not remember his dream. Thirdly, in the dream they were only an image which was going to be smashed, and again, there was no reality as though God was saying, "That is what I think of Gentile world power ... nothing."

The Stone (Jesus) did not slowly adjust the world situation, He smashed it to pieces, suddenly. Nor did the Gentiles decide it would be a good idea to serve the Lord. Jesus came and smashed them very suddenly. The Stone (Jesus) that struck the image became a great Rock and filled the whole earth with the Gospel Message. That is a picture of sudden, total intervention by Almighty God and it came with the birth of a tiny baby – Jesus our Rock. The Stone became the Messianic Kingdom that God is in the process of setting up. Jesus has begun the work already by saving humanity from its sins. We are part of God's eternal plan; His eternal Kingdom. Jesus said, "The Kingdom of God has come to you ... near to you" (Matthew 12:28; Luke 10:9 & 11; 11:20). When Jesus sets up His rule on earth from Jerusalem, it will not be by gradually Christianising the world but as suddenly as a thief in the night. 'Of that day and hour no one knows ... Watch therefore, for you do not know in what day your Lord is coming' (Matthew 24:36, 42 & 43). That day should not catch us unprepared because we have been warned to expect it. "See, I have warned you beforehand" (Matthew 24:25).

This is God speaking, "I have made a covenant with My chosen One. I have sworn to David My servant, 'Your Descendent will I establish forever and I will build up your throne for all generations'" (Psalm 89:3). Although this Psalm speaks about a person, the hidden meaning is referring to Jesus the Messiah. The covenant mentioned here had Jesus in mind. He is the Descendent Who will sit on the throne forever. David and his family have long since died out and none of His race have sat on the Jewish throne for more than 2,000 years, but Jesus will reign forever. The Kingdom of God was prophesied about in the Old Testament and established by Jesus as recorded in the New Testament. The Lord stated emphatically, that the sovereignty of His Kingdom will not be left to another people – it will always and forever be Jewish. Jesus our King has ushered in the Kingdom of God. He is God but He is also a Man. 'For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Jesus our Messiah' (1 Timothy 2:5). Jesus will be a Jewish Man forever. The eternal Kingdom of God is therefore now, and will forever be ruled by a Jewish Man (Jesus), Who is also our Sovereign King (Luke 19:38). God will not allow another people to rule His Kingdom (Daniel 2:44). Gentile rule is finished. The Kingdom of God is Jewish and all non-Jews have to be adopted by salvation into His Kingdom (Ephesians 1:5).

Here is an interesting footnote. Although the Roman Empire has gone forever, we still have remnants of the infrastructure and inventions the Romans set up for their people that we would not want to live without. They provided clean water for the people via aqueducts and one aqueduct is still being used after over 2,000 years. They made roads for people to travel more safely and some of those Roman roads are still in use today all over the vast area of what was once part of their empire. They had schools and universities, central heating, a type of police force and of course the Roman Catholic Church. The Roman language, Latin is still used today and Roman numerals are frequently in use. Many Latin words, literacy characters, their alphabet, their calendar and even some of their public holidays are still used in almost every country and language around the world. New Year's Day is one Roman public holiday. Many names given to babies that were popular during the days of Roman rule are still popular today as are some place names and street names. Some of the laws introduced by the Romans are still laws today. Their government structure is still used today, for example, prime minister, governors, the senate, councils, voting and elections by the people and a public gallery at the seat of government. They also had lawyers, charities, agriculture, glass windows and primitive types of hospitals. Their apartment blocks were often made by using their famous hard concrete that was so strong some of their buildings still exist. Hadrian's Wall was built by Emperor Hadrian. Workable sanitation was used by the Roman Empire. They introduced public toilets and sewerage to remove waste. Wealthy Romans even had flush toilets and sophisticated drainage. There are many other aspects of the Roman Empire that are part of our modern culture and way of life, comfortable things we would not like to live without. These things are the fulfilment of the prophecy, 'They will mingle themselves with the descendents of men' (Daniel 2:43). This was the Roman Empire that Jesus was born into to establish His Eternal Kingdom. 'Your throne God, is forever and ever. A sceptre of equity is the sceptre of Your Kingdom' (Psalm 45:6).

Amen and God bless you.

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