

## Lesson 3 Daniel 2

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[ 0 : 00 ] By helping us understand that and reminding us, this is one of the things that I like to do when I'm doing any kind of preaching or Bible study, is to go back and look at the big picture again.

Why did this person write this book? Why did he write these things? That is a very important question because it helps to shape how we make application.

Right? So if he wrote this, Daniel wrote this, in order to help people who are under persecution, under oppression, to have faith and hope and to know how to live in that circumstance, then we need to be careful with how we make application of what's going on here to other things.

And in the book of Daniel, the big question is always about the end times. So we've got to be careful not saying too much about the end times and neglecting to talk about the situation that they were going through.

And so, anyway, so as we look at this, we're going to see a couple of things that I think will be encouraging for us. How do we live under times that are difficult and oppressive?

[ 1 : 13 ] And we're going to divide today's lesson into two big categories. We're going to look at God's message that he gave to Nebuchadnezzar and then the meaning of that message that he gave through Daniel.

And so, the first part is God's message. It's verse 1 through 23. And under that heading, I've got the next one, and that is the king's demand, verses 1 through 5.

Here are the words of the Lord. Now, in the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuchadnezzar had dreams and his spirit was troubled. And his sleep left him. Then the king gave orders to call in the magicians, the conjurers, the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans to tell the king his dreams.

So they came in and stood before the king, and the king said to them, I had a dream, and my spirit is anxious to understand the dream. Then the Chaldeans spoke to the king in Aramaic, which, by the way, we talked about how this section, chapter 2 through chapter 7 is written in Aramaic and not Hebrew.

It begins right here with, O king. Okay? O king, live forever. Tell the dream to your servants, and we will declare the interpretation. The king replied to the Chaldeans, The command from me is firm.

[ 2 : 32 ] 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 made into a rubbish heap. Here's the king's demand.

Okay? Now it says that this happens in the second year of Nebuchadnezzar, and if you read chapter 1, you can see that Daniel and his friends are educated for three years.

So a lot of people point out that maybe there's a discrepancy in time, but what they fail to remember, or even maybe know, is that Babylon, Israel, Judah, many of the nations back then practiced what they call year of ascendancy.

Year of ascendancy is this. You might come in to be king March of 2023, but your first year of reign is not until January, March 24.

Okay? Until January, until January 2024. So in other words, that whole first year where you come in doesn't count. It's year zero. So that's probably how that is handled.

[ 3 : 38 ] The other thing that's disturbing about this is the demand that the king has that he says, you're going to tell me the dream and its interpretation, or I'm going to make you guys a pile of body parts.

And I'm going to destroy your families. Like, you've got to understand, Nebuchadnezzar is a despot. He's a tyrant. And he is evil. Don't fool yourself, because he says things at the end of this chapter that make it sound like he's different.

That's who he is. Okay? Alright? So let's go to the next section then. This is the wise man's dilemma. This is the wise man's dilemma. Verse 6 through 13. 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. They answered a second time and said, Let the king tell the dream to his servants and we will declare the interpretation. The king replied, I know for certain that you're bargaining for time.

Inasmuch as you have seen that the command from me is firm, 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, corrupt words before me until the situation is changed.

[ 5 : 00 ] Therefore tell the dream that I may know that you can declare to me its interpretation. The Chaldeans answered the king and said, There is not a man on earth who could declare the matter for the king, inasmuch as no great king or ruler has ever asked anything like this of any magician, conjurer, or Chaldean.

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.

Because of this, the king became indignant and very furious and gave orders to destroy all the wise men of Babylon. So the decree went forth that the wise men should be slain, and they looked for Daniel and his friends to kill them.

Now the wise men have four problems here. Number one, Nebuchadnezzar's wise to their normal schemes. I tell you the dream, you tell me some interpretation that you've concocted on your own, and I don't know that it's really what the dream means at all.

The second thing is that the wise men know in verse 10 that nobody can read another person's mind. You can't read another person's mind. The third problem they have is that only God can tell you what somebody else is thinking.

[ 6 : 23 ] And for the Chaldeans, the Babylonians, they did not believe that the gods lived with men. Part of the reason for that is that this is the beginning of the thought that says what is spiritual is good, what is physical is bad.

So the gods can't live with us because that would taint them. So you've got to keep that in mind as we get further down. And the fourth problem they have is that the king gives the command to round everybody up.

So even if you hadn't been there, like Daniel and his three friends, you're going to be now part of the death and the execution that's going to happen. So Daniel is going to be facing certain death because of all of this.

Well, then we get to the third part of this part, this Daniel's determination. So let's read verses 14 through 23. Then Daniel replied with discretion and discernment to Ariok, the captain of the king's bodyguard, who had gone forth to slay the wise men of Babylon.

And he said to Ariok, the king's commander, for what reason is the decree from the king so urgent? Then Ariok informed Daniel about the matter. So Daniel went in and requested of the king that he would give him time in order that he might declare the interpretation to the king.

[ 7 : 49 ] Then Daniel went to his house and informed his friends, Hananiah, Michelle, and Azariah about the matter so that they might request compassion from the God of heaven concerning this mystery.

So that Daniel and his friends would not be destroyed with the rest of the wise men of Babylon. Then the mystery was revealed to Daniel in a night vision. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven and Daniel said, let the name of God be blessed forever and ever for wisdom and power belong to him.

It is he who changes the times and the epochs. He removes kings and establishes kings. He gives wisdom to wise men and knowledge to men of understanding.

It is he who reveals the profound and hidden things. He knows what is in the darkness and the light dwells with him. To you, O 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 kings matter.

[ 8 : 55 ] I think it's interesting that Daniel approaches the bodyguard, the head bodyguard. He's very kind of discerning and careful. Why is this so urgent? You know, you can kind of see him just trying to play it just a little bit.

Then he says, okay, yes, I can. Let's get some more time. I think that we can do this. So what I find interesting is that the first thing that they turn to is prayer.

You know, he gets more time, but he doesn't consult with his friends. We don't hear that. We don't hear that he goes and searches something, but they go to pray. And it's interesting to me because they pray for compassion.

We're told very specifically that they pray for compassion. Now they're given more than compassion in answer, but they pray for compassion.

That seems like a strange thing to pray for to some degree. We can kind of understand it. But here's what I think is fascinating. I think, because I know that Daniel, being of the tribe of Judah, he knows the scriptures.

[ 10 : 06 ] And here's what's interesting. When Solomon built the temple and dedicated it in 1 Kings 8, he prayed to the Lord. And in his prayer in verse 50, listen to what he says.

Forgive your people who have sinned against you and all their transgressions which they have transgressed against you and make them objects of compassion before those who have taken them captive that they may have compassion on them.

I think he knows this prayer. And I think he knows that one of the things that Solomon was asking the Lord for is that if we don't stay faithful to you and we get carted off into some other nation, let your people be objects of compassion in front of their captors.

And that's what Daniel is leaning on. He knows that that's scripture. That's been inspired by God. It's written down. And he is leaning upon the scriptures to inform what he should pray.

It's what I would call he's praying the scriptures. But then he begins to give praise to God, right? He gives praise to God. Verses 20 through 23.

[ 11 : 18 ] It starts with let the name of God be blessed forever and ever for wisdom and power belong to him. So he's talking about how worthy God is of praise, that you should praise God for his power and his wisdom.

Then verse 21. Now this is fascinating too. It is he who changes the times and the epochs. He removes kings and establishes kings.

Now here's what's interesting. That particular piece right there, first of all, when he says kings, that can be interchanged with the idea of a kingdom.

Okay? So it's either he can remove and establish kingdoms just like he can kings. That word's used interchangeably. So why is he saying this?

Well, we know that the dream is about to be of a statue. And if you have any background in it at all, you know there's something about kingdoms there. So God's about to establish kingdoms.

[ 12 : 22 ] Well, if he's about to establish kingdoms, what kingdom is going to be removed? Well, the kingdom under Solomon. This is a description of the rule of Solomon at the end of his life, okay?

Okay? 2 Chronicles 9, 26 through 30. He was the ruler over all the kings from the Euphrates, even to the land of the Philistines. Do you know where the Philistines lived?

So if you have Jerusalem here, the Philistines are northeast on the coast of the Mediterranean. Okay? That's where the Philistines are. So from here, all the way to the Euphrates.

And then the next phrase is, as far as the border of Egypt. So come down south from Jerusalem and go this way over to like the Nile area.

So all of this area, the known world, Solomon was ruler over it. Okay? The king made silver as common as stones in Jerusalem.

[ 13 : 24 ] He made cedars as plentiful as sycamore trees that are in the low land. And they were bringing horses for Solomon from Egypt and from all countries. They're paying homage to him, right?

Now the rest of his acts, the first and the last, they're written in these different places. And you can go read those places. And he reigned for 40 years. My point is this. When Solomon began to rule, all the world began to pay homage to Israel.

Israel was the kingdom of the world. And it was a theocracy. It was a kingdom where God was in charge, ostensibly, right?

And he had a vassal, a vessel, a human person who ruled in his place. But it was a theocracy. That's why you see the laws of the Old Testament having civil authority that if someone's caught in a particular sin, then they're to be executed, right?

Execution is the sword that government bears for wrongdoers. And they were having execution for not just crimes, but even sins, right?

[ 14 : 34 ] Because that's what theocracy does, all right? So, when he praises God for removing kings and establishing kings, what he's saying is that God is the one who changes the times and the epochs.

And so the time of this theocracy is over, and there's a new time coming in in this vision from the Lord concerning Nebuchadnezzar.

He goes on in his praise and talks about that it's God who reveals the profound and hidden things. He knows what's in the darkness. God knows what's in the darkness.

And the light dwells with him. And the last one is that to you, God of our fathers, I give thanks and praise for you have given me wisdom and power.

And even now, you've made known to us what we requested of you. So, here's what I want to kind of do in terms of drawing some application from this. As we think about Daniel and his friends and how they're enduring this suffering, because in chapter one, they put themselves on the line by volunteering to eat different food.

[ 15 : 51 ] This time, there's no volunteering. They're being voluntold, right? You're going to die without this dream and its interpretation. And so, what do they turn to?

They turn to the Lord in prayer and in praise. Now, I just want to focus in on that and say that when we come into our own troubles and our own sufferings, why is it that we run to everything else first before prayer?

We almost use prayer like a last-ditch effort. Or, we might go to prayer first, but then there's nothing about us in our hearts and our minds and emotions that are changed after we pray because we're not really believing what we pray.

And so, I just want to encourage us to think about prayer. And I want to kind of get to some basic level of things on prayer just for a second. And then we'll move on. And that is, how do you pray? And I think that the Lord's Prayer or the model prayer in Matthew is a great model to kind of follow through and pray in that way.

But there's other models you can use. One of the ones that I've put in your paper is called the Acts of Prayer. Has anybody ever heard of what's called the Acts of Prayer? Okay. Well, let me go through this.

[ 17 : 04 ] What this is, is this is an outline to guide your prayers. Kinds of things to pray for. The A stands for adoration. Adoration.

The first thing you want to do is you want to give praise to God. You want to adore Him. You want to tell Him how great He is. You know, this prayer that Daniel is praying to God where he lays out a bunch of praise, that's a good example for you.

You can think about that he's praising God for His wisdom. He's praising God for His power. He's praising God for answering prayer. You know, that praise is the first part of our prayer.

That's how we should start our prayers. The C stands for confession. Confession.

And in confession, we want to confess two things. Number one, we want to confess our sin. Confess our sinful attitudes. Confess our sinful words.

[ 18 : 07 ] Confess our sinful actions. Confess our sins. But the other thing we want to confess is confess our need. God, I need You. I can't do this without You. I need You to help me.

So, adoration, confession. The T stands for thanksgiving. So, you want to give thanks to God. If you've praised God, that praise, lifting Him high, should help you see your sin.

And you go to Him in prayer and you ask Him to forgive you for your sins in confession, the next obvious thing to do is to thank Him. Thank Him for the forgiveness. Thank Him for Jesus.

Thank Him for the other blessings in your life. Your family, your home, your health. You know, maybe your health is not what you wanted, but your health is not what it could be in a negative way, right?

It could be a whole lot worse. There's a lot of things to be thankful for. The S is supplication. Supplication. And if you don't know how to spell that, you're going to have to ask somebody besides me.

[ 19 : 09 ] Supplication. That means you're asking God for things. You're asking God for things. We should always be asking God for things.

Supplication. Supplication. It involves asking for things from God for me and for others.

And the way that I like to deal with that is I like to look at like a ripples in a pond. Start in the middle and they go out. So I start by praying for myself first.

Now, I don't know what happened in the history of America and American churches, but when I first started telling people that they needed to pray for themselves, they looked at me like I was crazy.

Because most people have a tendency to say, well, you know, it's selfish to pray for yourself. And I'm kind of going like, but God uses prayer to change things. Why would you not pray for yourself?

[ 20 : 13 ] So, you should always pray for yourself. And you should start with yourself. Because if you start with somebody way out there and work your way in, by the time you get to yourself, you're probably not going to be praying for yourself.

You need to pray for yourself. You need to pray for yourself. And then just like the ripples that go out, the next level, right? That's going to be, you know, a spouse or children or parents or, you know, those close to you like that.

Then the next level out might be friends and some extended family, maybe your church. And right there also in the middle of that is your pastor. And then you just keep going out, you know, your community, your world.

And so you ask for things. You ask for God to save people. You ask God to disciple people. You ask God to open people's eyes. You just ask Him for things. Now, with that in mind, I know that sometimes, maybe we don't know how to praise God.

And so there's a thing called Method of Prayer. It's a book written by Matthew Henry. And you can buy the book for \$25 or you can go to this website that I put in your notes for free.

[ 21 : 24 ] So I don't know what you want to do. And he's taken Scripture and turned them into prayers. And so let me give you an example of praise that he gives.

He takes two passages of Scripture and he writes a praise prayer. He says, This is the message which we have heard of you and we set our seal to it that it is true.

God is light and in Him there's no darkness at all. God is love. Whoever abides in love abides in God and God abides in Him. It's just extolling God for His light and extolling God for His love.

And it's just taking the Scriptures and trying to use it as something to pray back to Him. Here's another prayer. But this one is asking God to make me holy. Right? Write your law on my heart and put it within me that I may be a letter from Christ written by the Spirit of God, of the living God, not a tablet of stone, but on a tablet of human heart.

That the law of my God being in my heart none of my steps may slip. And that I may delight to do your will, O God. That I may delight in the law of God in my inner being.

[ 22 : 37 ] So He's just written some things like that that might help give words to your prayers and help you to grow in your prayers. And so I just wanted to give those resources to you as something here.

Since Daniel and his friends were praying as the first thing that they did, I think it's a challenge to us. Run to prayer first.

Run to prayer first. You might even talk about the idea of praising God. And I won't dwell too much on that, but I will say this. It's interesting that Daniel praises God for lots of different things.

Our daughter-in-law, she helps with the worship ministry at their church, and she took all their songs, she put them into a database with different theological categories about God to see, what are we singing about God?

And like, the vast majority of their songs were about the love of God. But there's probably 30 or 40 different categories about God of things we could sing about.

[ 23 : 45 ] His wisdom, His power, His knowledge, His eternity, His infiniteness, His immutability, His immortality, His power, His strength, His might, His sovereignty, His justice, His righteousness, His holiness.

I mean, there's so much to sing about God that one of the things that we want to do is be sure that we're balanced and not just focus on one attribute and not the rest of them.

You know? Alright, so any questions? That's the first part. 1 through 23. Yes, ma'am. Who says that you have to pray like that? I mean, because these guys are divinely, I mean, this order?

The order that I gave you is just a suggestion. You don't have to pray ACTS. That's just a suggestion. If there's anything that's divinely given to us as an order we should pray by would be the model prayer.

And I think this kind of matches pretty close to the model prayer. But it is just a suggestion because some people struggle to kind of be balanced in what they pray. And so it's just a tool that kind of helps.

[ 24 : 50 ] Because the only thing I really remember reading this is that you should always ask it in His name. Right. That's a given. You have to ask it in His name. Which, which, well, that's a whole other discussion because I don't think you have to say those words to be praying in His name.

In His name. Right. Because it's all for His glory is what that means. So, but, but yeah, so, so I, if you want to talk about things that we should do for praying, one is the model prayer.

But two, I think the example that they go to the scriptures to kind of guide what they say is an important thing. There's a lot of times, you know, the passage in Romans chapter 8 says sometimes we don't know what to pray, but the Holy Spirit intercedes for us with words too deep for, or the groan is too deep for words.

And I think that when you understand the relationship of the Holy Spirit to the scriptures, when we don't have words to say, we may not know what it is the scriptures are fully saying, when we pray the scriptures back, that is the Holy Spirit speaking back to the Trinity.

Right? Because those are His words that He's inspired. And so, so yeah, so I'm not trying to find anything here as a must, but just trying to offer tools that will, that will help.

[ 26 : 06 ] Because sometimes I hear people following this thing and offering praise, I mean, like you can say a praiseful thing for God and stuff, but then they just keep going on and on and it's like schmoozing somebody and then asking for something behind it.

And I don't know, it just seems kind of sneaky. You know, and some people present it. Yeah, and I can understand that.

I think, I think two things I would say is that one is you know, we don't know what somebody's heart attitude is when they're doing that. And I know that there's times that I can feel that way because I know that if I were to do that it would probably be that.

So we have to watch our own heart attitudes. But at the same time, it's never wrong to praise God. You know, even at the end of this chapter you're going to see Nebuchadnezzar praise God but he's not converted you know, at all.

and yet he still gives praise to God and that's a right and good thing. Even if his motives are tainted, even if his motives are nasty and whatever, God deserves all praise even from the most wicked vessels because he is worthy of all of it.

[ 27 : 16 ] So I don't want to lose that but at the same time I understand what you're saying. Sometimes it seems as though there's an insincerity that's there. But I think that that has to be dealt with at the heart level instead of throwing all praise out and saying well let's get rid of praise so we don't do that.

It's like well no, you just need to correct your heart attitude. You know, don't act like a schmoozer. You know? Because it's right to praise God. Well like you said we don't know everybody's heart in any way.

Yeah, good question. Good question. Yes ma'am. What was B on the ABCs? It was somebody help me out the wise man dilemma.

What's that? I don't know what it was. Confession. No, C is confession. So adoration, confession, thanksgiving, supplication.

Okay. That's right. I got it wrong. Alright, any other questions? Now we get to the apocalyptic part.

[ 28 : 31 ] This is verses 24 through 49 and I got this laid out in I think four parts. Here's Daniel's boast. Verse 24 through 30. Let's say what?

Dodie, you want to read that for us? Verses 24 through 30. Therefore Daniel went to Ariok, whom the king had appointed to destroy the wise men of Babylon.

He went and said thus to him, Do not destroy the wise men of Babylon. Take me before the king and I will tell the king the interpretation. Then Ariok quickly brought Daniel before the king and said thus to him, I have found a man of the captives of Judah who will make known to the king the interpretation.

The king answered and said to Daniel whose name was Belteshazzar, Are you able to make known to me the dream which I have seen and its interpretation? Daniel answered in the presence of the king and said, The secret which the king has demanded, the wise men and the astrologers, the magicians, and the soothsayers cannot declare to the king.

But there is a God in heaven who reveals secrets and he has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what will be in the latter days. Your dream and the visions of your head upon your bed were these.

[ 29 : 59 ] As for you, O king, thoughts came to your mind while on your bed about what would come to pass after this. And he who reveals secrets has made known to you what will be.

But as for me, this secret has not been revealed to me because I have more wisdom than anyone living. But for our sakes who make known the interpretation to the king and that you may know the thoughts of your heart.

Okay. I think that last thing, it's not because I have more wisdom but it's not because I have more wisdom. I'm not any better than anybody else is the shape of that sentence.

So we got a couple of things that are kind of interesting. Daniel is concerned with the life of the other wise men. The bodyguard is extremely jealous to take credit for everything.

Look, I found somebody who can interpret your dream. But what's interesting is that as Daniel answers and talks to the king, he kind of agrees with the wise men to some degree that no man can tell the king what his dream is.

[ 31 : 10 ] Verse 27 compared to verse 10. But then Daniel kind of agrees but not exactly on their second point and that only the gods can reveal this. Right?

So, verse 28 and verse 11. The wise men's view of God, again, is that God can't come down this way. There's this line right here. It is the plane of existence or the plane of being and the being of God is so different from the being of humans that the gods can't cross that barrier because then they would be crossing into a place that's full of sin.

Right? So that's the Babylonian, Persian sort of view of divinity. But what Daniel says is that yes, only God knows this but he reveals this.

He's basically saying God transverses and comes across that barrier. That's who the God that I serve is like. So he's greater than the other gods. But then he says that this is what God has revealed to you what's going to take place in the latter days.

The latter days. I want to talk about that phrase for just a second because I just want to be sure that we're all thinking the same way on this. That phrase is found in several other places in the Old Testament.

[ 32 : 30 ] It's found here Genesis, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Isaiah, Micah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, all those verses. I'm not going to leave that there for long if you want those verses. I can give them to you on my notes later.



You get the same kind of phrase in the New Testament in several places like John 11 and Timothy, Hebrews, this kind of a thing. The bottom line is I want to look at some of these passages from the New Testament to kind of see what does it say is the last days or these latter days.

So, for instance, in Hebrews chapter 1 verse 2 it says that in these last days he has spoken to us in his son whom he appointed heir of all things.

What time frame is this talking about? In these last days he's spoken to us in his son. How did God speak through his son? In Jesus' ministry.

That's right. The first coming of Jesus in his incarnation, his life, his ministry and he's saying in these last days. He's calling that the last days.

[ 33 : 36 ] Okay, let me give you another one. 1 Peter chapter 1 verse 20 talking about Jesus here for Jesus was foreknown before the foundation of the world but has appeared in these last times for the sake of you.

When are these last times that Jesus appeared? Here. Right before he was crucified. Right. Again, it goes back to his first coming. His incarnation, his life, his ministry.

Right? So, it's that first coming that's called the last times. Now, look at John chapter 11 verse 24. This is Mary and Martha. Lazarus has passed away.

They're going like, well, if you'd been here he wouldn't have died and Jesus says he'll live again and she says I know he will arise again in the resurrection in the last days.

Now, what last day is this resurrection going to be? When? When we all sin. That's right. It's at the second coming. Okay? And then you go back to 1 Peter and I read this verse Sunday morning about the inheritance we have that's protected for us but we're also protected and it says who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

[ 34 : 54 ] Something that we don't have yet that's coming in the future. So again, it's the second coming. Here's my point. From the first coming of Jesus to the second coming of Jesus and in between all of that is the last days.

It's all the latter times. It's all the last days. Okay. So the next thing that happens is Daniel recounts the dream.

Here we go. Let's read about this dream beginning in verse 31. You, O king, were looking and behold there was a single great statue. That statue which was large and of extraordinary splendor was standing in front of you and its appearance was awesome.

The head of that statue was made of fine gold. Its breast and its arms of silver. Its belly and its thighs of bronze. Its legs of iron.

Its feet partly of iron and partly of clay. You continued looking until a stone was cut out without hands and it struck the statue on its feet of iron and clay and crushed them.

[ 36 : 09 ] Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, the gold were crushed all at the same time and became 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 whole earth. Now, remember what I said.

One of the things we need to do is we just need to get the vision right. So don't start telling me different nations but let's just look at what we have in the vision.

Okay? So somebody, in your own words, what do we have in this vision? We have different empires.

See, don't use the word empire. That's already interpreted. Kingdoms. Or kingdoms. Because in the vision we don't know that yet. We're going to interpret it later. We just want to see it. Well, somebody is going to be a whole lot stronger than what's right there at that point.

[ 37 : 11 ] So what we have is we have one statue. Yeah, a statue that is made of all these... We start off with gold. Gold. Then we go to silver. Yep. And then we go to bronze.

Yep. And then we go to iron. Yes. And then we go to clay. That's right. Iron and clay together. That's right. So we have these four layers, if you will. And then what happens?

Something else comes into the picture. A rock that is cut out. A rock cut out without hands. Which means that was from God.

It's got to be from God. Okay? And what does it do? It hits what? It hits the statue. It does. And it hits it specifically in the feet. And when it hits the feet, it tumbles.

It then crushes all of it. Now I don't know exactly what that image is, but because it didn't tell us, it's not important. The important part is that it's one statue. It gets crushed at a certain point, but it crushes all of it.

[ 38 : 11 ] And then what happens to that stone? It just... It just... It grows into a big mountain and fills the whole earth. Okay? So that's...

You've got to do that. You've got to do that work and look at all of those things without saying what the gold means. Because if you don't, you have a tendency to get ahead of yourself and there are little pieces that you might, you know, leave out.

Now the next thing we need to do is say, okay, does... is there a clue in the text that tells us what this might be?

And we do. In verse 38, you'll notice that Daniel's talking to Nebuchadnezzar and at the very end of verse 38, he says, you are the head of gold.

Now, now we can begin to kind of look at this thing and say, okay, we have a clue about how to look at this. If the head of gold is Nebuchadnezzar the king and therefore the kingdom of Babylon, then these other metals must be kingdoms and empires as well.

[ 39 : 20 ] So you weren't wrong. You're just getting ahead of me there, right? Well, let's think about the stone. One of the things about the stone that I find interesting, verse 34, this is the, this comes from the interpretation part, you continued looking until the stone was cut out without hands and it struck the statue on its feet, no, this is the description, and clay and crushed them.

Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, the gold were crushed all at the same time and became like chaff, okay? It doesn't mean it literally became like chaff, but it means that there was no trace to be found and the stone that struck the statue became a great mountain.

The stone becomes a mountain and fills the earth. So those both are clues to us to know how to interpret this. So let's look at what Daniel says about the interpretation, okay?

Daniel gives the interpretation, that's letter C, verse 36 through 45 and Michelle, can I get you to read those verses? This was the dream, now we will tell the king its interpretation.

Your majesty, you are king of kings, the God of the heavens has given you sovereignty, power, strength, and glory. Wherever people live, or wild animals, or birds of the sky, he has handed them over to you and made you ruler over them all.

[ 40 : 44 ] You are the head of gold. After you, there will arise another kingdom inferior to yours and then another, a third kingdom of bronze, which will rule the whole earth. A fourth kingdom will be as strong as iron, for iron crushing everything, and like iron that smashes, it will crush and smash all the others.

You saw the feet and toes, partly of a potter's fired clay and partly of iron. It will be a divided kingdom, though some of the strength of iron will be in it.

You saw the iron mixed with clay and that the toes of the feet were partly iron and partly fired clay. Part of the kingdom will be strong and part will be brutal. You saw the iron mixed with clay, the peoples will mix with one another but will not hold together, just as iron is not mixed with fired clay.

In the days of those kings, the God of the heavens will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed and this kingdom will not be left to another people. It will crush all these kingdoms and break them to an end, but will itself endure forever.

You saw a stone break off from the mountain without a hand touching it and it crushed the iron, bronze, fired clay, silver, and gold. The great God has told the king what will happen in the future.

[ 41 : 57 ] The dream is certain and its interpretation relied. Okay, so let's take this piece by piece, okay? This is so much fun, okay? So the first part is that Nebuchadnezzar or Babylon is the head of gold.

Okay, I'll put you a little graphic up here if you want to look at it. It's the only one I can really find and it's okay. So Babylon is the head of gold.

That's the Babylonian kingdom. They were from 605 to 539. The Medo-Persian empire was next. That's the silver, okay? Now, the next one is Greece under Alexander the Great, which by the way, the reason it lasts so long is because when Alexander died, his kingdom split into four pieces and one of those pieces was over Jerusalem specifically, but eventually they go out and then Rome begins to take over.

Rome really began to decline after Jesus was born and it just took them a long time to kind of finally die out. It's a little bit like Solomon's kingdom, right? You had all these kings that followed him and that was kind of the end.

And then you have what's called the divided kingdom. It's kind of this present day that's going on. One of the things we don't want to do is we don't want to say, well, who are the toes on the feet?

[ 43 : 19 ] And the reason is because it doesn't give us anything to figure that out. It's just giving us big picture. Okay? So we know because Daniel says very clearly that King Nebuchadnezzar is the head of gold.

Okay? Wait a minute. Before I do that, let me see. Is this next slide going to show up? That's kind of hard to see, isn't it? Yeah. Yeah. Okay. Well, we'll just skip it then.

We don't have to worry about it. So in Daniel 2, 37 through 38, as he tells Nebuchadnezzar that he's the head of gold, he says this, the God of heaven has given the kingdom, the power, the strength, and the glory to you, and wherever the sons of men dwell or the beasts of the field or the birds of the sky, he has given them into your hand and caused you to rule over them.

You are the head of gold. In other words, he's king of kings. God's given him authority over all the animal kingdom and he's given him authority over all men. And here's what I want you to see.

That, that is a kind of a Easter egg, if you will. It's like a foreshadowing, backshadowing kind of a thing to two different things.

[ 44 : 38 ] One is Psalm 8. What is man that you take thought of him and the son of man that you care for him? Yet you have made him a little lower than God and you crown him with glory and majesty.

Now let me pause there. Psalm 8 is a great psalm. The writer to the Hebrews uses it to talk about Jesus as the exalted man.

And you're going to see how he gets exalted here in a second. You make him to rule over the works of your hands. You've put all things under his feet, all sheep and oxen, and also the beasts of the field, the birds of the heavens, and the fish of the sea, whatever passes through the paths of the sea.

In other words, the psalmist is writing about the exalted man who has everything put into subjection under his feet.

As it should have been with whom? Adam. And then God said, let us make man in our image according to our likeness and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.

[ 45 : 47 ] What's happening is that as God tells Nebuchadnezzar through a dream about the latter days, he's telling Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuchadnezzar, you're the first.

You're the source. You're the new exalted man. You're the new Adam, if you will. And the theocracy that once was has been removed and now the time of the Gentiles, the kingdoms of the Gentiles, the empire of the Gentiles has come in and you will have rule over all men and beasts.

In other words, he's basically saying things have changed now. And here's what's going to happen and Nebuchadnezzar is the beginning of this new era.

And like the exalted man of Romans, of Psalm 8, he's going to rule over all of them. He's been given this authority and like Adam, like Adam, he is then to represent God.

He doesn't do too great at that. But the other kingdoms then, the silver most likely being it's inferior and the Medo-Persian empire was inferior to Babylon.

[ 46 : 57 ] then you had the bronze being the kingdom of Greece and then you have the last one, the iron, being the kingdom of Rome.

I'm a little confused with where I am at the moment. Hang on one second. Yeah, okay. I'm still just back here.

Um, let's talk about this, this, uh, one from Rome for just a second. It's interesting because a lot of what he says about this empire, we call it Rome, he just calls it the iron kingdom, is that it's strong as iron, it'll crush, it shatters, it can break into pieces, but it's also divided and brittle.

it can be easily torn apart. And verse 43 even talks about how the clay and the iron come together because of marriage, basically. It's the idea of descendants coming together.

So, so, here's then this, just the statue. We're not talking about the stone yet, just the statue, and just summarize what is this. This is showing that the Gentile kingdoms will now take reign and they have a season to reign.

[ 48 : 23 ] Now, I want you to think about Daniel and who he's writing to. He's writing to people who are in captivity, who are being oppressed, who are asking questions like, how much longer?

And the answer comes in the way of a dream to Nebuchadnezzar, oh, you've got a ways to go. Really and truthfully, the theocracy is over.

That time period is over. Something new is coming. But it's something that's going to last for a while, but it's going to come to an end. It's going to come to an end. And that's where we get to the stone that's cut out without hands.

And I want you to notice, it says in verse 44, in the days of those kings, that's speaking specifically of the feet, 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 of these kingdoms. So the question ends up being, when are these days?

[ 49 : 29 ] When are these iron and clay feet mixed? And there's a lot of people that have a lot of opinions about this, but this is the way I see it.

because what he's telling us is God is going to set up his kingdom that starts off as a stone and that stone grows to fill the whole earth as a mountain.

That matches the New Testament description of the nature of the kingdom. In the New Testament, what we have is we have this idea that when Jesus came, it began the process of destroying these kingdoms and as the church grows, as the kingdom grows, it's going to come down to where it fills the earth and by the second coming, it's all done with.

And so often the question is, is this little rock that destroys the feet, is that the first coming of Jesus or the second coming of Jesus?

And my answer is yes. Because of the nature of the kingdom. So you can write down Matthew 13 if you want to and specifically Matthew 13, 24 through 30.

[ 50 : 48 ] This is a parable that Jesus told where he said that the kingdom of God is like a man who goes out and sows seed in his field and the wheat begins to grow. But in the night, in the night, his enemy comes and sows weeds among the wheat.

And so the servants see that the next day or so and they say, hey, you want us to take out the weeds? And he says, no, let the weeds and the wheat grow together until harvest time. And then when harvest comes, he sends them back out, they take everything up and they separate the weeds from the wheat and the weeds get thrown into the fiery furnace.

Now, Jesus explains what this means. Okay? We don't have to guess what it means. Here's the explanation. He said, the one who sows the good seed is the son of man.

He's talking about himself. And the field is the world. And as for the good seed, these are the sons of the kingdom. And the tares are the sons of the evil one.

And the enemy who sowed them is the devil and the harvest is the end of the age and the reapers are the angels. So what you have then is you have the son of man in a sowing season, sowing seed for the kingdom.

[ 51 : 58 ] It starts small, but then it grows into wheat. And at the harvest time, the son of man sends his angels out and they gather, right? And it's an interesting gathering because what happens is that the weeds are pulled out and sent away and the wheat is left.

That's a whole other discussion but we can get into that another time. The point is is that the kingdom has two stages. It comes in seed form and in harvest.

It comes as something small that grows. It comes as a rock and grows into a mountain. It comes as an inauguration and a consummation.

And so what we're saying then is that the kingdom started at the first coming and it continues to grow until the second coming. And that may be different than what you're used to hearing about the kingdom of God and hearing about things often in the future but that's what matches and the Bible has this consistent constant thing of the already and not yet.

So you can look at the kingdom of God here in seed form as the stone and it is already but then there's part of it that's not yet.

[ 53 : 19 ] It's kind of like the devil, right? Has Christ defeated the devil? But is the devil still around? Here's what's interesting.

You've got 1 John 3.8 that says the Son of God appeared for the purpose to destroy the works of the devil. You can go to Hebrews chapter 2 that says something similar. It talks about him destroying Satan.

But then you have 1 Peter 5.8 that calls him a lion who roams around. Or Romans chapter 16 verse 20 that says that God will soon crush Satan under your feet.

How can he be destroyed and still need to be destroyed? Because this is the way the Bible is. Already and not yet. Already and not yet.

The last part of the chapter verse 46 through 49 Daniel is rewarded for giving the dream and the interpretation.

[ 54 : 18 ] Listen to what it says here. the king answered Daniel and said surely your God is a God of gods and a Lord of kings and a revealer of mysteries since you have been able to reveal this mystery.

Then the king promoted Daniel and gave him many great gifts. He made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon and chief prefect over all the wise men of Babylon.

and Daniel made request of the king and he appointed Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego over the administration of the province of Babylon while Daniel was at the king's court.

He praises God that he is not a converted king. He's not a converted king. Let me wrap this up with just a couple of thoughts on some application then.

We see this vision we sort of see how it's played out interpretation and history and that's a really exciting thing to see but remember Daniel's audience is not United States of America in 2023.

[ 55 : 16 ] His audience are a bunch of Israelites in captivity and oppression who are asking how did we get here? Why are we here? How much longer do I have to stay? Does God still love me?

And he is telling them God is sovereign over history. God is the king over history and the time that you have left is a little while longer.

One of the things that we have a tendency to do is we have a tendency to think in terms of short periods of time. As parents we have a tendency to think 18 we've made it.

Now most of you know that's a lot and most of you if I had been around when my first one turned 18 you would have done like everybody else has done in my past and you would have been silent you would have been like when that new baby is born you would have been like you better enjoy them while you can because we're thinking yeah they get really bad once they turn 18 you know then everything goes crazy you know then you have all these older adult children that you have no control over anymore and they break your heart and part of that is because we have a view for only 18 20 50 years the Israelites didn't have that the Israelites had a view of time that looked generations and generations and generations so for them to know okay I might die here but eventually my great great grandkids aren't going to be here anymore God's in charge and there is life for my offspring down the road there is coming a day when the king is coming there is coming a day when that is going to happen and so

God's in charge of all things and that really does demand of us that we should trust him that we should trust him in his sovereignty and I just want you to think about this for a second I've been trying to think about this myself we know that he's sovereign over all things so nothing comes into my life that he did not ordain to be there it's there because he says yes this is for my glory and your good and yet how do we talk about difficulties when strife and difficult and suffering and trials come our way how do we speak about it to others do we speak about it with complaints do we speak about it with hopelessness do we speak about it with frustration or when we're by ourselves and we're thinking about it and we're thinking about the suffering that we're enduring and suffering and going through do we think really negative and bad thoughts if people were to hear the thoughts we think when we're by ourselves would they look at us and say

[ 58 : 10 ] I thought you were a Christian do we sometimes look at God in our minds and our emotions and go like what are you doing why now why today of all days I just want to challenge us that I know that in the heart challenged and put to it and asked you know point blank hey do you really trust God in this every one of us would say yes with that hesitation that says my trust is weak and so I would just say look at your words look at your thoughts and find out why do you doubt why are you struggling is it because you don't believe in the middle of all this that God is good or that God is powerful because something is causing the doubt and the good news is that the one who came as the rock to set up the kingdom of God a part of what his ministry is is that he died on the cross to forgive sins so let that be our hope that yes we need to trust yes we need to watch it and when we fail

Christ has paid the price for our failure to believe