

# How to Sleep Well in Babylon

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[0:00] Thank you.

Thank you.

Last week we started a brand new series called Faithfulness in Exile, and we are working our way through the Old Testament book of Daniel. Amazing feedback from last week.

So thankful for that. And if you did miss last week, no problem. Just go online and you can catch up on that. Very quick review, however. Remember the years around 606 to 586 B.C.

This is when King Nebuchadnezzar, who is the king of the biggest, baddest nation on the planet at this time, begins to take some Jews out of Jerusalem into exile into Babylon.

[1:39] And one of the things that we talked about is what was particularly unique about the Babylonians is that the way they would take you captive is that they would make you comfortable. Remember we talked about that.

Assyria would love to beat you up. Babylon likes to blend you in. And we talked a little bit about what that was like. For example, they isolated them from Jerusalem to get them away from their support system.

And then they would indoctrinate them and enroll them in the education of that day. I don't know what you're laughing at, but they would teach them their language.

Too soon? Too soon? Or anyways. They would teach them their language. Some of you will stop, all right? They would teach them the Babylonian language, the Babylonian literature, and to make them Babylonian.

In fact, not only that, we learned in chapter 1, they give them new identities. Daniel and his friends are given Babylonian names. Ultimately, the desire is that they will worship at the feet of the Babylonian gods.

[2:47] Now, that's the very quick review of last week. What we talked about is you and I face the exact same thing today. In fact, the Bible even calls us exiles.

Look at what Peter says here in 1 Peter 2. Beloved, I urge you as what? Sojourners and exiles. To abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war on your soul.

Keep your conduct among the Gentiles. That is the nations. What Peter means there is the unbelievers honorable. So we are seen as exiles.

And you and I live in that cultural current that is trying to pull us from our faith in God. And I don't know about you, but we feel this every day, do we not?

That constant pull towards the culture and away from our faith. Well, Daniel would not defile himself, and the Lord grants him favor here in Babylon.

[3:45] Well, now in chapter 2, there's a whole new challenge that Daniel's going to have to face. His life is going to be on the line again, which is a theme throughout this book. And so we're going to read just the first five verses to kind of give us a taste here of what's going on.

And then we'll go through most of the chapter this evening. So let's stand together, if you are able, as we honor the reading of God's Word. So chapter 2 starts with the second year in the reign of Nebuchadnezzar.

Nebuchadnezzar had dreams. His spirit was troubled. His sleep left him. And the king commanded that the magicians, enchanters, sorcerers, the Chaldeans be summoned to the king to tell the king his dreams.

And they came in and stood before the king. The king said to them, I had a dream, and my spirit is troubled to know the dream. And the Chaldeans said to the king in Aramaic, O king, live forever, because that's what you do when you're in the presence of Nebuchadnezzar.

Tell your servants the dream, and we'll give you the interpretation. And the king answered and said to the Chaldeans, the word for me is firm. If you do not make known to me the dream and its interpretation, you shall be torn limb from limb, and your houses shall be laid in ruins.

[5:12] Someone did not have their coffee that morning. Let's pray. Father, thank you so much for our time to be together tonight. Teach us. This is such an important word for us.

Lord, I pray that you would just use me as your mouthpiece to speak your word to your people this evening. All for your glory, I pray. In Jesus' name and God's people said, amen.

You can be seated. Would you like to make a statement? That's the question that the San Francisco Chronicle reporter asked as he stood outside the front door of Harold Camping's home. The 89-year-old radio evangelist became famous several years ago with his continuous predictions of the return of Christ. Camping said that he had studied the Scripture thoroughly. He'd studied it line by line and had put together all the numbers and patterns to be able to predict the exact date of Jesus' return.

[6:16] September the 6th, 1994. Camping urged his listeners to get ready, and they did. Robert Fitzpatrick spent his life savings getting ready for that day.

Adrian Martinez, a 27-year-old woman, dropped out of medical school, spent all of her money even though she was eight months pregnant.

Others sold their homes, quit their jobs, because all of them believed the end was near. I don't know if you know this, but that date came and passed.

And Christ did not return. But camping doubled down. He said, no, no, no, I got my math wrong. He went back and redid the calculations, and he came up with a new date, May 21, 2011.

Billboards were placed all over America. Volunteers went from city to city handing out pamphlets. Once again, people would quit their jobs, spend their life savings, warning others before it was too late.

[7:24] May 21st arrived. People stood watching the skies, and nothing happened. So camping doubled down a third time, if you can double down a third time.

He said, no, no, no, what I really meant was October. And October came and went. For many of his followers, the emotional as well as the financial toll was devastating.

Many of them felt embarrassed. They felt betrayed. Camping finally acknowledged what he had resisted acknowledging for many years.

He didn't actually know when Christ would return. Now, Faith Family, one of the things that's puzzled me for many years is how many people don't understand this verse.

But concerning that day and hour, could you all just say this with me? No one knows. You don't need a degree in New Testament to know that that means no one knows.

[8:28] No one is able to predict that. And as camping stood outside his doorstep, all he could say to that reporter was, quote, I don't know why, I don't know why nothing happened.

Now, Faith Family, what is it about people? And by people, I mean us. What is it about people and their obsession with the future? And camping's not the first one in Christian circles.

Like the end of the world was supposed to be in 1948 when Israel became a state. Then I remember growing up, although I was born in 88. I was just making sure you're paying attention.

Now, my math's off. 88 reasons Jesus was going to return in 88. Then, how many of you remember the whole Y2K scare that Jesus is going to return in Y2K?

Along with today, there are hundreds and thousands of prophecy junkies, junkies in their leisure suits and hair toupees, flocking to the latest prophecy conference.

[9:34] And it's not just Christians that are obsessed with knowing the future. Non-Christians are as well. People read their horoscopes every day. There are people that try to predict the stock market.

There are some that will go to palm readers to see if they can predict their future. People will watch movies about what life will be like in the future.

Businesses will spend lots of time and money trying to forecast the future. Every one of us, in one way or another, is we're like that kid in the back seat.

You know what I'm talking about? What's the question they ask? How much longer until we get there? Our obsession with the future is so bad, we look to groundhogs to tell us how long winter will last.

You know, you want a prediction about the weather? You're asking the wrong film. I'll give you a winter prediction. It's going to be cold. It's going to be gray.

[10:40] And it's going to last you for the rest of your life. Faith family, there is even, or there used to be, an octopus named Paul that would predict the winner of World Cup soccer games.

We have lost our minds. And all God's people said, amen. But listen, listen, come here, come here. You do realize what's behind all this.

In every example that I just gave, what's really behind this obsession with the future is this. Notice it. It's actually not the future we want to know.

It's certainty we have to have. That's the real issue. I mean, we may know one a little bit about the future, but what's really behind it is not that we got to know the future, is that we all need certainty. When life is uncertain, we get all tied up in knots. And that is exactly, listen to me, that is exactly why the most powerful king on the planet at this time is having a full-blown panic attack here in Daniel chapter 2.

[11:55] Look at verse 1. In the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuchadnezzar had dreams, and his spirit was what? Troubled, and his sleep left him.

And so King Nebuchadnezzar has had a dream. He's had a series of dreams, and it's clearly that these dreams are bad dreams. We know that because the text in multiple occasions speaks of the fact that he is deeply troubled.

He can't sleep. In fact, if someone does not fix this problem, people are going to die. Are you with me? All of those are signs that he's not having happy dreams.

This is a bad dream, and it has bothered him deeply. How many of you have ever woke up from a bad dream in like a full-blown panic? Anybody? Anybody like it messes with your mind the entire day?

Your heart's maybe racing. Maybe it takes you a long time to shake yourself out of it. You know, maybe you dreamed that the Bears beat the Packers in the playoffs, you know? Oh, that's right.

[13:01] That actually happened. That wasn't a dream. Sorry. And so this is kind of like that. What Nebuchadnezzar is facing here is kind of like that, except a lot worse, and here's why.

In the ancient world, so this is where, like, we can't impose a modern mindset on the text. Like, don't think about dreams the way you experience dreams.

You need to go into the ancient world. And in the ancient world, the way they thought about dreams was that often they were messages from the gods. Are you with me?

Say yes. So they didn't understand everything we understand about dreams, and so when they had dreams or visions, they would often think that the gods were trying to communicate to them in some way.

That's why Nebuchadnezzar is so troubled here, because he believes the gods are sending him a message about his future, and it's not a good one.

[13:58] And so he's really, really bothered. So what do you do? Who do you call? Ghostbusters, right? And that's what he does. Look at verse 2. He calls in the experts.

He commands the magicians and the enchanters and the sorcerers and the Chaldeans to be summoned to the king of his... to tell the king his dreams. And so they came in and they stood before the king.

Now, you need to know that when it says, like, magicians, these are not like this kind of magician who performs little magic tricks. This group would have been the experts, quote, unquote, in predicting the future based on their belief that the gods could speak to them.

Is everybody with me? So this group is being brought in because they're the experts. They're able to communicate with the gods and therefore figure this out. They're kind of like fortune tellers, if you would, in our day.

So Nebuchadnezzar is so troubled. Listen, he's so troubled by this and the fact that his future is uncertain that he wants to put an extra layer of protection.

[15:08] In other words, he is not going to risk a made-up interpretation. He really, really has to know what this means.

So here's the layer of protection that he adds, verse 5. He answered and said to the Chaldeans, the word for me is firm. If you do not make known to me the what?

The dream and its interpretation, you'll be torn from limb to limb and your houses laid in ruins. I like the King James.

It says your houses will be turned to a dunghill. I just wanted to say dunghill. Anyways, all right. So this is a big deal. This is a big deal. In other words, what Nebuchadnezzar is saying is, if you're really as good as you say you are, then you'll be able to tell me not just what this means, but what the dream was.

That's the only way I'm going to be able to know whether you're giving me an accurate answer. Are you with me? Okay. Well, they push back, obviously. Look at what they say. They answered the king and said, King, you've lost your mind.

[16:14] They didn't actually say that. They'd have lost their head. They said, listen, there is not a man on earth who can meet the king's demands. There's no great and powerful king that's even asked such a thing.

The thing that the king asked is too difficult, and no one can show it to the king except the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh. We don't have this kind of ability.

We're not able to solve this for you. And, of course, Nebuchadnezzar's response is, well, then if you can't do your job, then what?

I don't need you. Look at verse 12. And because of this, the king was what? Angry and very furious and commanded that all the wise men of Babylon be destroyed.

Oh, there's trouble right here in River City. I mean, it just got really, really bad for a whole lot of people. Is everybody with me?

[17:16] You haven't zoned out yet, have you? How could you? Is this not a compelling story? This is so fascinating. Well, here's the problem. If you've been reading chapter 1, and we assume you have if you're in chapter 2, who is in this category of wise men?

Daniel. Daniel. Daniel's in this group. And so here's the tension. I hope you're feeling, I've done the best I can to try to set up the tension. Here's the tension in the text.

Everybody's future is uncertain. Everybody. The king's future is uncertain because of this dream that has him so troubled. And now all the wise men's future is uncertain because there's just been an order to kill them.

And so everybody's afraid about the future. Do you see that? Now, here's the question for you and I to think about. This is so relevant for us.

How do you respond when your future is uncertain? How do you respond when your future is uncertain?

[18:23] Now, it's probably not because a king is threatening to turn your home into a dunghill. Right? But it might be because you lost your job.

It could be that you're living paycheck to paycheck and financially struggling. It might be that you received a really, really scary diagnosis from the doctor.

It could be that you lost a loved one, maybe even a spouse. Are you with me? You've been in that moment where you, like, tomorrow is so foggy.

You don't know how you're going to get through. You don't even know if you're going to make it to tomorrow. Your future is uncertain. And what I want to say to you this evening, I hope you're listening, is life in Babylon is always uncertain.

Life in Babylon is always uncertain. So how are we to be fateful exiles? Look at Daniel's response in verse 16. Daniel went in and requested the king to appoint him a time that he might show the interpretation to the king.

[19:38] And then Daniel went to his house and he made the matter known to Hananiah, Mishael, Azariah and his companions. And he told them to do what? To seek mercy from the God of heaven concerning this mystery so that Daniel and his companions might not be destroyed with the rest of the wise men of Babylon.

Everybody listen to me. Daniel doesn't turn to Google. He turns to God. Preach, preacher. Many of us, the first place you run is Google.

I've got to find out more about this. I need to know more information. Daniel doesn't run to Google. He runs to God. Notice this on the screen. This is so important. Daniel goes to the king for permission, but he goes to God for provision.

He goes to the king for permission, but he goes to God for provision. And notice the difference here. The contrast is so obvious in the text between Daniel and Nebuchadnezzar.

Did you notice that? Listen, they both have uncertain futures. Nebuchadnezzar and Daniel.

Nebuchadnezzar turns to the gods of the world and they can't answer.

[21:00] Daniel turns to the God of heaven because he can. Are you with me? That's a really important thing for us to think about. Is my first reaction when tomorrow is unknown to go to the gods of this world to bring me comfort or the God of heaven?

And that's Daniel's response here is they seek the mercy of God in this matter. They go to God first. And you might say, why did Daniel do this?

Well, he's just a good Christian. Well, maybe, but that's not really the point. The point is that Daniel knows something. This is so important.

Daniel knows something that we need to know as well. How many of you tonight would like to learn a little bit of Hebrew poetry? You're going to anyways. All right?

So we're going to learn a little bit about Hebrew poetry because it's important. This is so important for us to understand the passage here in Daniel 2. Everybody with me tonight? Are you having as much fun as I am?

[22:03] No chance. Okay, so here. How many of you like musicals? A lot of show of hands. You know, you can verbally say. In fact, tell me your favorite musical.

Okay, all I'm hearing is wah, wah, wah, wah, wah, wah, wah, wah. Okay, so. All right. So here's the deal. That experiment failed. Here we go.

Have you ever noticed in a musical how they're like talking normally? They're having a normal conversation and then all of a sudden they just break out in song. Much more comfortable admiring your show from afar.

Comfort, the enemy of progress. Do you understand that just associating with you could cost me my inheritance? Well, what could cost you more than that? You'd be risking everything. But on the other hand, well, you just might find yourself a free man.

Right here, right now, I put the offer out. I don't want to chase you down. I know you see it. You run with me and I can cut you free. Out of the treachery of walls you keep in.

[23:09] Who's with me? Don't you want to get. Okay, sorry. Sorry. Never mind. Sorry. Keep that in. Keep that in. But let's be honest. Hugh Jackman. Whew.

Okay. Anyways. All right. I figured you ladies paying attention now. Can we watch Hugh Jackman again? Anyways. All right. So. But you see that happen a lot in musicals, right?

It's just like normal life and then all of a sudden you're like, why are you singing? Like you just broke out in song all of a sudden. Okay. So I want you to take that illustration in your mind and notice, look at your Bibles, whether it's an app or your Bible.

Do you notice how, I'm assuming all your Bibles should do this. Do you notice how verse 20 through verse 23 is formatted differently? Do you see that?

It should be. And maybe if you're on an app or something, it doesn't show that as well. But it should be formatted differently. And the reason is, listen, right in the middle of the Daniel 2 narrative, it breaks out in song.

[24:11] There's three verses here. Four verses here that are a song. In fact, it's Hebrew poetry. And so as a reader, because listen, I don't

just want to teach you the Bible. I want to teach you how to learn the Bible.

And when you're reading something like this and it takes a different break, like it does something different, you need to stop and ask, why is it doing that? Like why right in the middle of narrative is it breaking out into this poetry?

And the reason is, is because Hebrew poetry will do this, listen, as a way of emphasizing the most important point. So let's read the most important point, verse 20.

Daniel answered and said, blessed be the name of God forever and ever to whom belong wisdom and might. He changes times and seasons. He removes kings and sets up kings.

He gives wisdom to the wise, knowledge to those who have understanding. He reveals deep and hidden things. He knows what is in the darkness and light dwells with him.

[25:16] To you, O God of my fathers, I give thanks and praise for you have given me wisdom and might and have now made known to me what we have asked you for you have made known to us the king's matter.

Are you with me? What is the theme of those verses? What is the main point that Daniel is trying to get across to you as he breaks out in song?

Listen, his view of God. What does he say about this? Compare this to what the magician said about the Babylonian gods.

Yahweh is eternal. He is forever and ever. Yahweh rules over all the seasons. Life is constantly changing, but God does not change.

God rules over kings and kingdoms. He has all authority even over Nebuchadnezzar.

[26:25] God has all wisdom. He is all knowing. That's why he's able to make known to me this dream and what it means.

And I praise him. That's a beautiful song. It's a Hebrew musical. And it's trying to emphasize to you the right view of God and Daniel's view of God.

Here's the point, faith family. The magicians know what their gods can't do. Daniel knows what his God can.

That's so important. Thank four of you right there. I appreciate it. Right? So listen, are you with me? Come here, come here.

This is why Nebuchadnezzar is troubled about his future and Daniel's not. What gives us peace, I hope we're listening, what gives us peace when we are facing an uncertain future is not knowing the future.

[27:39] It's knowing the one who holds the future. And that's how you're faithful in exile. Because, please tell me you see that.

Babylon is an uncertain place. Isn't it? One day you wake up and everything's fine. The next day you wake up and Nebuchadnezzar is sending people out to chop your head off.

This is a really uncertain world. And we can walk out of this place tonight. And life can change in such a way that makes things uncertain for us.

Amen? So what is the thing that's going to give us peace? What's going to give us peace isn't knowing the future. It's knowing who holds the future. And I see this around so many times, particularly among Christians.

What if they don't win the election? And what if the stock market crashes? And oh my goodness, oh my goodness. Like this whole AI thing. This whole AI thing.

[28:42] AI is going to take over the world. It's a sign of the Antichrist. What if the lump is cancerous? And I say that with great sensitivity.

What if he leaves me? In other words, Babylon acts like this all the time. Help me Jewish God! Help me Allah! Ah! Help me Tom Cruise!

Right? We're just like, everybody's just like, just watch the news. Everybody's running around in a panic. Like calling out to any God that will give them some type of certainty.

And I'm just telling you this, Faith Family. Notice it on the screen. The only way to stay sane in Babylon is knowing the one who is sovereign over Babylon. That's the only way.

And that's Daniel's way. That's how Daniel is able to rest in the midst of this very uncertain, uncertain future. In fact, this is the meaning.

[29:41] Now let's get to the dream. We having fun? I'm just getting warmed up. Like that was like the appetizer. Here's the main course, all right? But the actual dream that Nebuchadnezzar has proves this point that I'm making all the more.

So let's look at the dream in verse 31. You saw, O king, and behold a great image. This image, mighty and exceeding brightness, stood before you, and its appearance was frightening. The head of its image was fine gold, its chest and arms of silver, its middle and thighs of bronze, its legs of iron, its feet partially of iron and partially of clay.

And as you looked, a stone was cut out by no human hand, and it struck the image and the feet of the iron and clay and broke them in pieces. And then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold all together were broken into pieces and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors.

And the wind carried them away so that not a trace of them could be found. But the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.

[30:51] So that's the dream. That's the dream. Because remember, Daniel has to tell Nebuchadnezzar the dream that he had and then what it meant. Are you with me? And so that's the dream that he had.

And you may have seen an image like this, but this is something like what is kind of put together to symbolize what's described in those verses that we just read, right?

You have the head of gold. You have the chest of silver. You have the thighs of bronze. And then you have feet of iron that's mixed with clay.

Now, if you look at the text and read it carefully, it's very obvious. Don't zone out. It's very obvious that Daniel's describing four, not five. Okay?

The bottom section is iron, and it is iron mixed with clay at the feet. But it's very obvious, as we're going to see in a little bit, that this is four different sections, if you will, of this image.

[31:49] Is everybody with me? Okay? So that's the dream. That's the image. What does it mean? I'm glad you asked that. Look at what Daniel says the interpretation is.

So this is the dream. I'm going to tell you what it means, king. Here's the interpretation. You, O king, the king of kings, don't be thrown off by that.

Daniel is basically just saying, king, you're the most powerful man in the world right now. You're the small k king of kings. There is no king greater than Nebuchadnezzar at this point in history.

Amen? That's true. To whom the God of heaven has given the kingdom. But let me make one thing very clear, Nebuchadnezzar. The only reason why you're the most powerful man in all the world right now is because God has allowed you to be.

God is the one that raises kings and brings kings down. So the only reason why you're even in this position is because God has ordained it. Look at chapter 1, verse 2 later.

[32:53] The power and the might and the glory and into whose hand he is given, wherever they dwell, the children of man. And notice, notice that Daniel assumes that you know some Genesis.

Genesis. He uses Genesis language about what it means to be created in the image of God. Because you remember that Adam and Eve were created in the image of God. And what were they given?

Dominion. Dominion over what? The beast of the field. The birds of the heavens. Making you rule over them. Daniel is taking you back to Genesis 1.

Does everybody see that? Are you still with me? Okay. You are the head of gold, Nebuchadnezzar. Now let's keep reading.

There's going to be another kingdom inferior to you that's going to come up after you. Then there's going to be a what? Third kingdom of bronze, which shall rule over all the earth.

[33:51] Then there's going to be a fourth kingdom. So what are we up to? Four. That's right. So we're at four. Strong is iron because iron breaks to pieces and shatters all things.

And like iron that crushes, it shall break and crush all of these. And as you saw the feet and toes, partly of the potter's clay and partly of iron. It. What's the it?

The fourth kingdom. There is no fifth kingdom. It's not here. There's four kingdoms. You'll see why that's important in a bit. It shall be the divided kingdom, but some of the firmness of iron shall be in it.

Just as you saw iron mixed with a soft clay. And as the toes of the feet were partly iron and partly clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly brittle. And as you saw the iron mixed with soft clay, so they will mix with one another in marriage.

They will not hold together just as iron does not mix with clay. And in the days of those kings, the God of heaven will set up. This is getting better. A kingdom that shall never be destroyed.

[35:00] Nor shall the kingdom be left to another people. It shall break in pieces all the kingdoms and bring them to an end. Say this with me. And it shall stand.

How long? Forever. And then in the final verse, just as you saw a stone was cut from a mountain by no human hand and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold.

A great God has made known to the king what shall be after this. The dream is certain and its interpretation is sure. This is so fascinating.

I'm thinking, cancel your plans tonight. All right, let's just stay here for a while. All right, what in the world is all of this about? And as you can imagine, a lot has been made.

Too much in my estimation. A lot has been made about what we've just read. Many of my dispensational friends do things with that image that are completely unnecessary and at least in my view, exegetically sloppy.

[36:02] And what I mean by that, listen to me. If you've zoned out, what do you do? Zone back in. Is that they will use that image here in Daniel to predict the end of the world.

And specifically to predict the Antichrist. To which I just want to go, just stop. Please, stop.

What is the natural reading of this passage? Okay? The natural reading of this passage, it's not hard. You don't need a degree in Old Testament literature to figure this out.

Here it is. You've got the gold head, which is clearly Babylon, right? It says so in the text. It's clearly Nebuchadnezzar. You have a kingdom after that, and we know the Medo-Persians conquered the Babylonians.

Right after them, you have the Greeks. And then right after them comes Rome, which will become a divided kingdom, just as the text said.

[37:07] Are you with me? It's just not hard. It's not hard. Finally, after all of this, there's going to come a stone or a rock, and that stone is going to do what?

Bring in a kingdom that lasts, I made you say it, lasts forever. What kingdom is that? Listen to me. Who was born during the Roman Empire? Jesus. Jesus was. And what did Jesus repeatedly say throughout his ministry?

The kingdom of God is here. And not only did he constantly say the kingdom of God is here, like if this isn't any more obvious, look at Luke 20.

Look at Luke 20. Jesus looked directly at them and said, What then is this that is written? The, hello, the stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone.

[38:13] Everyone who falls on that stone will be broken to pieces. That's Daniel 2. Are you with me?

I mean, are you really with me? Come here. Listen, listen. If you're dispensational, I'm sorry. But I still love you, right? The natural reading of this text is clearly referring to the coming of Jesus. Listen, not the second coming of Jesus. This does not predict the end of the world or the Antichrist. It's about his first coming.

And you say, why are you so certain that this is the right view? Number one, as I just showed you, it is clearly the most natural reading of the passage without having to make leaps that the text simply does not give you grounds for.

Second, it is far and away the most traditional view throughout church history. Third, listen to me, there is absolutely, listen, there is no reason in the text for some long gap of thousands of years off into the future.

[39:27] Answer me this question. Why do you see one after another but then skip thousands of years to the end? You're forcing your view of the

end times on this text.

Stop. It's one after another, clearly. So this is clearly pointing to the first coming of Jesus, not the second coming of Jesus.

And here's what I know some of you are going to say. Your response is going to be, but wait a minute. What about the destroying of the nations here? I mean, doesn't that clearly point to the second coming?

I mean, the language here is very graphic of destroying all these nations to which I want to say, patiently, what kind of genre is this?

It's apocalyptic genre. It's apocalyptic genre. And apocalyptic literature loves to use graphic imagery to describe things like this.

[40:31] Like all the time, actually, in apocalyptic genre. What apocalyptic genre does is, I taught you Hebrew poetry and apocalyptic genre.

Like, come on, come on. Where else are you going to go on a Saturday night to get those things? And Hugh Jackman. Anyways, all right, so, apocalyptic genre describes literal events, like the coming of Jesus, in symbolic ways.

In fact, if, come on, this is big, if you take the symbolism of Daniel 2 literally, then guess what you are forced to do?

You are forced to believe that Jesus is a literal rock. If you are going to be consistent, be consistent. Got to take this literally.

Then Jesus is a literal stone. Of course not. You know that's symbolic. That's because it's apocalyptic genre. Not to mention, listen, how did, come on, say preach, preacher.

[41:36] I'm having so much fun, right? How did Jesus conquer? How did he destroy the nations? People that over-literalize Daniel 2, in my estimation, make the same mistake the people in Jesus' day made.

Namely, they don't realize how Jesus conquers. Do you remember what Jesus said to his disciples in the upper room? If you don't remember, here it is.

John 16, 32. Come on, here we go. Behold, the hour is coming. Indeed, it has come. When you will be scattered, each to his own home, and will leave me alone.

Yet I am not alone. The Father is with me. I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have tribulation. But take heart.

Everybody say this with me. I have overcome the world. What? You've overcome the world?

[42:42] The hour has come when you have overtaken the world. Well, that's clearly not referring to his second coming. Jesus is clearly talking about his first coming.

The hour is now here. And you're going to take it on the chin. You're going to be scattered. You're going to face tribulation. But take heart, I've overcome the world.

Well, then how did he overcome the world? Because right after he says this, he lets himself be arrested. Peter wanted to fight.

He was ready to take out his sword and conquer the nations. But Jesus said, put it away. Then he let himself be beaten. And then they put a robe on him.

With a crown of thorns. And mocked him as a king. And then he let himself be crucified. That does not look like overcoming the world to me.

[43:54] Until Sunday morning. And on the third day, the king of kings walked out of the grave. And what did he say? All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.

So go and make disciples of all kingdoms. Don't you see? Yeah, you can be excited for that. This is what I'm telling you.

This is what I'm telling you. Jesus conquered by being conquered. Jesus conquered. He destroyed the authorities of these nations.

By laying his life down. And there is a stone, beloved. Cut from a mountain. That has now established a kingdom that will last forever.

That's Daniel 2. And if you still are not convinced that this is the right interpretation, I don't know what else I could do. But I'll give you one more.

[45:02] Listen to what Paul says in Colossians 2, verse 13. And you who are dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses by canceling the record of death that stood against us with its legal demands.

This he set aside. This he set aside. How, faith family? Nailing it to the cross. And what happened at the cross? He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame by triumphing over them in him.

Listen, there is no doubt in my mind whatsoever that Daniel 2 does not predict the Antichrist. It points to Jesus Christ.

It's so undeniable to me that that's what Daniel is saying here. So don't miss the main point. The main point is this. Listen, listen. And then we're going to land the plane. 30-minute warning. Nebuchadnezzar, here's what your dream means.

[46:21] You won't last forever. But there is coming one who will. That's the dream.

Amen? So, notice what our musical, the Daniel 2 musical taught us. And we'll give a few points of application and be done.

Verse 20. Daniel answered and said, Blessed be the name of God. What? Forever and ever. Verse 44. In those days the kings of God will set up a kingdom that shall not be destroyed, nor shall the kingdom be left to other people.

It shall break in pieces all the kingdoms to bring them to an end, and it shall stand how long? Forever. In verse 47. The king answered to Daniel.

So even Nebuchadnezzar admits this. Truly, your God is God of gods. The Lord of kings.

[47:21] So let me bring this down to our world, and I'm done. Regardless of your view of Daniel 2, the undeniable point of this vision is this, and this is what we need to take away.

Babylon is temporary. God's kingdom is eternal. Does everybody see that in the text? Okay. That's that Babylon is temporary.

Jesus is forever. His kingdom is forever. So how will that help us be faithful in Babylon? Babylon. You love me?

I remind you of this every week. You don't have to like me, but you have to love me. Here it is. Here's the first point. Put your hope in God, not government. Time to get political.

Political. Right? Just in this musical phase tonight. I don't know. I don't even want you to respond. But who's your favorite?

[48:25] Trump? Some of you, everything in you wants to respond right now. Vance? Biden? Waltz?

Don't respond, right? I told you not to respond. So who's your favorite? Who's your favorite? Who do you fear the most?

Putin? Chi? Let me tell you something about every single one of them. They'll be gone soon. They'll be gone soon. And here's why. Nebuchadnezzar's don't serve on eternal thrones. So why would you put your faith in them?

Or why would you live in fear because of them? Because if you do either of those, you have the wrong king. Are you listening?

[49:34] Hear your pastor tonight. Do not put your faith in government. I don't care who the leader is. Because they're temporary. And if Daniel 2 teaches you anything, is that there's only one kingdom that lasts.

And it's the kingdom of God. And you're going to lose your mind in Babylon if government is what you trust.

I have to do this because it's Saturday night and I have the time. I won't tomorrow. So you may be the only one that gets this. I couldn't help but think about the response.

I'm not, I've addressed every political party. So don't think I'm picking on one here. But I can't help but think about how people responded when Hillary Clinton, it's hard for me to say, Hillary Clinton lost the election.

Wolf, the scene here is so different than it was a few hours ago when people were happy and relaxed. I have been looking around the room at people who are stone-faced.

[50:37] Some of them have been crying. Do you remember that? People lost their minds. And here's why. If your king isn't king, you lose everything.

If your king isn't king, you lose everything. And what I'm telling you, it's because I love you, Daniel 2 invites you to put your hope in a kingdom that isn't up for election.

To put your hope in a kingdom that we'll never lose. As the song says, kings and kingdoms will all pass away. But there's something about that name.

The last application we're done is live your life for the eternal, not the temporal. Live your life for the eternal, not the temporal.

Because what's true for governments is actually true of everything under the sun. You'll see that in the study in Ecclesiastes. In fact, really the things of this world are a lot like fashion.

[51:44] They're a lot like fashion. How many of you remember when this was actually in style? I know that, like that used to be in style. Thank you, Lord, that it's not anymore.

Like, I'm glad you don't change, but thank you that fashion does. Lord have mercy. That's life in Babylon.

Everything changes. It's here one day and it's gone tomorrow. And what Daniel too wants to cultivate in us is a deep-rooted faith in the one who never changes.

To go back to the musical. I'm not going to sing again. But go back to the musical. He rules over all. He's always the same.

And that's what keeps me sane in an uncertain world. Amen. Amen. So, if you're here tonight and you're like King Nebuchadnezzar.

[53:00] And you're not sleeping well at night. And it's not because you're having bad dreams. It's because, like Harold Camping, no matter how hard you try, you can't figure out your future.

That's a Babylonian mindset, not a biblical one. Because as Christians, we are not obsessed with knowing the future. We're obsessed with knowing the one who holds the future.

As the old hymn says, and we're going to sing in just a moment. Because he lives, I can face tomorrow. Because he lives, all fear is gone.

Because I know, say it with me, he holds the future. And life is worth the living just because he lives. And all God's people said, amen. Let's pray. Lord, thank you for Daniel 2. What a lesson for us as we live in our Babylon.

[54:12] And all the uncertainties, all the unknowns. There's only one thing that's true in forever.

And that is you and your kingdom, O Lord. And tonight we come to this time of remembrance where we think about how you conquered through being conquered.

You have all authority in heaven and on earth. You rule over all the nations. Because you laid your life down for them.

And tonight we come to the cross. And we find our hope and sanity there.

In Jesus' name, amen.

[55:25]