

God of Gods, King of Kings

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Preacher: Jonathan Chancey

[0 : 0 0] Amen. You can be seated. Hopefully, you have your Bibles open by now to the book of Daniel. And our passage this morning will be Daniel chapter 2.

I want to say thank you to our three readers this morning. They did a great job reading what partially was a difficult text with some difficult names and difficult words. Y'all did excellent, so thank you for doing that.

And now, we ask for the Lord's help to understand what we've read. So, if you would, bow with me once more in prayer. Lord, apart from your grace, apart from your help, we cannot understand what we've read.

And so, we pray now that by the power of your Spirit, would you give us eyes to see and ears to hear and hearts to joyfully receive what we've read, that we might rejoice in the truth of your sovereign reign over all the earth.

We love you, Lord. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. I hope you noticed a theme in the songs that we sang this morning of the Lord's kingship.

[1 : 0 9] You know, the songs we sing, they aren't random or accidental. We choose the songs that we sing intentionally to preach the message in a different way through singing what we're going to preach through preaching the Word of God.

As I read through Daniel chapter 2 and studied through it this week, I was reflecting on some of the richest works of theological depth and truth that the church has sung throughout the ages.

And two songs in particular came to mind. And the first is like this. I won't sing it. And my God is so big, so strong, and so mighty.

You can go along if you know it. There's nothing my God cannot do. The mountains are His. The rivers are His. The skies are His handiwork too. My God is so big, so strong, and so mighty.

Y'all know it. Come on. There's nothing my God cannot do. The second one is like it. He's got the whole world in His hands.

[2 : 1 3] He's got the whole world in His hands. He's got the whole world in His hands. He's got the whole world in His hands. There's nothing wrong with a little repetition, is there? Now, we learn these truths as children through singing.

But the fact of the matter is, as we age, as we grow older, the more time we spend in Babylon, we can begin to wonder whether or not these truths are actually true.

Does God have the whole world in His hands? Is God so big and so mighty that there's nothing my God cannot do? Well, here as we come to Daniel chapter 2, I want us to remember the context here that Daniel is riding to exiles.

He's riding to God's people here who are placed in Babylon, here in enemy territory. And he's reminding them and us this morning of these very simple, very basic truths.

The truths for us as we live in exile, here in enemy territory, that God is still in control. Amen? The Lord is God of gods and King of kings.

[3 : 2 7] That's what we've titled the sermon this morning. God of gods, King of kings. That's a truth that we have to remember in our days here in exile. And two implications of that simple truth that we'll see here in Daniel chapter 2 this morning.

Two implications of God's reign over all things. That first, all wisdom belongs to Him. And second, we'll see all history belongs to Him.

The first implication here of God's reign is that all wisdom belongs to Him. Look there to verse 1 of chapter 2 with me. Daniel tells us that Nebuchadnezzar, in his second year of his reign, he had some bad dreams.

A dream so bad that they kept him up. He couldn't sleep. I don't know if you've ever been woken up by a dream. I have. Sometimes dreams can be unsettling. And sometimes they can seem real. Sometimes they can disturb us. Well, in this instance, this was very real. And in God's providence, this was meant to be unsettling. And unlike most of our dreams, God was genuinely communicating a truth, something very real for Nebuchadnezzar here in his dreams.

[4 : 43] And Daniel tells us that he's so bothered by the dreams that he commands that the magicians and the enchanters and the sorcerers and the Chaldeans, basically all of his wisest informants, to come in and tell him his dreams.

And so they all come together, and they stand before the king, and Nebuchadnezzar says to them, I had a dream, and my spirit is troubled to know the dream. And so Daniel tells us the Chaldeans spoke up and said reasonably so.

Tell your servants the dream, and we will tell you the interpretation. Give us something to work with here. You can see their predicament. Nebuchadnezzar, he's put these wise men of Babylon in an impossible situation.

He wants them to tell him not only the meaning of the dream, he wants them to tell him what he dreamed there alone in his own mind, in his own bed at night as he dreamed these dreams.

It's an impossible situation. And not only this, but he's so serious about this command that he says, if you can tell me both the dream and the interpretation, you will be rewarded and showered with gifts and honors and rewards.

[5 : 56] But if you cannot tell me the dream and its interpretation, look there to verse 5. It says, You shall be torn limb from limb, and your houses shall be laid in ruins.

Nebuchadnezzar's not messing around, is he? This is a serious dilemma. How in the world can they possibly begin to know the king's dreams? They can't. In fact, they know they can't.

And so they tried again and said, You tell us the dream, and we'll tell you the interpretation. But the king's word was firm. You tell me both the dream and the interpretation.

If you can tell me the dream, then I know that you can tell me the interpretation. I remember when I was in high school, I went to the movies with some friends, and I came out after the movie was over to my car, and on my car there was a flyer.

Don't you love getting those on your car, right? And typically I would not respond or call the person that put a flyer on my car, but this time I took them up on the offer because, to my surprise, this was a flyer, an advertisement for one free dream interpretation.

[7 : 07] And I couldn't wait. And so we got in the car, and we sped back to my house. We got in the house, and we ran up to my room, and we called the number, and the person picked up on the other end, and they began to ask for some personal information.

What's your name? Where do you live? And it's time to mess with them. And so we said, Wait a minute. Shouldn't you know my name? He said, No, no, no, no. You have to tell me your name. I said, Okay. Well, where do you live? Wait a minute. Shouldn't you know where I live? If you're supernaturally in tune like this, and you're prophetic, and you can know these things, I said, No, no, no.

You have to tell us where you live. And so we did the same exchange a few different times as they asked more and more questions, and finally it came to the point where they were ready to hear the dream and said, What did you dream?

I said, Wait a minute. Shouldn't you know what I dreamed? And she said, Don't call this number again. I don't got the phone. And it was done. Right? We were messing with her, but really what we were doing, right, is we were testing her.

[8 : 14] We were putting her claims to wisdom and knowledge and ability to the test. And nobody can tell you the dream and the interpretation. Anybody can make up an interpretation to a dream.

But who can tell you exactly what you dream? Nobody can do that. And that's, And that's, in fact, what the Chaldeans say in response. Look there to verse 10. They said, There is not a man on earth who can meet the king's demand.

No one has ever asked us to do anything like this. The thing that the king asks is difficult, and no one can show it to the king, except the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh.

And what I want us to see here is that this is a test of Babylon's wisdom. The king has been given a supernatural revelation.

He's been given a spiritual dream. This is a vision from God. And in his moment of desperation, he turns to the wisdom of Babylon. And despite all of their education, despite all of their training, despite all of their knowledge, they simply could not do what needed to be done.

[9 : 30] This is a failure of Babylonian wisdom. The Nebuchadnezzar had asked the impossible. On one hand, the impossible request was, Tell me what I dreamed.

No man can do that, right? That's an impossible request. But we also need to understand, there's another layer of impossibility here, that sometimes at first glance we tend to skip over.

It is impossible for people who are of the flesh, to discern and interpret and understand spiritual things. And Nebuchadnezzar's mistake, is that he turns to the wisdom of Babylon, in order to understand the truth of God.

That's impossible. What we need to understand is that unbelievers, people who are of the flesh, simply cannot understand spiritual truth.

Even if they could somehow guess the dream, which they couldn't, they wouldn't have a shot at understanding the truth of the vision. Why? Well, for the same reason that Nebuchadnezzar couldn't understand the truth of his dream.

[10 : 33] They are people of the flesh, and people of the flesh cannot understand spiritual truth. It doesn't matter. This is a lesson for us, church. It doesn't matter how educated you are, how influential you are, how high up in the ranks of society and culture you have climbed, how many degrees are hanging in your office.

It doesn't matter. Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians 2, verse 14, he says, the natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them, because they are spiritually discerned.

And Nebuchadnezzar's mistake here is that he turned to natural people, seeking spiritual wisdom, and predictably they failed. So verse 12, it says, because of this, the king was very angry and very furious, and he commanded that all the wise men of Babylon be destroyed.

So the decree went out, and the wise men were about to be killed, and they sought Daniel and his companions to kill them. But verse 14 says that Daniel replies with prudence and discretion to Ariok, the captain of the king's guard.

And he says, why is the decree of the king so urgent? And Ariok made the matter known to Daniel, and Daniel went in and requested the king to appoint him a time that he might show the interpretation to the king.

[12 : 06] Now what's so special about Daniel? This Judean teenager who thinks that he can do better than all the wise men of Babylon. At first glance, this seems like a bold move, doesn't it?

None of them can do it, but it requests a time for me that I can show the king the interpretation. It looks like a bold move, but actually as we see how he approaches this, it's actually profoundly humble, because unlike the Chaldeans, he doesn't rely on his own flesh to do it, does he?

And look at what he does. Daniel, you remember, he's been trained in Babylon's wisdom. He spent three years soaking in the Babylonian ways, learning their wisdom, learning their way, but he doesn't rely on Babylon's wisdom, does he?

Verse 17 says, Instead, Daniel and his friends sought the mercy of God in prayer. Verse 19 says, The mystery was revealed to Daniel in a vision of the night.

You know, there's a saying that's often attributed to the Navy SEALs. Speaking of times of desperation and crisis and a moment of need, they say, You don't rise to the level of the occasion, you fall to the level of your training.

[13 : 27] You've ever heard that? You don't rise to the occasion, you fall to the level of your training. Well, here's Daniel facing execution. I mean, this is the moment, right? This is a high stakes, high pressure moment.

He doesn't rise to the occasion, He falls to the level of his training. But not the three years of training in Babylon's wisdom. He falls to the level of his training in a lifetime of training himself in dependence upon the Lord in prayer.

Do you see the difference here between Daniel's approach and the Chaldean's approach? I hope you see this. I think that this is what Daniel is showing us here in this first half of the second chapter.

It's two polar opposite approaches to wisdom. On the one end is the wisdom of man. With all of this is education and accolades and success and self-dependence.

That's on one end. On the other end is the wisdom of God. These are two polar opposite approaches to wisdom. They do not mesh well with one another.

[14 : 35] And we see the end of each one as well, don't we? Dependence on the wisdom of man. What's the end of dependence on the wisdom of man? It's destruction. It's death. It's violence.

It ends in death. But dependence upon the wisdom of the Lord is the path of life. And as I read this and think about this, I'm reminded of Psalm chapter 1.

Psalm chapter 1 which says, Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers, but his delight is in the law of the Lord. And on his law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does he prospers.

But the wicked are not so, but are like chaff that the wind drives away. Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.

[15 : 37] For the Lord knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish.

Church, our call during our time of exile is to cling to the wisdom of God.

And we need to understand that the essence of sin is rejecting God's wisdom and instead pursuing a wisdom of our own making. Whatever that might look like, whatever shape that might take, sin is rejecting the Lord's wisdom and pursuing our own.

Well we've seen all the way back even in the first pages of scripture, all the way in Genesis chapter 3, that the path of man's wisdom ends in destruction.

Genesis 3 verse 6, it tells us, when the woman saw that the tree was good for food and that it was a delight to the eyes and that the tree was desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate.

She also gave some to her husband who was with her and he ate. And we know that as a result of rejecting God's wisdom and instead pursuing a wisdom of their own device, they were exiled from the garden.

[16 : 53] The wages of sin was death. That's the path and the end of man's wisdom. But we're told again that there is another path. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.

That doesn't come from us. It doesn't come from our own flesh. It doesn't come ultimately from our own study, from our own capabilities, although the Lord uses these things for our good. This comes from the Lord.

Church, if we want to grow in wisdom, here's a simple path for you. According to James, Treg quoted this verse earlier. He says, If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given to him.

If anyone lacks wisdom, let him pray. Ask God for wisdom. Seek his wisdom in prayer. It's amazing, isn't it? Daniel accomplished more in one night of prayer than he was able to accomplish in three years of study in Babylonian wisdom.

Christian, Christian, when's the last time that you got down on your knees, went into your closet, and prayed, and asked the Lord for wisdom to guide your steps, to open up his word?

[18 : 17] The Lord has written a book for us full of his wisdom, full of his direction. When's the last time you opened up his word and said, Lord, let your word be a lamp unto my feet and a light for my path.

Church, the Lord wants us to grow in wisdom. He's given us these very simple means of pursuing wisdom through prayer and through his word.

How often are we coming to his word? And most clearly, church, he's given us his own son who is the very wisdom of God.

See, the glorious truth of the gospel that the Chaldeans completely got wrong. Remember what they said? They said, no one can know these spiritual things, only the gods, and they would never come down to dwell among us.

We know better, don't we? God has come down to us in the person of Christ, the son of God, made flesh so that we might know the person and the glory and the wisdom of God.

[19 : 24] Paul tells us in Colossians, we've been studying this in our men's Bible study on Thursdays, that all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hidden in Christ. Outside of Christ, there is no wisdom.

But inside of Christ, church, Christian, you can have all the wisdom you want if you would seek it in Jesus Christ. So Daniel prays and the Lord reveals, but Daniel didn't stop praying once he got what he wanted, did he?

Now he responds to the Lord with this beautiful prayer of worship in verses 20-23. Look there with me. He says, 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 and knowledge to those who have understanding. He reveals deep 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 might. Do you hear that?

[20 : 30] All wisdom belongs to you and you have given wisdom to me. You've made known the matter to me what we asked of you for you've made known to us the king's matter.

All wisdom belongs to him. But there's a second point of emphasis here in this prayer, isn't there? All wisdom belongs to him and it says he changes times and seasons.

He removes kings and he sets up kings. The second truth of God's sovereign reign that Daniel wants us to see here in the second half of this chapter. All wisdom belongs to him first.

And second, all history belongs to him. All history belongs to him.

We see this in this interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream here in verses 24 through 45. Look there with me. After praising the Lord, Daniel goes to Ariok and says, Don't destroy the wise men of Babylon.

[21 : 34] Bring me in before the king and I will show the king the interpretation. And so, Ariok brings Daniel in to the king quickly. He says, In haste. And he says, I found among the exiles of Judah a man who will make known to the king the interpretation.

And so, the king declares to Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, Are you able, you hear that? Are you able to make known to me the king, excuse me, are you able to make known to me the dream that I have seen and its interpretation?

And here's what Daniel says. No. No. No. No wise men. No enchanters. No astrologers.

No magicians. Nobody can show the king the mystery. So far, he sounds just like the Chaldeans, doesn't he? No one can do this. But look there to verse 28.

But there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries. And he has made known to the king what will be in the latter days. I can't do it.

[22 : 43] You ask me if I'm able, I'm not able. No man is able to do this. But there is a God who is able, a God to whom belongs all wisdom, and a God who reveals wisdom to his people.

More than that, verse 30, he says, this mystery hasn't been revealed to me because of any wisdom that I have more than all the living. It's not about me. Don't give me any credit. This wisdom didn't come from me.

It was revealed to me by God. No one is able to do this, but God has revealed the truth. And then he begins to unfold Nebuchadnezzar's dream.

Now, here's my disclaimer. Okay, because the book of Daniel, as I mentioned last week, is filled with mystery.

And I told you last week, if you're not used to having a pastor, say things like, I'm not quite sure what this means, as we walk through Daniel together, you're going to get used to that.

[23 : 41] Okay, because there's mystery here. Christians have discussed and debated some of the meanings of these verses for years and years and years, for centuries. And I want you to be okay with us saying we may not have a 100% firm grasp on everything that we read here in this book.

and that's okay. Part of the purpose of apocalyptic prophetic literature is to encourage Christians that there is a God who knows all the details of human history even if we don't.

That there is a God to whom belongs all wisdom. That there is a God who sovereignly reigns over all of human history even if we struggle to put all the pieces together.

Okay? That disclaimer out of the way. Here we go. Alright, here's the dream. Daniel tells Nebuchadnezzar starting in verse 31 that he saw in his dream a great image.

It was strong and bright and frightening and the head of the image was of fine gold and his chest and arms of silver and his middle and thighs of bronze and his legs were of iron with his feet partly of iron and partly of clay.

[24 : 52] This is an image of one giant terrifying statue is made up of these different composite parts but these four parts they come together to form one strong, bright, terrifying image.

Everybody with me? Okay? No. Everybody with me? Are y'all with me? Alright. Alright. But then we see verse 34 something surprising happens. A stone that was cut out by no human hand and this stone comes and it strikes the image on the feet and in this stone it breaks them into pieces and

then from the feet upwards this whole image comes crumbling to the ground.

The legs of iron and the clay the bronze thighs the silver chest and arms all the way up to the head of gold. It was broken into pieces and it says the strong terrifying image becomes like the chaff of the summer threshing floors.

You remember Psalm 1? What happens to the wicked? They're like chaff that the wind blows away and they're no more. Not a trace of them could be found but it says the stone that struck the image listen to this the stone that strikes the image it becomes a great mountain and it fills the whole earth. Now at this point I just imagine Nebuchadnezzar's jaw dropping and hitting the floor. Daniel's done it. He has told him his dream. How did he do this? That's only part 1.

[26 : 20] Verse 36 says this was the dream now we will tell the king its interpretation. Daniel goes on to tell Nebuchadnezzar that this dream was a vision of five kingdoms.

Five kingdoms. Four of these kingdoms here on one side they make up this great and terrifying image. The first of these kingdoms is easy to identify.

Daniel says you oh king the king of kings to whom the God of heaven has given the kingdom and the power and the might and the glory and to whose hand he has given wherever they dwell the children of man the beasts of the fields the birds of the heavens making you rule over them all you are the head of gold.

Clearly kingdom number one is Babylon and if he were to stop right there Nebuchadnezzar's got to be feeling pretty good right? I'm the head of gold.

God's given me dominion. God's given me reign and rule. I'm at the top of this tower. I'm above the world. I'm the king of the world. But he doesn't stop there does he?

[27 : 35] Verse 39 He says another kingdom inferior to you shall arise after you. Those are two words a king never wants to hear.

After you. In other words as great and as mighty and as strong and as powerful as you are right now Nebuchadnezzar your kingdom will not last forever.

There's another kingdom coming. There will be an after you. There's an expiration date on your rule and you have nothing to do with it. You can't change it.

You can't control it. It's in the hands of a sovereign God who raises up kings and puts them down.

The second kingdom we see in the vision it has a silver chest and arms and the traditional understanding is that this is the Medo-Persian empire under Cyrus.

They came in and they conquered Babylon but that kingdom also will come and go and after this a third kingdom will come a third kingdom of bronze that it says will rule over all the earth and again as we follow the course of history most understand this third kingdom to be the Greek empire who came in and conquered Medo-Persia under Alexander the Great.

[28 : 54] They rose to power quickly and tremendous power they were strong they were agile they were fast Daniel chapter 7 we'll get there Lord willing it's sort of a parallel vision and Daniel chapter 7 this third empire is pictured as a leopard with wings it's fast and it's powerful there's stories of a 20 something year old Alexander the Great weeping because he said there's no more kingdoms for me to conquer he'd taken over them all and so he ruled so to speak over all the earth but even still another fourth kingdom will come after him this fourth kingdom he mentions he says is strong as iron because the iron breaks everything and this kingdom will crush and break into pieces and crush all the others and again as we follow the course of history as we read through the pages of the church fathers commenting on these passages the traditional understanding is that this is the Roman empire the Roman empire just like those before it the Roman empire rose to enormous power but this kingdom would be a divided kingdom you see the clay mixing with the iron partly strong partly brittle there was internal corruption and division in the

Roman kingdom moral insanity was the norm and it too would eventually fall now again as I said we're going to see more of these kingdoms as we get to the second half of the book of Daniel but I want to encourage us here in chapter 2 don't don't lose the forest for the trees here okay if your eyes are starting to glaze over I want you to come back with me alright because Daniel and his friends I want you to place yourself in their shoes for a moment here as exiles as Daniel interpreting this dream and this vision they wouldn't have been arguing over charts and dates and timelines and trying to argue over these details they would be rejoicing in the big picture truths of this vision they would be rejoicing that God is reigning over all of human history that God is the one who removes kings and sets up kings and we have the advantage of being able to look backwards and see how history has played out they were looking forwards and they knew with confidence it was a comfort

to them that

God is reigning over Nebuchadnezzar God is reigning over whoever it may be who will come after Nebuchadnezzar God is reigning over whoever it may be that's coming after that and whoever is coming after that there is a God who is orchestrating and who owns every single bit of human history God is in control what a comfort I know church that we are in an election year right as a year of panic and uncertainty and fear for a lot of people I want us to take this comfort with us whoever sits upon the throne of America come November is placed there by God himself we cast our vote but the deciding vote is in the hands of a sovereign God who raises kings and puts them down in this nation and in every nation on all the face of the earth amen and not only this

Daniel and his friends they would be they would be reminded that ultimately for all the kingdoms of the world in every time and in every age there are only two kingdoms two kingdoms did you notice that these four kingdoms in Nebuchadnezzar's dream they're all different they're all made of different stuff in the course of time they war after one another they conquer each other but in the vision they're all part of one big terrifying image here's the point all the kingdoms of this world in the kingdom of man they stand united against the kingdom of God there are ultimately only two kingdoms there is the kingdom of this world and there is the kingdom of God I'm reminded again of the second song it just asks why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain the kings of the earth set themselves against and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord and his anointed saying let us burst their bonds apart and cast away their cords from us that's the pledge of the kingdom of man says we will rule and not God for all the diversity that we have on the earth for all the diversity over over human history for all the diversity between here and in the next nation and the next nation and the next ruler the next ruler the next we have this in common we will not have God rule over us psalm 2 says he who sits in the heavens laughs the Lord will break them with a rod of iron and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel which is the third truth here that Daniel and his friends would take comfort in and that we church should rejoice in that at the end of history the kingdom of

[34 : 49] God prevails over the kingdom of man the end of history is written and this is the focus of this vision and church this ought to be where our focus is as well Daniel says in the days of these kingdoms verse 44 in the days of these four kingdoms God will set up another kingdom listen to this church as history goes about its course as these worldly kingdoms come and go rise and fall as leaders come to power and they fall down another kingdom is rising almost unnoticed by the kingdoms of this world but this kingdom is worthy of their attention is worthy of our attention Daniel says this coming fifth kingdom is not like the other kingdoms it is not the work of human hands unlike these kingdoms which rise and fall this fifth kingdom will rise and verse 44 says this kingdom shall never be destroyed unlike these kingdoms which rise temporarily but then eventually are overtaken and handed over to another people this kingdom will never be left to another people and unlike these kingdoms which lean on their own wisdom to their own downfall and eventually crumble to the dust this coming kingdom will triumph over all the kingdoms of the world says this kingdom will break into pieces all these kingdoms and bring them to an end and this kingdom shall stand forever what kingdom is this this is the kingdom of god this is the kingdom of the god of gods and the king of kings now this topic the kingdom of god which really it ought to be one of the most encouraging truths in all of scripture sadly is one that

Christians like to fight about and to disagree on and so I just want to ask two questions here of the kingdom when is it getting here and how do I get in two basic questions when is it coming how do I get in question number one when is the kingdom of god getting here well if you listen according to daniel it's here it's clearly different from these other four kingdoms right it's different from these other earthly kingdoms don't think of this kingdom in earthly physical terms but he says in the days of these kingdoms this fifth kingdom is going to rise up god's kingdom what we need to understand is that god's kingdom is his reign rule and authority over his people I'll say that again god's kingdom is god's reign rule and authority over his people greg greg gilbert pastor in kentucky says the kingdom of god is god's redemptive rule reign and authority over those redeemed by jesus the kingdom of god is his sovereign rule over his people now that kingdom it develops in the course of history it takes different shape it grows it swells it it looks a little bit different now than it did then but daniel tells us again god is working to establish this kingdom even in the days of these four kings and he tells us that there is a decisive crucial vital time in history when the stone that takes over the whole earth when this stone comes and does its damage to this kingdom of man do you see that it

strikes the feet doesn't it and the whole thing comes crumbly down but it is in the days of the Roman kingdom that the stone comes and crushes the kingdom of man and as we look to the pages of the New Testament as we jump ahead the gospel of Mark tells us that during the days of the Roman empire as the Romans occupied the country of Palestine a small unimpressive teacher named Jesus appeared in Galilee proclaiming the time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God is at hand repent and believe the gospel something decisive happens in the first coming of Jesus the gospel of Matthew tells us that Jesus went throughout all the cities and villages teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction the gospel of Luke tells us when Jesus was asked by the Pharisees they asked him when is the kingdom of

God coming he answered them the kingdom of God is not coming in ways that can be observed nor will they say look here it is or there for behold the kingdom of God is in the midst of you didn't Jesus teach us that unlike these earthly kingdoms which start big and strong and then they crumble down to dust the kingdom of God is like a mustard seed small barely noticeable but that becomes a great tree or the kingdom of God is like a little bit of leaven that is worked in and then it leavens the whole lump it transforms the whole thing or as Daniel says the kingdom of God is like a stone that becomes a mountain that covers the whole earth when Jesus enters into Jerusalem on the back of a donkey to the shouts of Hosanna the crowds understood that he had come to bring the kingdom but they misunderstood exactly how this kingdom would be established in the days of the Roman Empire in his first coming here's what I want us to see in his first coming Jesus inaugurated the kingdom of God but it wasn't the physical victory over the Romans that the Jews were expected instead he came to inaugurate a much bigger kingdom to win a much bigger battle he came to defeat all of our enemies yes Satan's final end is yet to come but he was dealt a decisive blow at the cross of Christ yes the final enemy to be defeated is death but death was defeated and destroyed in the resurrection of King Jesus King Jesus came the first time to create a new people for himself from every tribe tongue and nation believing Jew believing Gentile alike and when he comes again he will finish what he started and death will be no more sin will be no more the enemy will be no more

[42 : 06] Babylon will be judged the kingdom of this world will crumble to the ground all his people will be gathered and the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea church here's how we need to think about it the kingdom of God was inaugurated at his first coming and it will be consummated at his second coming it was inaugurated at Jesus first coming and it will be consummated when he comes again we experience the blessings of belonging to the kingdom of God right now we are citizens of his kingdom right now Jesus reigns from heaven over all the earth right now eternal life justification adoption sanctification these are all blessings of the kingdom that we experience right now in part but then in full we live here in the in between

Jesus has established the kingdom and yet it is still to come the kingdoms of this world are defeated and God's kingdom is here and one day soon it will cover all the earth see Christ Jesus is the stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone upon which the church the people of God the people of the kingdom is built so question number two how do we get in on this it's very simple don't reject the stone don't reject the stone or again as pastor Greg Gilbert says our entrance into the kingdom of God is determined by our response to the king the kingdom of God is at hand repent and believe the gospel reject the wisdom of man and pursue the wisdom of God forsake the wisdom of man and put your faith in the foolishness of the cross of Christ Paul says the word of the cross is foolishness is folly to those who are perishing but to us who are being saved it's the power of God reject the wisdom of man and receive the power of God for salvation in Jesus Christ and for those who belong to the king church our call is to live right now as citizens of his kingdom wherever we may be the Lord has placed us right here in Aundall South Carolina but church we are citizens of another kingdom and where do we see the rain and the rule and the authority of God most clearly here it's right here in the church it's right here in the church the church is an embassy of the kingdom of God here on earth and we are his ambassadors God making his appeal through us be reconciled to God where do we see God's reign and rule and authority most clearly is right here in the church as we submit to the word of God together as we lock arms together to make his name known here in Aundall and beyond as we gather together to sing hymns and let the word of Christ dwell in us richly God's reign rule and authority over his redeemed people his kingdom is right here what's the response what ought to be the response of

our heart to a God like that it's honor and praise and glory and thanksgiving rejoice the Lord is king this is what Nebuchadnezzar does here at the close of our passage look there to verse 46 says then king

Nebuchadnezzar fell on his face and paid homage to Daniel and commanded that an offering an incense be offered up to him and the king answered and said to Daniel truly your God is God of gods and Lord of kings and a revealer of mysteries for you've been able to reveal this mystery and the king honored Daniel and he promoted Shadrach and Meshach and Abednego and he appointed them over the affairs of Babylon and Daniel remained at the king's court church all wisdom belongs to him and all history belongs to him and because of this all honor and glory and worship and praise and thanksgiving and power and might belongs to him are we giving God the honor that he's due are we trusting him with all of our days are we seeking his wisdom while we live here as exiles in a foreign land

[47 : 33] I'd like to close our time this morning with one more song and we'll sing it in response together father this is my father's world let me ne'er forget that though the wrong seems off so strong god is the ruler yet this is my father's world why should my heart be sad the lord is king let heavens ring god reigns let earth be glad let's pray father we pray together this morning as you've taught us to pray thy kingdom come thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven here in all in all as it is in heaven here at seaweed bay as it is in heaven in our families as it is in heaven in our own hearts as it is in heaven lord would you help us to live our days in exile seeking first the kingdom of god we thank you jesus for your victory on the cross that the kingdom is here that the battle is won we thank you for your resurrection that you live and reign right now and as your kingdom grows here on earth lord we pray that we would be a part of the expanse of your kingdom we thank you lord that you have promised you will come again soon would you incline our hearts to that day help us to live today in light of that day when you'll come again and set all things right we love you lord we pray this in jesus name amen