

Atlantic Lyman conf.1972-02 Studies in Daniel 02

by Joseph Balsan

Daniel interprets Nebuchadnezzar's dream, revealing the future of Gentile kingdoms and the ultimate triumph of God's kingdom.

Duration: 58:42

Scripture: Daniel 2:31

Topics: "Biblical Prophecy", "Kingdom Of God"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher focuses on the book of Daniel and its relevance to understanding God's ways and counsels. The sermon begins by discussing the moral conditions of the four young men who were taken captive by Nebuchadnezzar and brought to Babylon. These young men, including Daniel, stood for God and refused to defile themselves with the king's meat. The sermon then moves on to Daniel chapter 2, where the king has a dream about a great image. Daniel interprets the dream, explaining that the different parts of the image represent different kingdoms, and a stone cut out without hands destroys the image. This stone represents the kingdom of God, which will ultimately triumph over all earthly kingdoms.

Transcript

Nice to see you all out tonight. I hope that you'll remember these meetings in prayer, that God will bless His Word. Let us turn to Daniel, chapter 2, shall we? Daniel, chapter 2. This is a very long chapter, and so we're not going to read it in its entirety.

But we'll start at the thirty-first verse of Daniel, chapter 2. Daniel, chapter 2 and verse 31. Thou, O King, sawest, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee, and the form thereof was terrible.

This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, his legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay. Thou saw'st till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet, that were of iron and clay, and break them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer-threshing floors.

And the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them, and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth. This is the dream, and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the King. Thou, O King, art a King of kings, for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power and strength and glory.

And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven, hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold, and after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth. And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron, for as much as iron breaketh in pieces, and subdueth all things, and as iron that breaketh all these shall it break in pieces and bruise.

And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potter's clay and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided, but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, for as much as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay. And as the toes of the feet were part of iron and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly, as the margin has, brittle. And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the feet of men, but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay.

And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed, and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever. For as much as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it break in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold, the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter, and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure. Then the king Nebuchadnezzar fell upon his face, and worshipped Daniel, and commanded that they should offer an oblation and sweet odours unto him.

The king answered unto Daniel, and said, Of a truth it is, that your God is a God of gods, and a Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, seeing thou couldst reveal this secret. Then the king made Daniel a great man, and gave him many great gifts, and made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon, and chief of the governors over all the wise men of Babylon. Then Daniel requested of the king, and he said, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego over the affairs of the province of Babylon, but Daniel sat in the gate of the king.

May the Lord bless to us the reading of his word. Shall we look to the Lord in prayer? Our Father, we desire to thank thee tonight for the privilege we have of coming into thy presence. We thank thee for the precious truth of these hymns that we have been singing, and we thank thee for thy word.

And our desire is tonight to have our understandings enlarged in the knowledge of thy word. We thank thee that thou hast not left us in the dark, but thou hast made known these things to us by thy word and by thy spirit. And so we pray that thou will give help in speaking it forth tonight, that it might be a blessing and a help to each and every one of us who are here.

We commend ourselves to thee and pray for those who could not be with us. In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, amen. Now as we have noticed last night, why this is the outline of the book of Daniel the prophet.

That was the title that our Lord Jesus Christ gave to this man Daniel. That he spoke of him as Daniel the prophet, and last night we saw that in chapter 1, we saw the moral conditions suited to the enlightenment

in the ways and counsels of God. We saw how that these four young men who were in the land of Babylon, taken their captives by Nebuchadnezzar from the people of Israel.

We saw how they were taken into a strange land and among strange people, with you might say even many of their fellow Israelites following the dictates of the king. And going contrary to the word of God, we saw how these four young men, why they stood for God. We saw how Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the king's meat, which was offered to idols.

We saw how he requested that he might be able to not eat of this meat, and the result was that when they prospered, why they were spared. And we saw that after all the training and testing, they were ten times wiser than all the Chaldeans and the astrologers in the land of Babylon. We also saw how that this chart you might say is divided, that the prophecy of Daniel is concerning the times of the Gentiles.

And we saw that the times of the Gentiles began with the destruction of Jerusalem, and the captivity of the people of Israel, and the setting up of Gentile rulers over the world. And as we are going to notice tonight, that there are four distinct kingdoms that are brought before us, that are going to be exercised by Gentile powers, and the final kingdom of course, the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. Now we saw also how that in this chart you notice we have a period here called the present age, which is a parenthesis in this chart.

This was something that Daniel of course did not see. When Daniel saw the image, he saw a complete image. And when Daniel had his vision of the four beasts and the Roman little horn, why there was no parenthesis.

This is something that is made known to us in the New Testament, and after the crucifixion of our Lord Jesus Christ, why the time clock of God's prophecy stopped, and God began a new work, something that has been going on for the last 1900 years, in which we have the preaching of the gospel of the grace of God, by which God is calling out from amongst Jews and Gentiles a people for his name. And that of course is the church, and when this church age is complete, you might say this top line coincides with this bottom line, when the Lord Jesus Christ is going to take out of this world his church, and if we could raise this to this, what Daniel saw, Daniel did not see this special age that you and I live in. That is made known to three, verses three to eleven, where Paul tells us that this age in which you and I live is a secret, which was hidden God, and was not made unknown in other ages, as it is now made known to us.

So in this special period of time, God is as it were working a special work, a concealed work, a hidden work, and when this is completed, why then of course we will come, or the world will come into the time of the end. We also saw that this chart is divided two other ways, in the first six chapters we have the historical part of the chart. In other words, things that actually happened in the life of this man Daniel, and then in the last six chapters, from seven through chapter twelve, we have the prophecies that Daniel saw, and these prophecies were especially in relation to the Gentile world powers, in relation to the people of Israel.

Now we come tonight to Daniel chapter two, and if you'll notice in Daniel chapter two, and verse four it says, Then spake the Chaldeans to the king in Syriac, O king, live forever, tell my servants the dream, and we will show the interpretation. Now you notice it says, Then spake the Chaldeans to the king in Syriac. Now Bible scholars tell us that from the second chapter and the fourth verse, all the way through the third, fourth, fifth, and sixth, and seventh chapters of this book of Daniel, it is written in the Syriac, or Aramaic language.

In other words, this book of Daniel is written in two different languages. In chapter one, and chapters eight to the end of the book, it is written in Hebrew, and from chapter two and verse four, through chapter seven, it is written in Syriac, or Aramaic. And that is very significant because it proves to us that this book was written in the time of Daniel, and that it was not written at a later time as some so-called Bible scholars would have us believe.

Now the reason for that is because the Aramaic was that language which was spoken by the Gentile powers, by the Gentile nations. Eventually, it became the language of the people of Israel too. But at the time that these incidents took place, while they were speaking Hebrew, they were not speaking Aramaic.

And so it is to us a proof that this book is inspired, and that it is written by Daniel, and that the things which were written so that these Gentile nations could understand them were written in a language that they could understand, and the things which were especially related to the people of Israel, they were written in the language that they themselves could read and understand. Now someone has called this Daniel chapter 2 the ABC of prophecy. In other words, perhaps it is the simplest outline on prophecy that we have in the entire Bible, because it brings before us, you might say, an outline of Gentile authority and Gentile rule and government from the very beginning until the very coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We, of course, we know that we are living in the times of the Gentiles. That is when Gentile nations are in power and in authority. That has been true since the days of Nebuchadnezzar.

Prior to that, why the people of Israel were the primary power. They were the dominating power in the world of that day. But today, and since the day of Nebuchadnezzar, why it has been the Gentile powers, and this will continue until, as we shall see, our Lord Jesus Christ shall come.

Now this account that we have in Daniel chapter 2 begins with Nebuchadnezzar, and Nebuchadnezzar has a dream. And why does he have a dream? Well, if you were to look a little farther down, you would notice that this man Daniel tells us here, I think it is in the 29th verse, he says, As for thee, O king, thy thoughts came into thy mind upon thy bed. What shall come to pass hereafter? Now you might say that here we have a little account.

Nebuchadnezzar, of course, had conquered many nations. Nebuchadnezzar was, you might say, the ruling power. He was the dominating power of his day.

He had conquered Jerusalem. He had conquered Egypt. He had conquered Syria.

He had spread out and he had conquered practically all the known world of his day. And as he was lying on his bed, as king and monarch of all this, he was thinking to himself, Well, I wonder what the future holds. After all, I'm like every other man.

Eventually I'm going to pass away, and when I die, I wonder what's going to be hereafter. I wonder what's going to happen after I'm gone. You know, that's really something that each and every one of us should think about, shouldn't we? Every one of us should think about the future.

Every one of us should think to ourselves, Well, I wonder what the future holds. I wonder what the future holds for me. Of course, Nebuchadnezzar wasn't thinking about what would happen to him after he died.

He was thinking about what would happen to his kingdom after he died. But you know, you and I, we can ask ourselves the question today, Well, suppose I was to die, I wonder what would happen to me. I

wonder if my soul was to leave this world tonight.

I wonder where I would be. Where am I going to be? I remember one day preaching on the street corner as a young Christian in the city of Chicago, and an older brother got up, and he spoke the gospel, and he raised a question that has stuck with me for a number of years. He raised the question, Well, where will you be 100 years from now? Now, I hadn't exactly thought of it that way.

I'd thought of eternity. But I didn't think of such figures as that. Well, where would I be 100 years from now? Well, every one of us are going to be someplace 100 years from now.

I wonder if every one of us who are in this meeting, if we have ever thought, well, what about my future? Where am I going to be? Where am I going to be after this? Nebuchadnezzar was thinking about the future, and it's a good thing to think about the future. And as he was thinking about the future, he fell asleep. And as he fell asleep, he dreamed a dream.

And this dream had such an impact upon him that we awake and startled. But the amazing thing about it was, he had the impression that he had dreamed something amazing and something beyond his comprehension. But the fact of the matter was, he couldn't recall it.

He couldn't think about what he had dreamt about. And so, of course, he called his wizards, his magicians into his presence. These were people who were occupied with magical arts.

They were occupied with the strange dreams. I think it's very significant that today we're living in a day when astrology is increasing. You know, it's amazing how even some Christians, they will read these astrological books.

And some of them are very intent on directing and guiding their lives according to astrology. We know that they said Hitler, during the last war, was in constant communion with mediums and seeking guidance from the spiritists to tell him what to do. Well, if he was guided by them, we know what happened to them, to him because he certainly met a catastrophic end and a terrible end, just as will those who follow the teachings and the leadings of astrologers.

But he called these magicians, he called these astrologers, he called these people into his presence, and he says, I have dreamed a dream and my spirit is troubled to know it. And of course the magician said, well, long live the king. You tell us whatever your dream is and we'll interpret it for you.

Just tell us what that dream was. And he says, that's just it. He says, I can't remember my dream.

Now he says, if you're magicians and astrologers and wise men, you ought to be able to tell me not only the interpretation, but what the dream itself was. Now you know, here we can see the wisdom of God. God was bound and determined to bring this king and his wise men to the end of themselves to show them that all of their wisdom and their learning couldn't unfold or couldn't decipher what the future held.

So he withheld the very dream itself from the memory of this king. You know, these men might have said, well, this is the interpretation of it. And of course, who would know whether or not it was true because they'd have to wait for the time.

You know, it's amazing in science, in so-called science, they say, well, this happened 2 million years ago or this happened 4 million years ago or 10 million years ago. But you know, there's no one to go back and

to be able to see whether it's so because it's so far back that none of them, of course, are able to go back to find out whether it's true or not. And some people wonder about some of these prophets and prophetesses like Jenny Dixon and the rest of it.

Well, do you think they're inspired of God? Do you believe they're led of God? Well, remember this. When you want to compare these prophets, and I've compared these prophets and prophetesses, and I've found that their calculations and what they say is rarely more than 50 or 60% true now or fulfilled. What they say is rarely completely fulfilled.

But that's one thing about scriptural prophecy. Scriptural prophecy is not 85% fulfilled. It's not 95% fulfilled.

Scripture prophecy will be fulfilled 100% to the very letter. And that is the means by which you and I can discern or determine whether a person is really a prophet of God or not. Because if the thing which they say does not come to pass exactly as written or spoken, why, you and I can be sure that it's not a prophet of God.

Because God's prophecies always are fulfilled completely and 100%. While here we have, this man has this dream, the wise men and the astrologers, the magicians, they're not able to interpret the dream. And so they said to the king, why no man on earth can interpret this to you? Why this is only with the gods whose dwelling is not with flesh.

And of course Nebuchadnezzar becomes so angry that he sends forth a decree that all the wise men and astrologers and magicians be put to death. And of course this man, Ariok, who was evidently the executioner of the king, well, he begins to carry out his duties and he comes to Daniel. Now we don't know where Daniel was or why he wasn't called into the presence of the king.

But when he hears what's taking place, he says, just give me a little time. And he says, I'll find out what the dream is. And I'll have the interpretation.

And so he goes into the presence of the king and he asks for just a little time. And the king grants him his request. And then we find something beautiful.

Daniel goes to his three companions. And you know they do something. What do they do? They pray about it.

They begin to pray about it. You notice the little father down there says in the seventeenth verse that Daniel went to his house and made the thing known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions, that they would desire mercies of the God of heaven concerning this secret that Daniel and his fellows should not perish with the rest of the wise men in Babylon. You know, it's wonderful to have those to whom you can come with your needs and your burdens and who can pray with you about these things.

There were only three young men that Daniel had as companions that he could come to with his problems. I wonder what you and I do with our problems. Do we know what it is to have someone that you and I can go to and we can say, I'd like to have you pray with me about this thing.

This is something that's burdening me. This is something that's troubling me. This is a decision that I have to make.

Do you have those that you can come to and that you can say, pray with me about it? Well, Daniel had that wonderful privilege. You know, it's a wonderful privilege to have those that you can come to and it's a wonderful privilege to be one of those. And you know, that question comes to us.

Would I be a person of such character? Would I be recognized as such a Christian that a person could come to me and say, well, I'd like to have you pray with me about this. Would I be such a person? If I didn't have such people that I could come to pray to, am I such a person that people can come to and they can ask me, well, pray with me about this thing. Help me about this thing.

Well, here were three young men. Now, all of these were young men. They weren't, you might say, old and gray-headed.

Evidently, these four young men were evidently in their teens or evidently in their early twenties at this time. And so we find that those four young men, they bowed their knees before God. And it says in the 19th verse, Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a night vision.

And you know, when the secret was revealed unto Daniel in a night vision, the God who had communicated that dream to this man, Nebuchadnezzar... You know, sometimes we wonder about the power of Satan. Does the devil know everything? The devil doesn't know my dreams. Oh, he can even perhaps give dreams to people, but the devil couldn't decipher or the devil couldn't penetrate into the mind of Nebuchadnezzar to get that dream, to give it to his wise men.

It was only God that could communicate that dream and He communicated it to Daniel in a night vision so that Daniel had it reproduced. And the first thing that Daniel does is what? Does he say, Well, folks, I've got it. I've got the answer.

I've got the solution. Does Daniel set himself up and say, I've had a tremendous spiritual experience and God has revealed this to me? No, you know what he does? You notice what it says? It says, Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven. Daniel gave thanks first of all to the God of heaven.

And he said, Blessed be the name of God forever and ever for wisdom and might are His. And he goes on speaking to God about the wonderful things that he has done. You know, it's one thing to pray.

It's another thing to have an answer to prayer. But then the third thing is, when I do get the answer to prayer, do I give God thanks? Do I thank God? Is that the first thing that I do? That's what Daniel did. The first thing that he did when he got the answer was, he blessed God.

I read something in a digest just this morning, you know, it was speaking about this very thing. This young fellow, this preacher was mentioned that we should give thanks when God answers prayer. Let's not forget to give thanks.

And then he told the story of the young fellow who was out in the woods. I know he got lost in the woods. And when he got lost in the woods, he was giving an account of how he had been found.

And he says, I became so disturbed and so distressed that he says, I got down on my knees and I prayed. And he says, Did God answer your prayer? Did God answer your prayer? He says, Well, you know, a guide came along and helped me before God could answer my prayer. God answered his prayer by sending a guide along, but he didn't see God in it.

And he didn't thank God. Do I thank God for what he does for me? God answers prayer. Do we thank God? Well, that's what Daniel did.

And then Daniel went into the presence of Ariok and he says, I've got the answer. God has given me the answer. And so when Ariok comes in, he says, Well, maybe you can know your king.

Here's the man who's got the answer. When Daniel comes into the presence of the king, well, you know, Daniel doesn't say, Well, I've got the answer. You know what he says? Notice what he says.

In the 27th verse, The secret which the king hath demanded cannot the wise men, the astrologers, the magicians, the soothsayers, show unto the king, but there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets and maketh known to the king, Nebuchadnezzar, what shall be in the latter days. He brings, he's not afraid to testify and honor God. Well, the God is the one who revealed this.

God is the one who made known the secret. God is the one who communicated it. Let's not be afraid in the presence of men to give honor to God.

Daniel doesn't say, Well, I, because I'm wise and because I'm more spiritual and because of that, well, that's why I've got the answer. Why, Daniel says, No, there is a God in heaven and He reveals secrets. And He's revealed at this that the wisest men in your kingdom were not able to communicate or understand.

And then He brings before us here, He tells what the vision was. He says, Thou, O King, the thirty-first verse, saw'st, and behold, a great image, this great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee, and the form thereof was terrible. He says, This image's head was of fine gold.

Now, this image that he saw was evidently a tremendous imposing image in the mind of Nebuchadnezzar, in fact, it was so great and so bright and so startling that it made an impression upon him that he couldn't forget, even though he couldn't remember the details of what he had seen. But now, as Daniel brings it before him, he says to Daniel, Daniel says, You saw an image. You saw that the head of that image was gold.

You saw that the breast and the arms were of silver. You saw that the thighs and the belly were of brass. And you saw that the legs were of iron.

And you saw that the feet were a mixture of iron and clay. And he says, You saw that the ten toes, why, they were a mixture of iron and clay. And then he says, You saw a great stone cut out without hands, and this stone came down with tremendous force and power, and it struck that image on the feet.

It didn't strike it on the head. It didn't strike it on the thighs. It struck it on the feet.

And he says, It broke that image to pieces, and it ground it to dust, and the wind came along and blew it all away. And then he says, That stone drew and drew and drew until that stone filled the entire earth. And of course, Nebuchadnezzar realized, Well, here is the dream.

Here is the thing that I have forgotten. Here is the thing that I have seen that disturbed me, and yet that I couldn't remember. And then Daniel not only told him what the dream was, but then Daniel told him also what the interpretation of it was.

And he says here in the 36th verse, This is the dream, and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king. Thou, O king, art a king of kings, for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power and strength and glory, and wheresoever the children then dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven, hath he given into thine hand and made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold.

Now you notice that Daniel brings before him that the interpretation of it is that Nebuchadnezzar and his kingdom, because in Nebuchadnezzar we have symbolized the Babylonian kingdom. The Babylonian kingdom which had conquered the world of its day, and he says, Thou art this head of gold. Now I want you to notice, just as we look at the medals, you notice that the medals all deteriorate.

The gold is the first, then silver, then brass, then iron, and finally a mixture of iron and clay. It shows that there was going to be a deterioration in these kingdoms. Now in what sense was there a deterioration? You know, if when men speak of the governments of the world, they look upon the ancient governments as inferior.

Oh, the Babylonian, that was primitive. The Medo-Persian, that was a little bit more advanced. And the Roman, of course.

But our modern democracies, they are the wisest. They are the best. They are the most advanced.

They are the most progressive. But you know, when God describes, democracy is the weakest form of government. Democracy is the most ignoble form of government.

Why does he bring that before us? Why does God look at it that way? If men had given this image, they would have said, well, the head was of clay and iron, the breast was perhaps of iron, the thighs were of silver, and the legs, of course, and the feet, why they were of, would be of gold. That's the highest, because man is progressing in his government. Well, why does God bring before us a picture of deterioration in the governments of the world? Because gold, of course, is the highest and the best metal.

The first kingdom was directly given by God Himself. This man, Nebuchadnezzar, was absolute king. In the fourth chapter it says, whom he would, he slew, and whom he would, he kept alive.

We see that right now in the second chapter, when he sent out the decree that all the kings should be put, all the wise men should be put to death. Why, his word was absolute law. But you know, when we come to the Medo-Persian, and, of course, we remember that in Nestorian's den, which was in the reign of the Medes and Persians, we know that when the false, as we're going to see when we come to it, the false accusation that was given against Daniel, and Daniel was put in the lion's den, we remember that Darius tried every means possible to save Daniel.

But once he had signed that letter, that could not be broken. He himself could not break it. He was under the control of a party of men whose voice was practically equal with his.

And in the days of Alexander and the Grecian Empire, his military generals were practically equal with him, and he had to consider what they had to say. In other words, in other words, power spread out. And instead of being embodied in one person, it spread out.

And the more there are to divide power amongst, why, the more inferior, until finally, when we come to democracy, what do we have today? Well, look at our country. Look at our country. Oh, we say, well, Congress is a means of safety and preserving the safety of this country, but it's also weakness.

It's also weakness, because we've got to get a hundred senators and five hundred representatives to agree on a certain course of action, and what is the result? It's weakness. We've got a variety and a diversity of opinions, and the result is the country, instead of being powerful, is gradually getting weaker and weaker. And so we find that God looks upon autocracy, monarchy, as being the most powerful form of government.

It comes from Him, and when we come to the last form of government, we have a mixture. We have a mixture of the will of the people and the voice of the people mingled with the voice of authority, and the voice of authority not daring to do anything unless He has the voice of the people behind Him. And so the result is God from God's viewpoint, from the way God describes it.

We have the four kingdoms, the Babylon kingdom pictured in the head of gold, we have the Medo-Persian pictured for us in the chest and the arms of silver, we have the Grecian Empire pictured for us in the thighs of brass, and Rome in the legs of iron. Now we're not left in any doubt as to what these four kingdoms are. God here brings before Nebuchadnezzar that there are going to be four great world powers.

He was first, the Babylonian was first. Notice the 39th verse, it says, And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee. Now we don't have to go outside of the Bible to find these four kingdoms.

In the 5th chapter of Daniel, if you'll just notice, we'll come to it eventually. But in the 5th chapter of Daniel, and notice it tells us in the 30th verse, it says, In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain, and Darius the Median took the kingdom, being about threescore and two years old. There we have the coming in of the Medo-Persian Empire, the second empire.

In the 8th chapter of Daniel, and notice it tells us here in the 8th chapter of Daniel, and the 20th verse, it says, The ram which thou sawest having two horns are the kings of Media and Persia, and the rough goat is the king of Grisha, and the great horn that is between his eyes is the first king. Now there we have the third empire, and that is the Grishan. We know that after Belshazzar was slain, the Medo-Persians reigned for about 200 years, from about 536 B.C. to about 336 B.C., when of course, we'll get to that in the 8th chapter, but when this kingdom took over, the Medes were the strongest.

Darius the Mede, he was the leader at that time, but eventually the Persians became stronger, and Cyrus became their great king. And you know, that's another thing. Isaiah prophesied 100 years before Cyrus ever came on the scene that he would be the great king who would help the people of Israel, and he even named him by name 100 years before he was ever born, before he ever came on the scene.

Now many people say, well Isaiah must have been written after the days of Cyrus, because how could he have been named by name 100 years before he was ever born? But there are other instances of that in the Bible. And then of course, the Medo-Persian was overcome by Greece. Now the amazing thing about it was that when Nebuchadnezzar had this dream, Babylon was in power, but the Medes and Persians, they were warring tribes.

The Grecians, why they were little nations you might say, in Europe, which were fighting amongst themselves. And Rome, which was the fourth great world power, why it was just a little village on the banks of the Tiber. It was just rising.

If you would have said, well Rome's going to be a world power, that's going to be a world power, and you notice the legs of course Rome was going to be in power longer than any of the others. And so we find

that here we have this vision, here he had this vision of these four great world powers. But you notice he tells us something else.

He tells us in the 40th verse, The fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron, for as much as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things, and as iron that breaketh all these shall it break in pieces and bruise. And that is true, that the Roman power was perhaps the most powerful, ruthless, irresistible military power that the world has ever seen. And just as the Scripture said, they broke in pieces, they bruised, there was nothing that could stand against them.

And then it says in the 41st verse, Whereas thou sawest the feet and toes part of potter's clay and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided, but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron for as much as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay. But it was amongst the Romans that the people began to express themselves and that the people had a voice. And that was one of the causes of the weakness of the Roman Empire.

And then it tells us, As the toes of the feet were part of iron and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly broken. And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the feet of men, but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay. And in the days of these kings, now, who are these kings? Well, he speaks of ten toes here.

Now, if we were to turn to Revelation chapter 7, or rather, Revelation 13, and also Daniel chapter 7, when we get to that, we'll notice that he speaks of ten horns. And he tells us in Revelation 17 that these ten horns are ten kings. Now, as you and I look at the world today, we say, well, there is no world power today.

There is no Roman Empire today. The Roman Empire is destroyed today. Well, as I said, Daniel did not see this parenthesis, this age in which you and I live.

This is a secret in the heart of God that he has made known when Christ was crucified, and he brought into being in which God at this present time is saving people. But when this period of time is completed, and the church is complete, why, then will emerge again a resurrection of the Roman power. Now, it was in 1946, after the end of World War II, that Winston Churchill said, for the safety of the world, the nations of Europe must work together and unify, and if you want to call it something, call it a United States of Europe.

But a United States of Europe must emerge for the safety of the world. Now, I think it's very significant that within the last fifteen years, the common market in Europe has unified many of the nations in Europe so that they've worked together, they've enjoyed economic prosperity, they've enjoyed trade relations with one another, they've helped one another, they've worked together in the last fifteen years in a way that they haven't been able to work together for hundreds of years. And only within the last year, these six common market nations have agreed to take in four more countries, Britain, Ireland, Denmark, and I think it's Norway.

Taking in those four countries to make ten, and with those ten countries, they'll have a more, they'll have a greater population than the United States, they'll have a greater economic possibility than the United States, and the statesmen of the U.S. and the businessmen of the U.S. are beginning to face up to the fact that if this common market of ten nations functions the way they planned, there'll be a threat to the economic prosperity of the United States, and we're going to have to do something about it. Now the Bible tells us that this empire is going to revive in a ten kingdom form, and it tells us when this ten kingdom

empire does come into being, and it's going to be built, and it's going to be geared to the principles of the Roman Empire. In fact, the laws of the United States, the jurisprudence of the United States is based on the Roman legal system, and many of the principles of the Roman Empire are today incorporated into the legislative systems of many of the countries of Western Europe and the Western world.

So that's not unreasonable, it's not too far-fetched to see an emergence of a state of nations or a United States of nations in Western Europe that is going to be part and parcel of the Roman Empire. Now it won't be called the Roman Empire, of course, it'll be called by another name, but it's going to be the same system judicially, economically, and politically that characterized the Empire of Rome. So that it is part and parcel of it.

But when those ten nations do exist, notice in the 44th verse, it says, In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed, and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all those kingdoms, and it shall stand forever, for as much as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without end. Now what is this stone? This stone that is going to come and hit this image, this great political system, this great political image that is pictured for us here. As I said, it's not going to hit it in the thighs, it's not going to hit it in the chest, it's not on the toes.

In other words, Daniel says, well when those ten kings exist, this stone is going to fall from heaven and this stone is going to break this image in pieces. It's going to hit it with such terrific force it's going to break it in pieces, grind it to powder, and the wind will carry it all away. And he says, that stone will become a great mountain filling the whole earth.

Now what is the picture for us here? What is that stone? Well, we're not left in any doubt as to what the stone is. In Matthew chapter 21, the Lord Jesus says, Whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken, and on whomsoever this stone shall fall, it will grind him to powder. Who is he speaking about? He was speaking about himself, wasn't he? He is the stone.

Here Nebuchadnezzar sees the coming of Christ, the second coming of Christ. How is Gentile world power going to end? What is going to happen to this great Gentile world dominion? Why, the second coming of Christ is going to smite it. If we were to turn to Revelation chapter 19, we would find how Christ is going to come followed by the armies of heaven, and how he comes against the beast and against his kings, and how he takes the beast and the false prophet and casts them into the lake of fire, and he destroys that Gentile power.

And then what's going to happen? Why, that stone grows and fills the whole world. A picture to us, how when Christ comes and executes judgment on the Gentile world powers, he's going to take over the reins of government, he's going to institute his kingdom, and he's going to reign throughout the whole world, as we have in Revelation 20, and as we have in other parts of the Bible, for a thousand years. His kingdom would fill the entire world.

And so here we have brought before us in very simple forms that there would be only four world powers, the Babylonian, the Medo-Persian, the Grecian, and the Roman. And that in the last stage of that Roman Empire, which is yet future, there will be a ten-kingdom empire, and you can read about it in Revelation 13, you can read about it in Revelation 17, you can read about it in Revelation 19. This ten-kingdom power, which is going to reign, which is going to have authority until Christ comes and executes judgment and then sets up his kingdom.

Now notice in the 45th verse, the last part, that he says, The great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter, and the dream is certain and the interpretation sure. Now we know that the first part has been fulfilled, the second part has been fulfilled, the third part has been fulfilled, and the fourth part has been fulfilled. All that waits now is for the formation of those ten toes, that ten-kingdom form, which will be a mixture of dictatorship and democracy, and we know how democracy leads to dictatorship, and going to be the end, the setting up of his kingdom.

So that in this chapter, Daniel 2, we have brought before us an outline of the entire times of the Gentiles from their beginning in the days of Nebuchadnezzar to their very end when our Lord Jesus Christ comes and sets up his kingdom destroying all the Gentile world power. So that is what we have in Daniel chapter 2. In Daniel chapter 3, which we're going to look at tomorrow, we're going to see how the head of this political power is going to try to enforce universal worship, and we're going as of himself, and we're going to see how that there will be a faithful remnant in that day of tribulation who will stand true to the Lord and who will pass through tremendous trial, but who will be preserved to go into the kingdom of our Lord Jesus. Brother Kell, will you pray please?

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