

DANIEL 2

A STATUE AND A STONE

For more than 70 years, Daniel lived at the Babylonian and Medo-Persian court. He was a member of the government, and high in rank; and he was both politically and spiritually prepared for receiving revelations from the Lord. Thus he gained an insight into the rise and fall of the kingdoms of this world, and he was enabled to share these prophetic visions with the people of God. And here in this chapter, we are introduced to a study of the first of these prophetic passages, which took the form of a dream that was given to King Nebuchadnezzar.

On this night, the king was in a sober mood. It seems that the young conqueror was not only pondering upon his own possible future career, but also upon what would be the end of all things. To a mind that was thus prepared by its own reflections, God revealed – by a dream – the procession of empires that would rise and fall over the next several hundred years, until all of them disappeared before a Kingdom that was not of this world. When the king awoke, his spirit was greatly troubled; and in his distress, he sent for his magicians, astrologers, and sorcerers. If the king had been able to describe his dream, these men would have attempted an explanation; but unfortunately for them, the dream had perished with the king's awaking. Therefore, he made the unreasonable demand that they should tell him what the dream was, and then give him the interpretation also. This challenging order was followed up by lavish promises of reward on the one hand, and by dreadful threatenings on the other.

Of course, in such a situation, these men were forced to confess their failure to their king. And so he became “angry and very furious, and commanded to destroy all the wise men of Babylon.” Naturally, this order of death included Daniel and his three friends. After Daniel received an explanation of the tremendous haste on the part of the king's captain, he hurried away to the palace to beseech the king for time, and to assure him that he would tell him both the dream and its interpretation. The petition was granted; and when Daniel arrived back at his house, he told the news to his three friends, and advised that they should employ the power of united prayer, which is the best resource in times of perplexity and danger. And that same night, the Lord gave Daniel the very same dream that had been given to the king on the previous evening.

The next morning, Daniel was rushed into the presence of the king so that he might tell him his dream and its meaning. Daniel began his presentation by acknowledging the failure of the sorcerers and astrologers, but then he immediately gives all the credit to the Lord of heaven for his own ability to fulfill the king's unique request. Having made this clear from the outset, he began to relay

Outline of the chapter:

- ❖ Nebuchadnezzar's dream, and the magicians' failure to interpret it – verses 1-13
- ❖ God reveals the dream to Daniel, who tells it to the king – verses 14-45
- ❖ Honors are shown to Daniel and his three friends – verses 46-49

the dream to the listening monarch. The king saw a colossal image, which was great and grand. The head of the image was of fine gold; its chest and arms were made of silver; its stomach, waist, and thighs were of brass; the legs, below the knees, were of iron; and the feet of this statue were comprised of iron and clay mixed together. The image stood for a while, giving the king ample time to carefully observe it. At length, however, a great stone that was self-detached from its native rock-layers came flying through the air – hurled by an invisible supernatural force, rushing like a missile in the direction of the image, striking it on its feet, and crumbling it to pieces. The heap of dust was blown away by the wind, leaving behind the stone – and nothing but the stone. The image was pulverized and gone; but that stone mysteriously grew, until it became a mountain which filled the whole field of vision – from one horizon to another.



The various metals that comprised this gigantic image represented the successive kingdoms that would dominate the world – beginning from the time of Daniel himself and extending forward prophetically for the next several hundred years. The head of gold was the symbol of the Babylonian empire in general, and of King Nebuchadnezzar in particular. After the fall of Babylon, another universal empire would arise – the kingdom of the Medes and Persians, whose symbol was the chest and arms of silver. Next in line for the seat of the superpower of the world was Greece, represented by the brass stomach and thighs, whose founder would be Alexander the Great. And the fourth great world-power, represented by the legs of iron, was the Roman Empire. They ruled the world with a rod of iron; but toward the end of their Divinely-allotted period of authority and supremacy, they became divided and unstable – like the feet of the image, which were made of iron and clay mixed together. This was the empire that would be in existence when the stone that was cut out of the mountain, without the skill of human hands, struck down the entire image. Of course, this stone was a picture of Messiah's Kingdom. In the days of the last of these kingdoms represented by the giant statue, the God of heaven would set up the glorious Kingdom of Jesus Christ, which shall never be destroyed! This Kingdom does not owe its existence to any human counsel, agency, or power. And notwithstanding its small beginnings, it is destined for universal prevalence. Although many heathen persons and organizations have endeavored to crush and annihilate this Kingdom, it shall never be destroyed; it shall break in pieces and consume all rivals, and it shall stand forever and ever!

Lord, we thank You that although the rulers and governments of this world may exalt themselves against Jesus Christ the Messiah, yet He reigns as our King forever and ever, and He will dash them all in pieces like a potter's vessel! Amen.