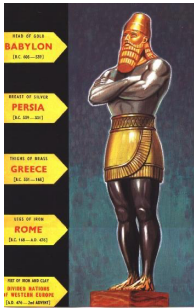


Daniel 2:31-45 The Delight of Divine Perspective by Faber McMullen, Pastor - Union Grove Baptist Church of Whitehall, Texas © 2016

Daniel 2: 31-45 The King's Dream



31 “You, O king, were looking and behold, there was a single great statue; that statue, which was large and of extraordinary splendor, was standing in front of you, and its appearance was awesome.

32 “The head of that statue was made of fine gold, its breast and its arms of silver, its belly and its thighs of bronze,

33 its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay.

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

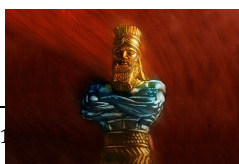
35 “Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver and the gold were crushed all at the same time and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away so that not a trace of them was found. But the stone that struck the statue became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.¹

If you have your Bibles, open them to Daniel Chapter two and we will begin with the interpretation of the dream. This dream is one of the most famous dreams in history, and if you've never studied Biblical prophecy before, this is a great starting point.

Let me start by sharing with you that prophecy is not something we need to get worried or bothered about. Prophecy is in fact very comforting. And that is the overall message of this morning. **We can be 1) comforted knowing that God is in control, 2) God's Word is true and it can be trusted, 3) God is truth and He can be trusted. Fourthly, prophecies allow us to share a little in the delight of divine perspective.** We need not wring our hands and worry because we have clues as to what is coming. As we look at Daniel's prophecy unfolding throughout history we can see that there is blessed assurance in knowing not only that Jesus is mine, but also in knowing that He's got this one. He's got the whole world in His hands.

The overall view of the dream is that there are 5 epochs of rule or periods of governance that will exist from the time of Babylon until the time of Jesus' return. These epochs of human governance begin with Babylon and they end when the "chief corner stone" which is Jesus will come crashing into the kingdoms of man to flatten the established governance on the earth. So right out of the starting gate I want you to realize that Jesus is coming and He wins! Daniel begins to tell Nebuchadnezzar the dream:

KINGDOM OF GOLD



36 “This was the dream; now we will tell its interpretation

¹ *Standard Bible: 1995 update.* (1995). (Da 2:31–35). LaHabra, CA: The Lockman Foundation.

before the king.

37 "You, O king, are the king of kings, to whom the God of heaven has given the kingdom, the power, the strength and the glory;

38 and wherever the sons of men dwell, or the beasts of the field, or the birds of the sky, He has given them into your hand and has caused you to rule over them all. You are the head of gold.

Why did God describe Babylon as a "head of gold.?" Babylon was known in antiquities as "The Golden Kingdom". Visitors would come and go and would marvel at the gold in the place. One hundred years prior to this dream Isaiah the prophet declared, "*thou shalt take up this parable against the king of Babylon, and say, how hath the oppressor ceased! the golden city ceased!*".² Then we have the descriptions given by the historian Herodotus as he described Babylon in fantastic detail.

Herodotus tells us that:

The city was in the form of a square that was 14 miles long on each side.

The outer wall around it was 56 miles long, and was 300 feet high and 25 ft thick.

The inner wall was set 75 feet behind the first wall, extending 35 ft into the ground.

There were 250 towers along the wall. There was an enormous moat on the outside of the wall.



The Euphrates flowed along the middle of the city and a half mile long bridge serviced the city.

The "Hanging Gardens" were filled by hydraulic pumps taking water from the river. There were 53 temples and 180 altars to Ishtar the fertility god.

There was a solid golden image of Baal and a golden table weighing over 50,000 pounds. There were 2 golden lions and a golden human image both 18 feet high guarding the city.³

Guys what I'm really trying to tell you is that there was never anything before Babylon or anything after Babylon that could be described as "The Golden Kingdom". It was spectacular.

KINGDOM OF SILVER



Daniel then explains that a second epoch of rule will come on the earth that it will be inferior to the Golden Kingdom. The key to understanding this prophecy is to take note that the chest in the dream has "two arms". Throughout antiquities, the Medo-Persian Empire consisted of two competing people groups.

These kingdoms are the Kingdom of the Medes and the Kingdoms of Persia. They were at war with each other then and so they are presently. You see church all evidence points to the fact that the Medes are what we call "the

² Isaiah 14:4

³ <https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/iraq/babylon-walls.htm>

Kurds" today. Remember Saddam Hussein made war against them because they are ancient enemies, yet they've been put in the same place and have an historical place as a bifurcated Kingdom. This is the Kingdom of the Medes and the Persians that conquered Babylon in 539 BC.

KINGDOM OF BRONZE



39 *“After you there will arise another kingdom inferior to you, then another third kingdom of bronze, which will rule over all the earth. In 331 BC a young Macedonian prince tore his way through the kingdoms of the world and he established himself over every part of the known earth. He was known as Alexander the Great. As I wandered through the Museum of Antiquities the spring before last I looked in wonder at the hundreds of pieces of armor from Alexander's*

kingdom ; They were ALL made of Bronze (and or brass). His Kingdom certainly was a bronze kingdom.

KINGDOM OF IRON



40 *“Then there will be a fourth kingdom as strong as iron; inasmuch as iron crushes and shatters all things, so, like iron that breaks in pieces, it will crush and break all these in pieces.*

Rome followed the Greek Empire as they conquered Greece in the Battle of Corinth in 146 BC. I have stood with Sandy and Kat on the top of the old fortress of Corinth and we looked at this place where kingdoms exchanged the power of the known world. Remember all armor in Rome was made of Iron. The Romans were as hard as iron and they were known for their power, their force, their might, and their strength. Rome basically ruled the world for 1,000 years. I like to summarize it as running from 500 BC until 500 AD. As Rome began to unravel from within itself, the Roman Empire divided itself in two. Thus, we see Daniel's vision of two legs of the same Kingdom of Iron. When the Emperor Constantine came to power in 306 AD he moved the capital of Rome far east to the great ancient city of the east, Byzantium. He changed its name to Constantinople (after himself) and you now know this city by its Muslim name, Istanbul. You see Daniel prophesied long ago that Rome would be a Kingdom of Iron and that it was to be represented by two great legs of iron.

A DIVIDED KINGDOM - Feet of Iron & Clay

“Its feet partly of iron and partly of clay”
Daniel 2:33



41 *“In that you saw the feet and toes, partly of potter’s clay and partly of iron, it will be a divided kingdom; but it will have in it the toughness of iron, inasmuch as you saw the iron mixed with common clay.*

42 *“As the toes of the feet were partly of iron and partly of pottery, so some of the kingdom will be strong and part of it will be brittle.*

43 *“And in that you saw the iron mixed with common clay, they will combine with one another in the seed of men; but they will not adhere to one another, even as iron does not combine with pottery.”*

I think what we are seeing here is the vestiges of the Roman empire being made and remade into what we call "Western Culture". These residual kingdoms and peoples that were ruled under Rome are being put together again and again and then being pulled apart, being constructed and deconstructed, resulting in an alliance of nations. Think UN (United Nations). The strong powers of the UN at present are the residual nations left in the wake of the Roman Empire. We see France, Germany, Britain as power houses and we see the United States itself which was born out of ALL of those European/Roman residual nations.

In thinking about the picture of the feet and the toes, it perhaps might be a description of the United States itself which represents a "melting pot" of every nation, tribe and people. Our national motto is "E Pluribus Unum". Do you know what that means? Out of many one. And yet we all know that this "melting pot" experiment is not mixing every tribe and nation in any sustainable and enduring way. We are "out of many" but we are not becoming "one". The iron and the clay do "not adhere to one another." Yes, we are as strong as iron, but at the same time we are as fragile and as brittle as clay. This is a perfect portrait of the present state of the western nations in general and the United States in particular. Whatever this kingdom is, it is the final kingdom or epoch of power that will rule and influence the earth before the end. So what comes after it? Well, Daniel tells us:

THE DIVINE KINGDOM



44 *“In the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which will never be destroyed, and that kingdom will not be left for another people; it will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, but it will itself endure forever.”*

45 *“Inasmuch as you saw that a stone was cut out of the mountain without hands and that it crushed the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver and the gold, the great God has made known to the king*

what will take place in the future; so the dream is true and its interpretation is trustworthy.”⁴

What in the world could this be talking about? Let me turn your attention to several prophecies in the Bible.

⁴ *New American Standard Bible: 1995 update.* (1995). (Da 2:36–45). LaHabra, CA: The Lockman Foundation.

In the Bible, messianic prophecies speak of the Messiah as the Cornerstone. Isaiah 28:16 says, "Behold, I am the one who has laid as a foundation in Zion, a stone, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone, of a sure foundation." Psalm 118:22 speaks of the Messiah, stating, "The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone."

In Acts chapter 4, Peter and John were brought before the Sanhedrin (that's like the Jewish senate) to defend themselves, and I read "**8 Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them: "Rulers and elders of the people! 9 If we are being called to account today for an act of kindness shown to a man who was lame and are being asked how he was healed, 10 then know this, you and all the people of Israel: It is by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified but whom God raised from the dead, that this man stands before you healed. 11 Jesus is 'the stone you builders rejected, which has become the cornerstone.' 12 Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved."**

When Jesus comes back He will be like the flaming stone in this vision coming out of nowhere. This stone will crush all the kingdoms of the world. Daniel is telling us that all the king's horses and all the king's men won't be able to put the kingdoms of the world back together again. Jesus is returning to earth at the end of that "Divided Kingdom" and He will establish His Kingdom - and His Kingdom will have no end. - Alleluia!

Don't you see church, God is giving us a delightful divine perspective. We don't need to be horrified when the United States seems so divided and so fractured. Why? Because we've already been told that it will come apart. It will some day be replaced. Is that time soon? Well, none of us know when that time will be, but we do know that today we're one day closer to THAT day. When things seem to be coming apart, rejoice for in reality they are COMING TOGETHER!!

Church, let not your hearts be troubled. In John chapter 14 Jesus gives great words of comfort.



27 Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

28 "You heard me say, 'I am going away and I am coming back to you.' If you loved me, you would be glad that I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I. **29** I have told you now before it happens, so that when it does happen you will believe. **30** I will not say much more to you, for the

prince of this world is coming. He has no hold over me, **31** but he comes so that the world may learn that I love the Father and do exactly what my Father has commanded me.

Do you know Him? If you do know Him, are you serving Him? Prepare your hearts because things are coming together! Jesus is coming soon! Alleluia !

Let us pray.

Faber McMullen is pastor of Union Grove Baptist Church - Whitehall, Texas. This community of faith is one of the oldest Baptist churches in the State of Texas. Pastor McMullen may be contacted by email at: uniongrove362@gmail.com / Prayers and Financial support for the work at Union Grove Baptist Church are appreciated. Mailing address is: 15301 FM 362, Navasota, Texas 77868.