

Daniel 2:31-45 – The Dream – A Revelation from God

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: God gave Nebuchadnezzar a dream – a Divine Revelation 神的启示. By putting this dream into the king's mind, God showed his sovereignty 主权. God confirmed his sovereignty when he gave not just the meaning of the dream, but the dream itself, to Daniel's mind. Those were great. But it is what God promised in his revelation to Daniel that made this even more remarkable. God would affect the entire world – and he would affect the world for the remainder of human history. And it was Daniel's privilege to know this first and his privilege to say this to the world first.

Today we will begin to unpack the meaning of Nebuchadnezzar's dream – a dream that would change the world... This dream was so specific that there could be no doubt as to the intent. The characters of the dream were made unquestionably clear.

Our headings are: The **Description of the Dream**, and The **Meaning of the Dream**.

Our goals are: That you **will see God's sovereign hand in human history and that you will rest in that sovereignty knowing that you are on God's good side through Jesus Christ your Lord.**

The Description of the Dream

31 "You, O king, were watching; and behold, a great image! This great image, whose splendor was excellent, stood before you; and its form was awesome. 32 "This image's head was of fine gold, its chest and arms of silver, its belly and thighs 大腿 of bronze, 33 "its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay 粘土. 34 "You watched while a stone was cut out without hands, which struck the image on its feet of iron and clay, and broke them in pieces. 35 "Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold were crushed together, and became like chaff 糠 from the summer threshing 脱粒 floors; the wind carried them away so that no trace of them was found. And the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.

1. As Daniel started to tell Nebuchadnezzar his dream – he used the pronoun “we.” Daniel did not promote himself – V36.
He always thought of his Christian brothers and worked to share the credits and benefits with them.
2. There is no doubt that by telling Nebuchadnezzar his dream it would have jogged 漫步 Nebuchadnezzar's mind back to what he had seen but had forgotten. You can imagine Nebuchadnezzar saying: “Yes, that's it...yeah, now I remember.”
3. So what was the dream? God had shown Nebuchadnezzar a great image. It was an image of splendor – a magnificent image – an image of a well-built man. Statues were quite popular in Babylon and great and famous people were carved in stone. But the Babylonians made many gods out of stone also and used them as a regular part of their worship. Marduk, Ishtar, and Shamesh were some of the more popular gods. So it was reasonable for God to use an image to make a point to the Babylonians and the Jews. (Remember, this message was primarily for the Jews.)
4. The image Nebuchadnezzar saw was made of 4 different types of material: the head of the image was fine gold, the chest and arms were silver, the belly and thighs were bronze, and the legs and feet were part iron and part clay. Obviously this figure required interpretation because it was not a real man. It was a symbol.
5. Continuing to give the dream, Daniel described how this handsome image of man was broken into pieces by a stone “cut without hands” and the image became useless dust that was blown away.
6. Then the stone that struck the image grew into a mountain and filled the whole earth. This stone was not a literal stone, so it needed some interpretation.

The Meaning of the Dream

36 "This is the dream. Now we will tell the interpretation of it before the king. 37 "You, O king, are a king of kings. For the God of heaven has given you a kingdom, power, strength, and glory; 38 "and wherever the children of men dwell, or the beasts of the field and the birds of the heaven, He has given them into your hand, and has made you ruler over them all—you are this head of gold.

1. Daniel then pointed out that the 4 sections of the image's body represented 4 kingdoms. What were they?
a. Babylon, led my Nebuchadnezzar, was the head of gold. Indeed, the Babylonian empire was considered a golden empire. It has lasted for about 500 years and accrued a lot of gold. It ruled over other many nations and was exceedingly feared. But the source of its power, strength, and glory was from the God of heaven; it was not from superstition, luck, or inheritance. **What a humbling thing for Daniel to say to the most powerful man on the face**

of the earth. What courage! But when one speaks of truth God gives courage. His Holy Spirit strengthens the speaker so he is not afraid. And in fact, it was from love...and love casts out fears...

Jeremiah 27:5 `I have made the earth, the man and the beast that *are* on the ground, by My great power and by My outstretched arm, and have given it to whom it seemed proper to Me. 6 `And now I have given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, My servant; and the beasts of the field I have also given him to serve him. 7 `So all nations shall serve him and his son and his son's son, until the time of his land comes; and then many nations and great kings shall make him serve them.

39 "But after you shall arise another kingdom inferior to yours; then another, a third kingdom of bronze, which shall rule over all the earth.

b. The 2nd kingdom, represented by silver, would be great, but not as great as Babylon. It would be an inferior 劣 势 empire to the Babylonian empire – inferior in wealth, power, and victories. What is ironic is that the golden powerful Babylonian kingdom would fall to a lesser, weaker kingdom. **But this was the Lord's doing.** And you will see beyond doubt that this was the Medo-Persian Empire, hence the 2 arms. The Medo-Persian Empire was formed by Darius the Mede and Cyrus the Persian.

c. The 3rd kingdom would be lesser yet, but it would rule the whole world. You will see beyond doubt that this was the Greek Empire that was exceedingly terrible and powerful. Alexander had a small but effective army. One record showed that an army of 300,000 surrendered without a fight to Alexander's army of 30,000. Alexander conquered the Medo-Persian Empire. Again, in irony, a lesser kingdom would rule the world. History records that Alexander the Great sat down and cried because he did not know of any other place to conquer.

40 "And the fourth kingdom shall be as strong as iron, inasmuch as iron breaks in pieces and shatters everything; and like iron that crushes, that kingdom will break in pieces and crush all the others.

d. The 4th kingdom would be known as a shatterer or crusher of nations. This is undoubtedly the Roman Empire. The two legs of this kingdom most likely pictured the 2 sources of power of the Roman Empire: the emperor and the senate. But the Roman Empire was divided into the Eastern and Western Kingdoms during the time of Constantine. So this could refer to the two divisions, though unlikely.

41 "Whereas you saw the feet and toes, partly of potter's clay and partly of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; yet the strength of the iron shall be in it, just as you saw the iron mixed with ceramic clay. 42 "And as the toes of the feet were partly of iron and partly of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly fragile. 43 "As you saw iron mixed with ceramic clay, they will mingle with the seed of men; but they will not adhere to one another, just as iron does not mix with clay. 44 "And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.

2. And then, the Lord purposely went into details about this 4th kingdom. The other 3 are important and you will see that, but this one was unique. How was it unique?

a. **There were 2 types of material** ...two types of men - men who love iron and the iron rule, and men who are mere men of clay. Iron and clay do not mix. Strangely, the Roman Empire was strong because of the iron, and yet fragile.

b. During the time of this 4th kingdom, the God of heaven would establish a 5th kingdom. This God was not the useless gods of the Babylonians who could not keep the kingdom...

c. This new 5th kingdom would never be conquered. The Babylonian Empire was conquered by the Medo-Persian Empire. The Medo-Persian Empire was conquered by the Greek Empire. The Greek Empire was conquered by the Roman Empire. The 5th kingdom was unconquerable.

45 "Inasmuch 鉴于 as you saw that the stone was **cut out of the mountain without hands,** and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold—the great God has made known to the king what will come to pass after this. **The dream is certain,** and its interpretation is sure."

3. Christ's kingdom was the 5th kingdom. The Christian kingdom would conquer the Roman Empire. Jesus Christ is the "stone cut out of the mountain without hands." He was of heaven and conceived by the Holy Spirit. He destroys!

Psalm 2:9 You shall break them with a rod of iron; You shall dash them to pieces like a potter's vessel."

Jesus Christ was the stone that builders rejected and he who would become the Cornerstone. And nothing and no one would ever be able to conquer the Christian kingdom. It wouldn't be left to other people. No one could invade 侵略 it.

And all other kingdoms and empires would be destroyed by this great kingdom. And isn't it interesting that at the beginning of the dream the image was described as great... and yet in the end, man's greatness is reduced to rubble? It is the power of Christ that consumes the world and show they are like the chaff of Psalm 1. Jesus himself confirmed this destruction. Those who challenge the new stone king will have him fall on them. What a rich picture this is.

Matthew 21:44 "And whoever falls on this stone will be broken; but on whomever it falls, it will grind him to powder."

Jesus said that the gates of hell cannot prevail 赢 against his kingdom. So Christ's kingdom is not a "a squeaking 尖叫 by" kingdom, but a healthy living thriving 兴旺 one.

1Corinthians 15:24 Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power. 25 For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet.

Isaiah 9:6 For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. 7 Of the increase of His government and peace There will be no end, Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, To order it and establish it with judgment and justice From that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

Luke 1:33 "And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end."

The statue that Nebuchadnezzar kept and worshipped would be destroyed by the God of heaven.

4. And to top off the dream, Daniel expressed the certainty that the dream would come true...and that the great God would see that it would. This was not a kingdom established by military force as others.
5. Do you see why there is need to remove fear and trepidation from your life? Jesus Christ continues to rule over his kingdom in an unstoppable way. Yes, the wicked will try to destroy God's kingdom. For 1400 years Muslims have tried to destroy the church, but to no avail. God will destroy them and all false religions. Bin Laden in one of his Fatwas (religious edicts 法令) called for attacks against all Jews and Christians...but God's kingdom will not be controlled by a wicked man. Bin Laden is dead but Christ's kingdom continues. Where are the Roman, the Greek, the Medo-Persian, or the Babylonian today...and the Assyrians and Egyptians before them? All that stand in the way of the Lord will be destroyed. No, this is not hate speech. This is love speech. In order to avoid the judgment of God the nations must surrender to him. Love makes me say this.

Conclusion:

Four nations will rise with power but 4 nations will be ruined by the hand of God and God's own unstoppable, unending, kingdom will spread throughout the world. What comfort this must have been to the Jews who were in captivity! What fear this must have put in the hearts of the Babylonians! Imagine how much better they would have started to treat the Jews there! Imagine Nebuchadnezzar's turmoil 动荡 for the rest of his life!

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: Do you see how good God is to you...to have brought you into his kingdom where you are safe for eternity? Do you see how you have no reason to fear anything or anyone? Do you willingly respond now in working to build this kingdom...by strengthening yourself in God's Word...by teaching your family...by showing Christ by your life? If you care for the lost you will work to see that they will not be destroyed. You will tell them that Jehovah is the only sovereign God and he provided a way for them to live forever...if they receive by faith the work of Jesus Christ.

Finally, what an incentive this must be to the wicked to bow before the Lord. If you do, he will remove your sins, receive you as his child, and restore you into a right relationship with him. If you don't, you will die and face his hand of judgment. The choice is yours.