**The Fifth Kingdom**

**Daniel Chapter 2:31-49 (Lesson #3)**

***2:29 To you, O king, as you lay in bed came thoughts of what would be after this, and he who reveals mysteries made known to you what is to be. 30 But as for me, this mystery has been revealed to me, not because of any wisdom that I have more than all the living, but in order that the interpretation may be made known to the king, and that you may know the thoughts of your mind.”***

***31 "You saw, O king, and behold, a great image. This image, mighty and of exceeding brightness, stood before you, and its appearance was frightening. 32 The head of this image was of fine gold, its chest and arms of silver, its middle and thighs of bronze, 33 its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay. 34 As you looked, a stone was cut out by no human hand, and it 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, all together were broken in pieces, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away, so that not a trace of them could be found. But the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth. 36a This was the dream.***

**Vs 31 –** Listen to Daniel’s words here. He does not stop with what the King saw, but even how the king felt. First, he saw a **“great”** image, a huge, massive, large image.

Notice, the image was mighty, it was exceedingly bright, and its appearance was **“frightening.”** The idea of this word is terrible, dreadful, fearful!

**Vs 32-33** We have a description of the statue:

There seems to be four principal parts, with additional detail on the fourth part:

1. Head of fine gold
2. Chest and arms of silver
3. Middle and thighs bronze
4. Legs are made of iron and the feet being partly clay (fired tile) and partly iron

**Vs 34-35 –** Daniel describes what Nebuchadnezzar saw next:

A stone was cut without human hands, that stone was then apparently thrown at the image, it struck the image on its feet, and destroyed the feet, and the entire image.

Although we are not told that specifically. It appears when the stone hit the feet, it broke them in pieces as well as the entire statue, and the whole thing became like chaff and was blown away!

**The stone** that struck the image, became a great mountain and covered the entire earth!

This imagery is from Psalm 1: *“1 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; 2 but his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night. 3 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. 4 ¶ The wicked are not so, but are like chaff that the wind drives away. 5 Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous; 6 for the LORD knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish.” (Ps 1:1-6 ESV)*

Daniel recounts to Nebuchadnezzar through exactly **what he saw** in his dream**.**

Vs 36a -This was Nebuchadnezzar’s dream!

Reminder: *“10 The Chaldeans answered the king and said, "There is not a man on earth who can meet the king’s demand, for no great and powerful king has asked such a thing of any magician or enchanter or Chaldean. 11 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."” (Da 2:10-11 ESV)*

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***36 This was the dream. Now we will tell the king its interpretation. 37 You, O king, the king of kings, to whom the God of heaven has given the kingdom, the power, and the might, and the glory, 38 and into whose hand he has given, wherever they dwell, the children of man, the beasts of the field, and the birds of the heavens, making you rule over them all —  you are the head of gold. 39 Another kingdom inferior to you shall arise after you, and yet a third kingdom of bronze, which shall rule over all the earth. 40 And there shall be a fourth kingdom, strong as iron, because iron breaks to pieces and shatters all things. And like iron that crushes, it shall break and crush all these. 41 And as you saw the feet and toes, partly of potter’s clay and partly of iron, it shall be a divided kingdom, but some of the firmness of iron shall be in it, just as you saw iron mixed with the soft clay. 42 And as the toes of the feet were partly iron and partly clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly brittle. 43 As you saw the iron mixed with soft clay, so they will mix with one another in marriage, but they will not hold together, just as iron does not mix with clay.***

**Vs 36 -** Now “we” will tell the king its interpretation. More than likely the “we” includes his three friends who joined Daniel in praying for God to reveal the dram and interpretation.

\*\*\* **We must guard ourselves against over interpreting this dream. Many want to run to Dan 7:1-14 and 8:1-14 and draw conclusions. The problem, we are told the interpretation of this dream and we should probably not go any further than that. \*\*\***

**The thrust of this dream and the interpretation is all about the stone and His kingdom that grows into a mountain and covers the planet.**

**Vs 37-38 –** Daniel tells Nebuchadnezzar:

1. You are the most powerful king on the planet, you are the “king of kings.”
2. **The God of heaven**, gave you this kingdom, your power, your might, and your glory. It is for his reasons that you possess this power and authority.
3. The God of heaven has placed you in this preferred place and gave you this massive kingdom as well as this beautiful capital
4. Like God gave Adam dominion, the sovereign of the universe gave you the dominion you currently enjoy!
5. **You are the head of Gold!**

**Vs 39a –** Provides a very brief explanation about the next part of the great figure:

1. The chest and arms of silver represent a kingdom, a kingdom that should rise after Nebuchadnezzar’s kingdom.
2. As sliver is inferior to gold in that it is less expensive and more brittle, this kingdom will be inferior to Nebuchadnezzar’s kingdom.

Theologians and history tell us this powerful, yet inferior to the Babylonian kingdom is the **Medo-Persian empire which would reign from 539BC – 331BC.**

**Vs 39b** – makes mention of the next kingdom: ***and yet a third kingdom of bronze, which shall rule over all the earth:***

1. Like the head and the chest, the arms of silver, the belly and thighs of bronze represent a kingdom. A kingdom that will rule over all the earth.
2. As bronze is inferior to silver and gold in value and ductility, this kingdom will be inferior to the first two (although this is not specifically stated).

**Theologians and history** once again form a consensus and tell us that the belly and thighs of bronze are the **Greek empire that ruled from 331-63 BC.**

Notice, this third kingdom ***“shall rule over all the earth.”***

**This is the Grecian empire that under Alexander the great conquered the known world.**

**Vs** 40 – 41 tells us of the fourth kingdom:

Like the other parts of the image, the legs of iron with feet that are partly iron and partly clay, this is another **kingdom (forth).**

1. We are provided additional ink on this kingdom.
2. This kingdom is very powerful and destructive, yet inferior to the first three (as iron is inferior to bronze, silver, and gold).
3. This kingdom was strong like iron then an explanation – ***“because iron breaks to pieces and shatters all things. And like iron that crushes, it shall break and crush all these.”***
4. So iron legs, very brittle and not near as beautiful or as expensive as bronze.
5. Further, the feet are iron mixed with **חסף** chacaph (khas-af’). It means clay that has been fired or tile.

Theologians and history once again tell us this forth kingdom is the **Roman Empire** which reigned from **63BC -476AD**.

**Vs 41 – reminds us of its division and its ultimate downfall!**

As you consider all of this, you see how with each kingdom there is regression, things are not getting better or stronger. Rather things are getting worse; things are getting weaker.

**You and I are being provided with a snapshot of human history that covers the period from approximately 600BC to 476AD.**

Now this is God raising up kingdoms for his own purposes and putting down kingdoms, for his own purposes and reasons.

But now the ultimate goal is about to be introduced!

**The stone! The fifth kingdom!**

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**44 *And in the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed, nor shall the kingdom be left to another people. It shall break in pieces all these kingdoms and bring them to an end, and it shall stand forever,***

**Seven things** about the Stone from verse 34 and the description of what happens in verse 35 and 44:

1. **Vs 44 –** This dream will find its fulfillment in the days of those kings and in particular the fourth kingdom. This point will develop as we look at the remaining points.
2. **Vs 44 -** The God of Heaven ***“will set up a kingdom.”*** In Vs 34 we were told the stone was cut **“*by no human hand.”***

*“14 ¶ Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, 15 and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."” (Mr 1:14-15 ESV)*

1. **Vs 35** - Its origin is small (stone). God’s plan to announce and establish his kingdom: Jesus, going about from city to city in Israel, choosing 12 to follow Him who would carry on His ministry.
2. **Vs 35 -** The stone cut without hands destroys the statue (pulverized it to dust and the wind blows it away) and then the stone becomes a great mountain that covers the entire earth:
	1. Greatness of earthly kingdoms brought to nothing.
	2. Stone becomes the kingdom that covers the world.
	3. WOW at the irony and the words of Jesus as he quoted Ps 118:

*“4 The wicked are not so, but are like chaff that the wind drives away.” (Ps 1:1-4 ESV)*

1. **Vs 44** - This kingdom – shall never be destroyed. This is unlike any earthly kingdom.

*“****16*** *Simon Peter replied, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."* ***17*** *And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven.* ***18*** *And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.* ***19*** *I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."” (Mt 16:16-19 ESV)*

*“Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe,” (Heb 12:28 ESV)*

1. Vs 44 - This kingdom shall not pass person to person, nor shall it be left to other peoples, and it shall have one King.

*“****1*** *¶ Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain?* ***2*** *The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD and against his Anointed, saying,* ***3*** *"Let us burst their bonds apart and cast away their cords from us."* ***4*** *He who sits in the heavens laughs; the Lord holds them in derision.* ***5*** *Then he will speak to them in his wrath, and terrify them in his fury, saying,* ***6*** *"As for me, I have set my King on Zion, my holy hill."* ***7*** *¶ I will tell of the decree: The LORD said to me, "You are my Son; today I have begotten you.” (Ps 2:1-7 ESV)*

1. This kingdom shall put to an end all other kingdoms, although as we have seen it is running simultaneously alongside many kingdoms.

**This is an amazing prophecy about the coming Messiah’s kingdom which would ultimately put an end to these kingdoms.** It is different in many ways, but most notable is that **it shall stand forever!**

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***45 –******just as you saw that a stone was cut from a mountain by no human hand, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold. A great God has made known to the king what shall be after this. The dream is certain, and its interpretation sure." 46 ¶ Then King Nebuchadnezzar fell upon his face and paid homage to Daniel, and commanded that an offering and incense be offered up to him. 47 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 have been able to reveal this mystery." 48 Then the king gave Daniel high honors and many great gifts, and made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon and chief prefect over all the wise men of Babylon. 49 Daniel made a request of the king, and he appointed Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego over the affairs of the province of Babylon. But Daniel remained at the king’s court.***

**Vs 45** – God has made known to you what shall be hereafter.

 The dream is certain… The Aramiaic word is **true**

The interpretation is sure, the Aramiac word is **faithful**

**Vs 46 –** Nebuchadnezzar falls on his face before Daniel. He commands that an offering and incense be made to him.

**Vs 47-** The Nebuchadnezzar says ***"Truly, your God is God of gods and Lord of kings, and a revealer of mysteries, for you have been able to reveal this mystery."***

This is from the lips of a pagan king, but accurately testifies of our GREAT God!

Here we see God doing multiple things simultaneously, all for his glory and for the good of His people:

1. God is revealing himself in a marvelous, miraculous, and amazing way to a pagan king, thus to a pagan people.
2. God is elevating his servant in the eyes of his supervisor (this pagan king). Nebuchadnezzar not only recognizes that God is the God of gods. But Daniel is the one whom God has chosen to reveal his mysteries through!
3. Daniel (and his friends) are comforted, as they are reminded that the day is coming when the kingdom of the stone, will spread across the planet and will never be stopped or thwarted. That kingdom has only one king (the Lord Jesus Christ!)

**Vs 48 –** King promoted Daniel, gave him ***high honors and many great gifts*** made him ruler of the whole providence of Babylon and made him chief administrator over **all the wise men of Babylon!**

**Vs 49** – Daniel petitioned the king, and ***he appointed Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego over the affairs of the province of Babylon.***

Vs 49 – But Daniel, ***remained at the king’s court.***

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**Points of Application:**

1. God can turn things around on the dime: **What a turn of events. As chapter 1 begins we are introduced to Daniel, a young man of nobility and member of the royal family who becomes a slave, then in 1:6 we see he becomes a student, then in 1:17 a seir, and in 2:48 the sovereign over the whole providence of Babylon and the supervisor of the wise men. He had to be thinking about Joseph!**

*“Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you,” (1Pe 5:6 ESV)*

1. **All kingdoms will ultimately fall to the Kingdom of Christ.**
2. **It is amazing to consider how the Kingdom of God started and what it is now.** The stone (unassuming) came into our world in great obscurity, yet as Jesus preached people believed and that kingdom has now covered the earth.

*“Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe,” (Heb 12:28 ESV)*

1. **God is always working to make himself known.**

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**Jesus in the Text:**

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