

Daniel 2.31-49

Rock of Ages

A PASTOR writes about Every Preachers NIGHTMARE...

It happened to me again. I woke up in a cold sweat, my heart pounding and my mind racing. I'd had a dream, the same dream I had over and over for the last twenty years. The dream usually occurs on Saturday nights. In the dream I am sitting in the pulpit chair on the platform of our sanctuary with my Bible open on my lap. Everyone in the church is singing, everyone except me. I am feverishly looking through my Bible for my sermon notes. As I come to the realization that they are not there, I feel increasingly powerless. My legs are getting weaker, and my arms are feeling limp. I realize I have no idea what I am going to say. In my dream the singing stops, and I get up weak and powerless, my mind empty. I begin to speak, but the people are obviously not interested in what I am saying. One by one they begin to leave. I look at my wife and she is frowning. Finally, when everyone else has gone, my wife gets up to leave. At that moment I awake in a cold sweat, thankful that it was all just a dream! Rodney Stortz

Book of DANIEL > King Neb had DREAMED a DREAM so IMPORTANT that FATE of all the WISE Men in his COURT hangs on INTERPRETATION
Admit NO MAN can Know DREAMS of ANOTHER > Only God ABLE

As we STEP into END of Daniel ch 2 > DANIEL received Message from GOD

1. God over Empires

a. Described by Prophecy

vs. 31-33 “You saw, O king, and behold, a great image. This image, mighty and of exceeding brightness, stood before you, and its appearance was frightening. The head of this image was of fine gold, its chest and arms of silver, its middle and thighs of bronze, its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay.

“apparitions of gigantic figures are characteristic of ancient Near Eastern dreams”
J.J. Collins

HUGE Statues of god MARDUK were in Prominent places in BABYLON

KINGS lay at Feet of Huge Images of their gods in Temples > Asking Guidance

King NEB who just came to THRONE has FEARS and QUESTIONS

He must have WONDERED whether he had OVER-REACHED

People who have unrealistic ideas or too high an opinion of themselves or who can make grandiose plans out of proportion to their real capacities, have dreams of flying or falling. The dream compensates the deficiencies of their personalities, and at the same time warns them of the dangers of their present course.

C.G. Jung, Man and Symbols

DREAM > 5 Different EMPIRES – Gold, Silver, Bronze, Iron, Stone

ORIGIN of the Symbolism must be found in DIVINE REVELATION

GOLD Empire in the FORM of its RULER stood Before DANIEL

v. 45 “A great God has made known to the king what shall be after this. The dream is certain, and its interpretation sure.”

DREAM itself is NOT Revelation >> RAW MATERIAL for Revelation

Daniel >> RESPECT for Neb. AND Uncompromising LOYALTY to God

If it were ME, I would have DESPERATELY Asked --- Did I get it RIGHT?

Daniel did NOT ASK Neb whether his Descriptions were CORRECT

He is CONFIDENT SERVANT of...God, who never lies, promised before the ages began and at the proper time manifested in his word Titus 1.2,3

v. 36 “This was the dream. Now we will tell the king its interpretation...”

NO Human Being knows such SECRETS only the REVEALER of Mysteries

This is WHAT makes Book of Daniel --- HOTLY DEBATED by CRITICS

PREMISE > Daniel looks into HISTORY and Sees World History UNFOLD

That means there is A GOD – who LIVES and RULES & REVEALS his Plans

That means GOD SPEAKS and His WORD is TRUE, ETERNAL, Unchanging

CONFIDENCE in Daniel based on AUTHORITY of RISEN LORD JESUS

“...spoken of by the prophet Daniel”

Matthew 24.15

This accurate forecast of the gentile world empires following the fall of Babylon is the chief reason why liberal scholars of the past tried so hard to discredit this book...Such prophecies are one proof of the Bible’s divine inspiration... Sometimes fortune-tellers make shrewd guesses about some future happening – if it is not too far in the future. But nowhere in all history is there a rival to the distant, detailed, and yet accurately fulfilled prophecies of the biblical writers.

James Boice

b. Destroyed by Providence

MESSAGE > God is SOVEREIGN over ALL – Including our Interpretations

DANGER of trying to be WISER than God

God DOES give Isaiah PROPHETIC Prediction of NAME Cyrus – ABLE

Could have given Daniel EXACT Names – Dates – and Details – NOT the Point

He did NOT NAME the POLITICAL STATES pictured in this STATUE

We can GUESS, but that is all we are DOING

Faithfully PREACH the TEXT is to ADMIT that the NAMES are NOT There

vs. 39-43 Another kingdom inferior to you shall arise after you, and yet a third kingdom of bronze, which shall rule over all the earth. 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. 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. And as the toes of the feet were partly iron and partly clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly brittle. 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.

METALS show VARIETY of Natural Resources on the EARTH

4 >> 4 CORNERS of Earth – 4 RIVERS in Eden > UNIVERSAL SCOPE

CLAY Mixture is FATAL WEAKNESS – HUMAN Flaw > UNDOING

God reveals How FRAGILE is HUMAN POWER

IMPRESSIVE APPEARANCE but with ONE BLOW it turns to CHAFF

What a rickety base for the whole monstrosity of human kingdoms to rest upon!

Dale Ralph Davis

Relation between ETERNAL and CONTEMPORARY

GOD and his Truth are TIMELESS, Sovereign over PROVIDENCE

We MUST Believe that God REIGNS NOW even if there is LITTLE Evidence

Belief in the RULE of God is Essential for the LIFE OF FAITH

TOP HEAVY Statue that is READY to EASILY TOPPLE

Process SPEEDED by STONE that will CRUSH these Human Kingdoms

FOCUS Not on Gold Statue but on STONE that CRUSHED THEM...

vs. 34-35 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. Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold, all together were broken in pieces

STONE Uncut > NOT Prepared by Human Hands >> from Heaven

Thru Dream God gives Neb. GLIMPSE of the SPAN on Human History

Neb. occupies PRIVILEGED Position > Head of GOLD on Massive Statue!

vs. 36-38 "...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, 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."

Most SCHOLARS believe these METALS describe these MAJOR Kingdoms



While distinct, these four kingdoms were also in a sense one...Medo-Persia conquered Babylon. Greece did the same to Medo-Persia...Rome conquered much of the same...those four empires together represent Gentile world dominion O.T. Allis

Ch 7 SUBSTANCE of the Revelation will be FURTHER DEVELOPED

As same 4 will Again be Presented in a DIFFERENT VISION

Daniel describes what FEW Captive Judeans bound in Babylon Understood

HISTORY is HIS STORY > Outworking of HIS Power and Providence

kingdoms of men		Kingdom of God
Human	ORIGIN	Divine
Temporary	DURATION	Eternal
Overcome by each succeeding kingdom	POWER	Unconquerable

The kingdoms of this world are powerful and sometimes glorious. But even their strength is given to them by God, and just as God sets up kingdoms, so does he bring them down and dispose of them. James Boice

2. God of Eternity

a. Kingdom among kingdoms

v. 44 And in the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom...

PROMISE of NEW Creation – Spoken FIRST in GARDEN of OLD Creation

SERPENT Crushed – HEEL Bruised – SEED of Woman SET APART

COVENANT Promise RESTATED to Abe – Applied to ALL PEOPLES

God CREATES Nation to BRING FORTH a SAVIOR for ALL NATIONS

As PAUL preached to GENTILE PEOPLES in LYSTRA...

“...living God, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and all that is in them. In past generations he allowed all the nations to walk in their own ways. Yet he did not leave himself without witness” Acts 14.15-17

LIGHT of God’s Kingdom SHINES even in Earth’s DARKEST Hour

God’s WHISPERS can still BE HEARD amidst the SHOUTING of Babylon

Jesus: “With what can we compare the kingdom of God...It is like a grain of mustard seed, which, when sown on the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth, yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes larger than all the garden plants and puts out large branches, so that the birds of the air can make nests in its shade.” Mark 4.30-32

Human kingdoms will have their NATURAL DECLINE

God’s Kingdom grows from Strength to Strength

ARE you YEARNING for the KINGDOM like Joseph of Arimathea

Joseph of Arimathea, a respected member of the council, who was also himself *looking for the kingdom of God* Mark 15.43

The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, and the calf and the lion and the fattened calf together; *and a little child shall lead them.* Isaiah 11.6

DANIEL and the BOYS will become the WISEST Men in All of BABYLON

4th C Roman EMPEROR JULIAN known for HATRED of Christians

363 AD Went OFF to Fight the PERSIANS

As heading OFF 1 of Leaders MOCKINGLY Asked Christian in ANTIOCH

“How is the Carpenter’s son doing?”

“The Maker of the world, whom you call the carpenter’s son, is employed in making a coffin for the emperor” Christian in Antioch, 363 AD

Within DAYS News Traveled EMPIRE > JULIAN killed by the PERSIANS

WAITING for LAST TRUMPET to Announce GOD’S FINAL Consumation

Then the seventh angel blew his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, “The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever.” Revelation 11.15

b. Kingdom outlives kingdoms

v. 35 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.

IMPOSING Figure Quickly Reduced to NOTHINGNESS > CHAFF

What SEEMS an EMPIRE is just BRIEF EPISODE

Kings and kingdoms, presidents and dictators, democracies and tyrannies and monarchies come and go and enter the landfill of history. Dale Ralph Davis

Just After PERISTROIKA 1991 – Auction of Statue of VLADIMIR LENIN

IMPOSING Statue stood FEARFUL Watch over Town – TARTU, ESTONIA

But Now, Newly Independent Town needed Money – SOLD \$ 15,000 usd

The kingdom of God is of Divine origin and eternal duration. For this reason, it cannot be the millennium, which is but 1000 years in length. Since the kingdom is divine, it is therefore eternal. E.J. Young

vs. 44-45 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, 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.

Rome CONQUERED World but Could NOT CONTROL Itself

KINGDOM declines in SPLENDOR but grows in HARDNESS > Gold to Iron

4th Kingdom PARADOX – Weak AND Strong – IRON mixed with CLAY

On the whole history degenerates; it carries its own germ of disintegration that becomes increasingly apparent. There is then no ‘progress’ gene implanted in history’s womb that insures some sort of infallible upward movement... True optimism comes from God’s indestructible kingdom, not from a defunct but deified historical process.

Dale Ralph Davis

So, don’t BE IMPRESSED with HUMAN Power, No matter how IRON it Looks

Only God’s Kingdom will NEVER be DESTROYED

Brings HOPE to God’s People SQUASHED under HEELS of Human Kingdoms

Jesus Christ the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of kings on earth.

Revelation 1.5

c. king acknowledges King

vs. 46-47 Then King Nebuchadnezzar fell upon his face and paid homage to Daniel, and commanded that an offering and incense be offered up to him. 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.”

Most POWERFUL PAGAN lies Prostrate before Young EXILED JEW!

Historians CANNOT Believe the END of this Story > Great Neb. BOWS Down?

What we SEE is PREVIEW of What we WILL SEE on Final DAY

Every KNEE, Every TONGUE, Every KING & Commoner, Man, Woman

HOMAGE to Daniel – Same word used 11 X's Chapter 3 for WORSHIP

Of course NEB was a PAGAN who did NOT Know BETTER

NEB goes OVER THE TOP > Both in his GRATITUDE AND his THREATS

HEARD what he WANTED to Hear > HE is the Head of GOLD

ADMITS that Daniel's god is ONLY True God > Remains a POLYTHEIST

Neb INCORPORATES Yahweh into his PANTHEON of gods

Gives YAHWEH his 15 minutes of BABYLONIAN Fame

We'll see more of Neb's Spiritual Journey in this Book / UPS and DOWNS

JOSEPHUS wrote that Alexander the Great bowed to JEWISH High Priest

When PARMENIO, Alexander's General, asked WHY his Commander bowed?

"I do not worship the high-priest, but the God with whose high priesthood he has been honored"
Alexander the Great, according to Josephus

One of Main Theme's of Daniel >> God brings Praise to His Name

Israel had largely Failed in their Missionary Duty as LIGHT to the Nations

This Failure was One Reasons for Exile > Sent among Nations to Declare God

Judah's EXILE was Divine Punishment for Failing to Give Him GLORY

BEFORE they went on MISSION trip to BABYLON, Isaiah reminded them..

"It is too light a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to bring back the preserved of Israel; *I will make you as a light for the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth.*" Isaiah 49.6

Despite Israel's failure, God's Name will be Praised by Kings

For from the rising of the sun to its setting my name will be great among the nations, and in every place incense will be offered to my name, and a pure offering. For my name will be great among the nations, says the Lord of hosts.

Malachi 1.11

FIRST words of JESUS in Gospel of Mark

Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, and saying, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.”

Mark 1.14,15

d. Kingdom servants in kingdom service

vs. 48-49 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. 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.

End of Chapter > RETURN to POLITICAL Scene > Kingdom PROMOTION

LIFE must GO ON – Someday we ALL will LEAVE BEIJING!

DANIEL ‘At the Gate of the King’ > CENTER of Kingdom Administration

Like a MEMBER of the King’s CABINET

DANIEL puts in a GOOD WORD for his BOYS /// Barnabas into PAUL

Many GAIN Power & then FORGET who Helped get them There! Not Daniel!!

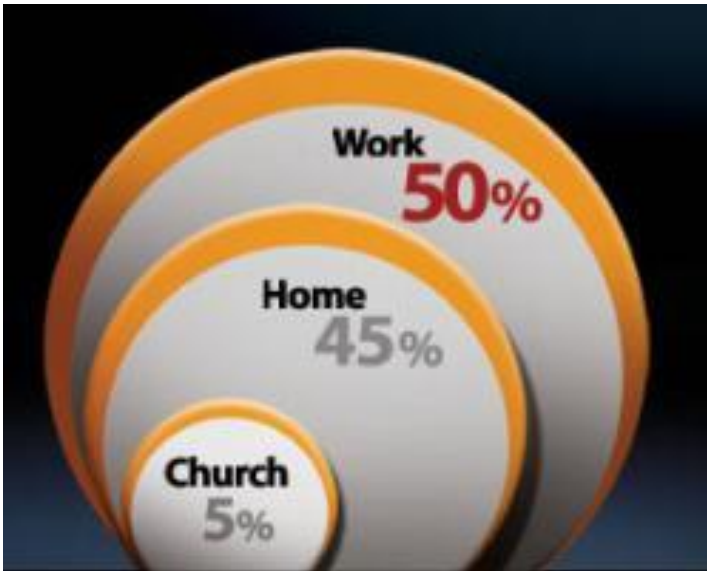
3 Friends named PROVINCIAL Governors OUTSIDE the CITY Itself

The chapter ends with Daniel and his friends promoted to responsible positions within the Babylonian system...they didn’t isolate themselves from the kingdom of this world as they waited for God to establish his kingdom; rather, they poured themselves into seeking the welfare of their temporary home in Babylon.

Iain Duguid

“Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, to all the exiles whom I have sent into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon: Build houses and live in them; plant gardens and eat their produce. Take wives and have sons and daughters; take wives for your sons, and give your daughters in marriage, that they may bear sons and daughters; multiply there, and do not decrease. But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare.”

Jeremiah 29.4-7



“I’m prepared to contend that the primary location for spiritual formation is the workplace.”

Eugene H. Peterson

Peterson NOT Have to do a lot of HEAVY Lifting to WIN that Argument

When you WALK Out of here in Few Minutes

I won’t see MOST of you for a WEEK

TOMORROW – Every Day of Week you’ll see Classmates & Colleagues

They need to know you are Follower of Jesus even MORE than I do!

In the face of the crises confronting Africa today, it will take more than roadside signboards to convince the world that Christ is the answer. We need Josephs and Daniels who are able to reveal secrets, interpret dreams, and solve enigmas.

Tokunboh Adeyemo

Workplace – PRIMARY Arena for you to LOVE GOD and NEIGHBOR

“a sense of divine vision must be restored to man’s daily work” C.S. Lewis

What a GOD we have to SHARE with them – God of Empires and Eternity!

God who KNOWS our DREAMS and their INTERPRETATIONS

God who in Fullness of Time – Walked Earth, Lived, Loved, Healed, Forgave

LORD Jesus Christ > OMNISCIENCE, COMPASSION, FORGIVENESS

Spent Hot Afternoon telling SCORNED Woman of God’s PLAN & PARDON

God of DREAMS and VISIONS Saw Her and Knew Her and Loved Her

May we BRING our NEIGHBORHOOD to Jesus like that Woman of Samaria...

So the woman left her water jar and went away into town and said to the people,
“Come, see a man who told me all that I ever did. Can this be the Christ?”

John 4.28,29

Daniel 2.³¹“You saw, O king, and behold, a great image. This image, mighty and of exceeding brightness, stood before you, and its appearance was frightening.³²The head of this image was of fine gold, its chest and arms of silver, its middle and thighs of bronze,³³its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay.³⁴As 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.³⁵Then 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.³⁶“This was the dream. Now we will tell the king its interpretation.³⁷You, O king, the king of kings, to whom the God of heaven has given the kingdom, the power, and the might, and the glory,³⁸and 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.³⁹Another kingdom inferior to you shall arise after you, and yet a third kingdom of bronze, which shall rule over all the earth.⁴⁰And 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.⁴¹And 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.⁴²And as the toes of the feet were partly iron and partly clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly brittle.⁴³As 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.⁴⁴And 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,⁴⁵just 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.”⁴⁶Then King Nebuchadnezzar fell upon his face and paid homage to Daniel, and commanded that an offering and incense be offered up to him.⁴⁷The 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.”⁴⁸Then 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.⁴⁹Daniel 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.