

Nebuchadnezzar's First Dream (Part 1)

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 18 November 2015

Preacher: Don Coleman

[0 : 00] When you think of the book of Daniel, there are a number of things that of course come to mind.

Of course, Daniel in the lion's den and Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the fiery furnace. Those are the two things that really stand out in our mind. But we also think about some of Nebuchadnezzar's dreams and later Daniel's visions, especially this one of Nebuchadnezzar's and this image.

So we want to get to that. We're familiar with it, maybe even familiar with Daniel's interpretation of it. In fact, that's the most important part of it, isn't it? Not just understanding this description of this statue, but understanding what it means, the interpretation of it.

That's what this is all about. Nebuchadnezzar needed an interpretation for his dream, and God gave it to him. Well, God gave him the dream to begin with. So it's the interpretation of that. Probably most of us have some knowledge of that. You know, there are, of course, a number of different views out there. I'm not going to attempt to lay out before you some of those various views.

[1 : 21] I'm going to give you mine, if that's all right. But anyway, so you know about this statue, the interpretation of it, how it's connected with eschatology, prophecy concerning end times.

So we'll kind of talk all about that. Not really in depth, but I think enough to satisfy all of us. Now, the preceding chapter that we have already studied, took several Wednesday nights to study, really sets us up for this chapter, what's going to happen in this chapter and chapter 2.

If you remember, back in chapter 1, verse 17, and even if you don't remember, I'll read it to you. As for these four young men, and who are they?

Well, there's Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, but let's stick with the Hebrew names, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah.

God gave them knowledge. Remember, we studied this passage. This was God's blessing to these men for obeying His word and, in effect, refusing to take up not only the king's diet, but also the whole culture of the Babylonians.

[2 : 35] And God honored them, blessed them, so He gave them knowledge and skill in all literature and wisdom. And then to Daniel, what? He gave him an understanding in all visions and dreams.

So this is what we're introduced to in chapter 1. And so chapter 2, then, is the first example of giftedness that Daniel had from the Lord.

So, Nebuchadnezzar has a dream for which Daniel gives the interpretation. God said he could interpret dreams. And so Nebuchadnezzar has a dream.

Daniel gives the interpretation. And Daniel has a vision from God. That's something we need to remember as we go through this story. There are two things happening here. There's a dream first, but there's also a vision.

Nebuchadnezzar had the dream. Daniel had the vision. The vision was of what the dream was, specifically, and the interpretation of it. So Daniel has a vision from God that gives him the correct interpretation.

[3 : 40] All right, so getting to your outline there. First of all, the dream and its circumstances. The dream and its circumstances.

The circumstances surrounding this dream that Nebuchadnezzar had. And here's how chapter 2 begins. Verse 1. Now, in the second year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign, Nebuchadnezzar had dreams.

And his spirit was so troubled that his sleep left him. Have you ever had that kind of experience? You know, with me, I don't know that I have to have any kind of excuse for sleep to leave me.

I just can't. I'm not a real good sleeper. But Nebuchadnezzar is troubled. He was troubled in his spirit because of this dream. And so he couldn't sleep. Couldn't sleep.

So this is kind of the circumstances. Now, we can make several observations here. And I don't think I put this in your notes. And it's not a biggie. But I wanted to just share a few things here.

[4 : 48] Daniel, if you remember, and this kind of focuses on at least one of many, actually, criticisms or critiques of this portion of Scripture.

There are scholars that say, well, something here doesn't make sense. You know, so what's going on here? Well, Daniel had completed, remember, he was to complete a three-year training program. All right?

This was Nebuchadnezzar's program for these young men that were brought into his kingdom as part of captivity from Israel. And it was a three-year program, kind of a, you know, university of Babylon.

And you remember that we studied that portion. We have to understand at this point in chapter 2, Daniel has completed that three-year training program.

So how could this, here's the question, how then could this be only Nebuchadnezzar's second year as a king? So there's some contradiction there, or seemingly.

[5 : 50] And really, there's not. The answer really is this, and if this even matters to you. But I always like to, you know, when there are major questions that critique the Bible and maybe suggest even that maybe there's a mistake here, I always try to address that.

But we have to understand how they mark time. You know, not only in that culture, but really, to a degree, we can even see that we do this sometimes. Daniel did not have to train three complete years.

I mean, in terms of 12 months or 365 days to make that third year. He didn't have to do that for them to say that he had completed, or for it to be said that he completed that three years.

Because a part of a year usually counts for a whole year. And so it's easy to interpret this way.

And then on the other side of that, there would have been, for King Nebuchadnezzar, there would have been a time when Nebuchadnezzar was acceding to the throne.

[7 : 01] All right, he was coming to the throne. That would not have been counted in marking the tenure of his reign. All right, so he completed his second year, which, by the way, just as was true with Daniel, it could have been 24 months strictly, or could have been 26 or 28.

But he's completing his second full year, could be the understanding. But also there's a period of time, the accession to the throne, that he may have been going through even when Israel, when he brought these captives into his palace.

So don't worry about the contradiction of the date or the timing there. And I'm sure as I look at your faces, you were worried about that. You've read this, and you know, this doesn't make sense.

And so I think there's probably a mistake here in the Bible. That's what you were thinking, right? I wanted to just clarify that. Now, Nebuchadnezzar, though we also, I think, should understand, too, that since there's only one dream mentioned here, then how are we to understand this phrase, had dreams, dreams plural?

Because we only have one that's dealt with here. Well, you know, I guess it could mean that he was just, he just had a lot of dreams. And we all have dreams. Probably do every night.

[8 : 35] We just don't remember them. But we dream when we sleep. But that's really not, doesn't satisfy it here. Actually, the phrase literally means that he was in a state of dreaming.

It was just kind of a dreamy, a dreaming time in one night. Or it could be that this same dream, he had a number of times.

All right? So, not a bunch of dreams. And so, I'm sure that when you read that, you were thinking, well, where are these other dreams? You know, did Daniel interpret those? I'm a little bit concerned that maybe the Bible left something out here.

That's what you were thinking, right? Well, don't worry about it. It's just, he was in a dreaming kind of time. All right? Now, the particular dream Nebuchadnezzar had really caused, actually, literally, if we understand the language here, and I don't, but scholars do, Hebrew scholars, and we should understand that this particular dream caused Nebuchadnezzar to have an irregularity of rhythm in his heartbeat.

I say, well, where does it say that in there? Well, it's this word troubled. It's troubled. The root word of this Hebrew word is translated troubled, at least in the New King James.

[10:00] It means, literally, to strike as with a hammer on an anvil. And it's used, quite often, to, applied to the heart.

And so, you know, Nebuchadnezzar had this dream. And his heart is palpating after it. And not just for a while. It continues. Now, we don't know if this was one night that he just spent a sleepless night because he, you know, his heart just was all out of whack because of this, you know, this incredible dream that he had, disturbing dream that he had, or whether it was for nights on end as he continued to be disturbed by this dream.

I kind of tend to believe it is that, that he was desperate. So, he's not just concerned about his loss of sleep, that he can't sleep.

He's really concerned about this dream, the seriousness of it. That was so serious, so struck him, that, that, it, it even made his heart go out of whack.

All right? Now, also understand that, and this is not, you know, indicative just of the Babylonians, but especially the Babylonians, we understand this from, from archaeology and history, they believed in dreams, they believed, they put a lot of stock in dreams.

[11:27] Now, a lot of people today do that as well, but I'm talking about an entire civilization. They put a lot of stock in dreams because they believed that they were messages from the gods.

And people today believe dreams are messages from God. But this was part of their culture. And, and, and so much a part of it that, they had to have people to interpret them for.

And we're going to meet some of those a little later here in the text, as, we're just going to kind of read it as we go. These, the Bible uses the words like sorcerers, astrologers, Chaldeans. these are the experts, and they were trained in how to interpret dreams. And they had it down to a science, probably wrote books on the subject. In fact, I think I did read a little blurb from archaeology that some of these writings had been found.

So, they were very serious about it. So, Babylonians believed in dreams, believed they were messages from their gods, and so a correct understanding, not just, just, you know, some casual understanding, but a correct, you know, very specific understanding of the dream was crucial for their future.

[12:45] Now, this would be true, of course, of Nebuchadnezzar. All right, so, he must have it interpreted. So, that leads me to the second thing in your outline, the dream and its consequences.

The dream and its consequences. So, the story begins with a dream that Nebuchadnezzar has. And, it, and at this point, anyway, this becomes even clearer as we kind of start walking through the first part of this chapter.

At this point, nobody but Nebuchadnezzar knows what the dream is. He had it. Hasn't told anybody about it. Nobody knows anything about this dream.

Very disturbing in Nebuchadnezzar, but he's not shared the contents of the dream with anyone.

Now, the only other person, of course, who knows is God. All right. And then God's going to reveal it to someone else.

But at this point, only Nebuchadnezzar knows the specifics about this dream. All right, so, sub point, under point number two, or A in your outline.

[13:53] Let's look at the king and his demand. All right, so, if he's had the dream, perhaps, he's had it a number of times, the very same dream. You know, that sometimes happens.

Or, just had it one time, and it is just so unnerved him that he can't sleep, and he's got to know the answer to this dream, and so, he makes a demand. Verse two, then the king gave the command to call the magicians, the astrologers, the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans to tell the king his dream. Now, note that. To tell him his dream. Not to interpret yet. He's going to ask that too. But tell him the dream. Wow. So, they came, stood before the king, and the king said to them, I have had a dream, and my spirit is anxious to know the dream.

And it was. All right. Now, what about these magicians? Magicians, astrologers, all these terms. Magicians, astrologers, sorcerers, and then, kind of a, really a word that is more of a category, and that is Chaldeans.

Chaldeans. Now, Chaldeans could refer to a specific group of people. Remember, Abraham was a Chaldean when God called him out to a land, you know, the store of Abraham.

[15:22] And they made his covenant with Abraham. So, he came from the Chaldeans. So, it can refer to an ethnic group of people. But in this sense, it refers to a specialized kind of people who have great wisdom.

Or at least, wisdom as it was measured in that day. Great intellect. And, so, you have these magicians, astrologers, sorcerers, Chaldeans. And these terms just simply refer to men in Babylonian society who were considered wise.

Right? It's really all this is. Now, there's several different terms, and so, obviously, each one would have his specialty. It's a little difficult I mean, a little difficult to maybe determine what that specialty is just from these terms.

But, you would obviously make a conclusion astrologers, their specialty was to read the stars. you know, magicians had another kind of specialty. But, all of them were well versed in the art of dream interpretation.

Because, this is a big thing to the Babylonians. And, but the thing we ought to get from this, this exhaustive, kind of exhaustive list, just kind of the terms for all the wise people in the kingdom.

[16:35] All right? Many of these guys would work while they would serve Nebuchadnezzar, be his counselors, be his wise men, his wizards, and so forth. The thing we ought to get here is that the list is exhaustive, and, and therefore is a strong testimony to Nebuchadnezzar's desperation to have his dream answered.

So, he's going to get them all together. Every one of them. You know, he's not going to consult maybe his favorites first or those who have an office of council that are close to him, maybe in his palace.

He's going to gather them all up from all over his kingdom. And, I mean, he's desperate. And, that's what we should see here. So, with all of his wise men standing before him, Nebuchadnezzar made what is an impossible demand.

Right? It's impossible. The command, see, the command given in verse 2 goes beyond just the assembling of the wise men. So, the command is not just, I want all the wise men here.

Now, that's part of it. And, hey, you know, they didn't just come because they wanted to. They were, they were commanded to. But, it goes beyond that. The command is specifically that they tell him what the dream consisted of before they tell him what it means.

[18:00] Now, that's an impossible demand. Well, except with God, of course, and we shall see. All right, so that leads us then to the wise men and their dilemma.

Their dilemma. the wise men, first of all, they responded with a reasonable question, I think. Pretty reasonable.

I think we would ask the same question initially if we weren't afraid to have our heads cut up, cut off, or as later when we see Nebuchadnezzar's threat to have them cut into pieces.

If we weren't afraid of that, we would at least ask this question. They did ask the question. Verse 4, then the Chaldeans spoke to the king in Aramaic, O king, live forever. Tell your servants the dream and we will give the interpretation.

Well, that's a reasonable question, isn't it? Well, what was the dream? I mean, if somebody came to you, if you believe in such things, and they said, I've had a dream and I just don't, I think it's a message from God.

[19:01] What's the first thing you're going to ask? What was it? Yeah, what was it? Tell me the dream. And so, it was a reasonable question. By the way, and I'll just throw this in here to you, it says specifically that the Chaldeans spoke to the king in Aramaic.

That was the language of the Gentiles, Aramaic. And what's interesting, something we should realize here at this point, as Israel first went into captivity by the Assyrians, then ultimately Judea, they would be taken into captivity by the Babylonians.

That would effectively end the kingdom of Israel, which was in God's divine plan, his intent was for Israel to be his kingdom on earth, but it came to an end because of the rebellion.

So, from that time on, you really have the time of the Gentiles. And so, the language of the Gentiles, and in fact, it's interesting, from this verse, verse 4 in chapter 2, all the way to, I think, the end of chapter 7, it's all in Aramaic.

Not any Hebrew there. Because it's all about God's dealings with the Gentile world. Even this statue that we're going, that is part of the dream, it's all about God's foreordained plan through the Gentile kingdoms.

[20:43] And so, it's interesting, the language is all in Aramaic here, the language of the Gentiles. Alright, so, where was I? Alright, so they responded with a reasonable question.

The king then responded with an impatient reiteration of his demand. Kind of like saying, perhaps, you didn't hear me right. You know.

Let me set you straight. So, verse 5 says, the king answered, said to the Chaldeans, my decision is firm. See, the Chaldeans or his wise men are kind of trying to wiggle out of this thing.

This is unreasonable. You've got to tell us what the dream is before we can interpret it. And Nebuchadnezzar is not going to have any of that. He said, my decision is firm. You tell me what the dream is and then tell me the interpretation.

And so, then we have the king issuing a threat and a promise. A threat and a promise. And kind of saying, you pick which one it's going to be for you.

[21 : 45] So, he makes his command clear. There should be no question about what the king wants here. and now he puts teeth to his command. Verse 5, that part of it.

If you do not make known the dream to me and its interpretation, you shall be cut in pieces. Your houses shall be made an ash heap.

However, if you tell the dream and its interpretation, you shall receive from me gifts, rewards, and great honor. Which, by the way, Daniel did get.

Got great honor. Therefore, tell me the dream and its interpretation. So, it's very clear. So, if there was any question early on when, you know, Nebuchadnezzar says, what's the dream?

Any, any, you know, misunderstanding there is he saying, tell me what it means or what it is. Now we know. It's, what is the dream and then, what is its interpretation?

[22 : 49] All right, so then the king, we understand then from this is that he's testing and he's testing the wisdom and honesty of his wise men. Actually, I, I really think that God is at work behind all of this because he is kind of using Nebuchadnezzar to reveal not only to Nebuchadnezzar but to all that these wise men, they don't really know anything about dreams.

They really don't know anything about what they think they know about. And so he's going to test them and verse 7, they answered again and said, let the king tell his servants the dream and we will give its interpretation.

The king answered and said, I know for certain that you would gain time. You're just stalling here.

Are you just trying to buy some time? Because you see that my decision is firm.

you know, kind of stalling here. If you do not make known the dream to me, there's only one decree for you.

For you have agreed to speak lying and corrupt words before me till the time has changed. That is, you know, you're just giving me, feeding me something until maybe my anger subsides or maybe this just kind of blows away.

[24 : 11] Therefore, tell me the dream and I shall know that you can give me its interpretation. I'm putting you to the test. You really know what you claim to know. All right, then the wise men admitted their inability and claimed the impossibility of obeying such a command.

Verse 10, the Chaldeans answered the king and said, there is not a man on earth who can tell the king's matter. No one can do this. Therefore, no king, lord, or ruler has ever asked such a thing, such things of any magician, astrologer, or Chaldean.

It's a good thing they didn't say no king or lord or ruler should ever ask such a question. I think that would have been the end right there. But this has never been done before.

This has never been asked before. It is a difficult thing that the king requests. And there is no other who can tell it to the king except the gods whose dwelling is not with flesh.

flesh. Well, you know, they were wrong on several points here. Maybe they'll learn, at least those that survived the first wave of the king's wrath.

[25 : 22] First of all, there was a man who could obey the king's request, Daniel. And second, the difficulty is only for the one who does not get the answer from God.

Okay? The one true God does dwell with those in the flesh. Daniel and his buddies.

And with us in the person of Christ. The king then made good on his threat, didn't he? Verse 12, For this reason the king was angry and very furious and gave the command to destroy all the wise men of Babylon.

So the decree went out and they began killing the wise men and they sought Daniel and his companions to kill them. Why is that? Because they were wise men.

They were brought in for that. And remember, they'd already been evaluated to be ten times wiser than all the astrologers and so forth. Now, there's nothing said here that Daniel and his friends were

brought with all the other astrologers and magicians and so forth.

[26 : 30] Because there's no answer from them. But, in fact, it seems clear from the text that Daniel didn't even know all the specifics of all of this because he had to ask for that. We'll see that here in a minute.

Alright, so, king made good on his threat, started getting these guys put to death. And really, what could these wise men do? I mean, what else could they have done? If you think about it, they could not know the king's dream.

They couldn't know it. There's no possible way they could know it. God's not going to reveal it to them. And the king knew his dream, right? But he didn't tell anybody. And so, since he knew the dream, if they pretend that they know, you know, oh, this is your dream, king, then they would be pretending and their subterfuge would then be discovered immediately because the king knows his dream.

Remember, he hasn't forgotten the dream. Don't make the conclusion here in this text, well, you know, just kind of like me, sometimes I have a dream and I forget what it is the next day.

So maybe that's what it was with king Nebuchadnezzar. No. Remember, he said, then I'll know if you're lying to me. He's testing them.

[27 : 51] And certainly these magicians, these wise men, they understood that the king knew his dream. All right, so they couldn't just answer any way they wanted to, they would be discovered and then the king would carry out his threat against them.

So they were between a rock and a hard place, there wasn't any way out of it. And so they're in deep trouble. Some of them paved with their lives. So next, then, the prophet and his desire. And we see several things here. first of all, Daniel's purpose, his purpose, he purposed to do something. Verse 14, then with counsel and wisdom, Daniel asked Ariok, the captain of the king's guard, he would actually be the executioner, you know, to carry out the king's demand that these magicians be put to death.

Anyway, who had gone out to kill the wise men of Babylon, he answered and said to Ariok, the king's captain, why is the decree from the king so urgent? See, Daniel doesn't really know all the specifics of this.

Then Ariok made the decision known to Daniel, gave him all the information, so Daniel went in and asked the king to give him time that he might tell the king the interpretation.

[29 : 11] Now, there's several things about that that may be a little confusing. Number one, how could Daniel just go in and talk to the king? Well, apparently he had that kind of access, that kind of privilege.

And the other thing is interesting, he asked for some time. The wise men didn't ask for any time. They said it's not possible.

In fact, Nebuchadnezzar even accused them of stalling for time. But the king granted Daniel to have some time. But I think the most important thing to note here is that Daniel didn't just come in and try to buffalo his way through.

He knew the only way he could interpret the dream was to go to God first. And so, anyway, he purposed to save these guys' lives. I mean, you know, all this destruction.

And then we get to Daniel's prayer. Verse 17, then Daniel went to his house and made the decision known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions, that they might seek mercies from the God of heaven concerning this secret, so that Daniel and his companions might not perish with the rest of the wise men of Babylon.

[30 : 28] So he's looking out for himself and his friends as well. So, praying. Then we get to Daniel's praise. Verse 19, then the secret was revealed to Daniel in a night vision.

So Daniel blessed the God of heaven. Daniel answered and said, blessed be the name of God forever and ever, for wisdom and might are his. And he changes the times and the seasons. He removes kings and raises up kings, even pagan kings, by the way. He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who have understanding.

He reveals deep and secret things. He knows what is in the darkness and light dwells with him. I thank you and praise you, O God of my fathers.

You have given me wisdom and might and have now made known to me what we asked of you, for you have made known to us the king's demand. So he prayed about it.

[31 : 33] God granted him, gave him the answer to what the dream was and also its interpretation and Daniel, praise God for it, Daniel's promise.

Daniel's promise. Verse 24, Therefore Daniel went to Ariok, whom the king had appointed to destroy the wise men of Babylon. He went and said thus to him, Do not destroy the wise men of Babylon.

Take me before the king, and I will tell the king the interpretation. The king answered and said to Daniel, whose name was Belshazzar, Are you able to make known to me the dream which I have seen and its interpretation?

And Ariok quickly brought Daniel before the king and said thus to him, I have found a man of the captives of Judah who will make known to the king and interpretation.

By the way, did Ariok find him? I think Daniel came to him. He wanted to take credit. Maybe he thought maybe he would get a little bit of that, you know, lands and honor and so forth.

[32 : 40] I found him, king. Alright, so Daniel answered in the present king and said the secret which the king has demanded the wise men, the astrologers, the magicians, and the soothsayers cannot declare to the king, but there is a God in heaven who reveals secrets, so Daniel gives credit to God.

And he has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what will be in the latter days. Your dream and the visions of your head upon your bed, were these. As for you, O king, thoughts came to your mind while on your bed about what would come to pass after this.

And he who reveals secrets has made known to you what will be. But as for me, this secret has not been revealed to me because I have more wisdom than anyone living. The humility of Daniel.

But for our sakes, who make known the interpretation of the king, and that you may know the thoughts of your heart. So that leads us to the dream and its contents.

So then verses 31 to 35 is Daniel's vision of Nebuchadnezzar's dream. So that is where Daniel says, here's what your dream was.

[33 : 58] Then verses 36 to 45 we have Daniel's interpretation of the dream. And we'll just put these together instead of taking those separately because they go together.

So that leads us to my little statue there. So the head of gold is what? Anybody guess? Babylon. The Babylonian empire. Babylon. Verses 31 to 32. 32, the first part of 32. O king, you, O king, watch, we're watching, and behold a great image.

So he's interpreting the dream here. I'm putting both together. I mean, he's describing the dream and then interpreting it. So here's the description of it. This great image, whose splendor was excellent, stood before you, and its form was awesome.

This image's head was of fine gold. And then we'll skip to verse 37 and the interpretation. You, O king, are a king of kings.

[35 : 08] For the God of heaven has given you a kingdom, power, strength, and glory. And wherever the children of men dwell, or the beasts of the field, and the birds of heaven, he has given them into your hand, and has made you ruler over them all.

You are this head of gold. Not just Nebuchadnezzar, but his kingdom. So this is the first kingdom, Babylon.

Not the first kingdom that has ever existed, but in the time of the Gentiles, in God's program leading up to Christ, coming of Christ, but really he skips to the second coming, and the kingdom that will be existing at the time of Christ's second coming when he establishes his kingdom.

So this is the time of the Gentiles, it's the age of the Gentiles, and so Babylon is the first empire. So God has given this kingdom to Nebuchadnezzar.

You clearly see that, that Daniel is emphasizing that God gave this to you. He set you up. He allowed you to be a king of kings, to be the ruler over all of the known world of the day, all the civilized world of the day.

[36 : 32] The great city of Babylon was known for its gold. I'm giving you a couple of references to that. Herodotus, the Greek historian, and he visited Babylon, and in his writings he described it as a city full of gold.

Babylon's temples, their chapels, everywhere he looked he saw gold. We'll get to the Bible. The Bible says this as well in Isaiah 14.4, referred to Babylon as the golden city.

So it's very fitting. But it's not gold just because there is some association with gold with the empire. Because you can't just use that because as you go on down, it's difficult to make any association

with these certain kinds of metals.

But the point is that it's the greatest, the greatest of them, and they become more inferior as we go down through the statue. So gold is the greatest of value.

So the head of gold is Babylon. Arms and chest of silver, Medo-Persian empire, empire, M-E-D-O dash Persian empire, the Medo-Persian empire, verse 32, it's chest and arms of silver.

[38 : 01] So he's describing the dream. Then we get to the interpretation, verse 39, first part of it, but after you shall rise another kingdom inferior to yours.

Now that's all he says in the interpretation. So he doesn't say here that it's the Medo-Persian empire. But in chapter 8, verse 20, Daniel has a vision, and it's not the vision of the statue, but it's a vision that still identifies all of these kingdoms.

And so in that vision, in chapter 8, verse 20, Daniel identifies it as the Media and Persia empire that will come after Nebuchadnezzar, after the Babylonian empire.

And this kingdom will be the Medo-Persian empire led by Cyrus, Cyrus the Great, and the kingdom is symbolized by silver.

We can make a connection here, primarily because as Daniel prophesied, it would be an inferior to Babylonian empire of gold. So silver is just right under gold.

[39 : 07] So the silver probably points more to the fact that it's inferior to gold, and that lines up with what Daniel said in his interpretation.

Historically though, silver does symbolize the Medo-Persian efficient system of taxation, and they were known for this, which enabled them to accumulate vast hordes of silver.

Medo-Persian empire is very, very wealthy, and probably because of their method of collecting of taxation, Romans learned from them, and were also very effective in that. Two arms, all right, the two arms of silver represent the two parts or divisions of the empire.

Media, Persia, Medo-Persian empire. All right, so the head of gold, Babylon, the arms and chests of silver, Medo-Persian empire. You can see the dates when these kingdoms existed.

By the way, at this point, how did Daniel know about this? Well, the answer is, you know, Daniel didn't write this. Somebody wrote it a long time after all these kingdoms came and went, and so they could just go back and say, well, that's what the state.

[40 : 19] No, that's not it. Daniel prophesied because God gave Nebuchadnezzar the dream, and God gave Daniel the interpretation, and it was a prophecy of the kingdoms, the Gentile kingdoms, that would rule the world all the way up to the second coming of Christ.

All right, so Babylon, arms and chest of silver, Medo-Persia, the belly and thighs of brass, of Greece.

That's Greece. It's belly and thighs of bronze, verse 32. Verse 39, a third kingdom of bronze, which shall rule over all the earth.

Now, in 332 BC, the armies of Alexander the Great conquered the Medo-Persian Empire, and thus established the Greek Empire, and Daniel is specific also about this one, this third kingdom in chapter 8, verse 21, names it Greece.

How did he know? Well, God knew. Historians reveal that the Greek soldiers wore brass armor, known for that, helmets, breastplate, shields, swords.

[41 : 40] The Greeks conquered and ruled the entire civilized world, just as Nebuchadnezzar's dream revealed, 200 years before it happened. Before it happened.

All right, so head of gold, Babylon, arms and chest of silver, Medo-Persian, belly, thighs, belly, thighs, Greece, bronze, their Greece, that's Greece, the empire, Greek empire.

Then the legs of iron, Rome, Roman empire. Verse 33, it's legs of iron, and then verse 40, the interpretation, 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.

That's pretty descriptive. Now Daniel doesn't name this kingdom, all right, not even in parallel visions in chapter 7 and chapter 8.

Doesn't name it, but we know it's Rome, Roman empire, we know it historically. Rome followed after and conquered Greece, and iron, of course, was the strongest of metals known to the world of Daniel's day, Daniel's age, creation.

[43 : 02] And so the terms breaks and shatters and crushes and the phrase break in pieces and crush all the others, they form really a very vivid picture of the power and might of the Roman

empire that conquered the known world with an iron fist.

I mean, iron is very descriptive of the power, the might of the Roman empire. No one could stand against them. The two legs, you know, we can't be real dogmatic about it, but you do know that the Roman empire at some point was divided into two, east and west, you know, when it became Christianized, but 385 AD, we have east and west.

All right, so let me just go ahead and finish this up if you don't mind. Then we have the feet of iron and miry clay. And you can put in there, do I have something in there or is it blank?

The diagram that I use, they put in Rome number two. And that's not totally wrong, but in some sense a revival of the Roman empire, a revival of Rome in a very loose sense.

And I don't want to make too much of this. There's some who make a big deal out of this. But let me just walk through this real quickly. Verse 33, it's feet partly of iron and partly of clay.

[44 : 41] So that's why, you know, there's a remnant of Rome there. There's iron, but it's now mixed with clay, two very unlikely substances put together.

Verse 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.

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. As you saw, iron mixed with ceramic clay, they will mingle with the seat of men, but they will not adhere to one another, just as iron does not mix with clay.

So this is the interpretation of this part of the statue, the final part of the statue itself. Now, what can we say definitely about this kingdom?

I mean, there are a lot of different views about it. First of all, when will this kingdom exist? Well, the win depends on your interpretation of the rock that comes and smashes all of these kingdoms.

[45 : 57] The win is defined by the identity of that stone and clearly it's Jesus. Clear to me anyway.

At his second coming, not his first coming, he didn't conquer anybody at his first coming. All right? He certainly didn't conquer Rome, the Roman Empire. It continued on.

But at his second coming, and we'll get more to the stone here in just a minute, but what is this kingdom? Well, since the feet and toes are part of the legs, all right?

Mine are. I think yours are too. Then there must be some connection with the previous empire, the Roman Empire. And so there are a number of things we can consider about that.

Number one, Daniel explained that it will be a divided kingdom. Clay and iron, they don't mix. So there's some sense of a kingdom, but there are divisions because iron and clay don't mix.

[47 : 03] That we can say definitely from the interpretation. Secondly, the kingdom as a whole will be powerful, he says. Because iron is powerful. First, it will have the strength of iron in it, all right?

Third, some of the statue's toes were made of iron and others of clay, meaning that some of its parts will be strong and some will be weak. All right, now keep all this kind of building up here.

The people or nations, I think what we're talking about here, represented by the separate iron and clay toes. I think these are all nations, particular nations of people, that they will constitute one kingdom in a sense.

There will be this mingling, that's the word that's used, mingle, in the sense of a mixture. All right, nations that are forming some kingdom but they are still have some kind of separation.

to summarize then, shortly before the second coming of Christ, ten kingdoms of unequal strength will unite to form a coalition that will rise out of the ruins, so to speak, of the ancient Roman Empire, or at least, at the very least, rise out of that region, okay, which today is Europe.

[48 : 29] And since Rome then is part of Europe and the activities of that ancient empire centered in Rome, it's reasonable to assume that this area of the world will play a leading role in this future empire.

All right? I haven't named anything specifically yet, okay, you might be thinking of some connections here. In Daniel 7, in that vision, the prophet indicates that from this empire, this last empire in the statue, really the last empire in the Gentile world, from this empire will come the evil world leader of the last days known as the Antichrist.

All right? Now, there are those who say what we have, I mean, this kingdom already exists today, the European Union. It's what many prophecy gurus are saying, and maybe they're right.

I don't know that for sure. There is some question about the number of kings in this kingdom, and there are ten toes.

Does that have to be taken literally, so there has to be exactly ten, or is it just ten, because that's how many toes we have on a human body. And maybe it's not significant as to the number of the kings, but I kind of tend to believe it will be, but whether it's the European Union, something exists today, or something that will form sometime later, one thing we can say, that this kingdom is represented by strong nations and weak nations, iron and clay, will have a coalition, and in a sense be the last kingdom when Jesus comes the second time.

[50 : 21] So then we get to that stone. you can read that passage for yourself. So the coming kingdom of God symbolized by a stone, just very quickly, this kingdom will be established in the time of those kings, it says in verse 44.

This kingdom will be divine in its origin. God himself will establish this kingdom from verse 34. It's a mountain made without hands, a rock made without hands, that's divine.

Number three, the kingdom will be eternal, it's forever, it will never come to an end, never will be destroyed. Can't describe any kingdom that's ever existed on this planet. This kingdom will be the earthly reign of Christ inaugurated at his second coming, second advent.

Christ's coming kingdom will be triumphant, verse 44, break in pieces and consume all these other kingdoms. Christ's kingdom will certainly come, verse 45, what does it say, verse 45, I love those words, let me read it real quick.

Verse 45 says, the latter part of it, God has made known to the king what will come to pass after this, what will come, it's certain, and then finally this kingdom will be ruled by the son of God.

[51 : 47] all right, so our last point of the chapter, I'll take that up next week, the dream and its conveniences, convenient to Daniel, and how Nebuchadnezzar honors him.