

DANIEL 2:31-49

A Certain Future

KNOWING & GROWING

Read the scripture and highlight the words that stand out to you.

Tips: Read it out loud. Mark the words that are repetitive. Mark the words that stand out to you personally.

Daniel 2:31-49 [NKJV]

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. ³²This image’s head *was* of fine gold, its chest and arms of silver, its belly and thighs of bronze, ³³its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay. ³⁴You 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. ³⁵Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold were crushed together, and became like chaff from the summer threshing 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.

³⁶“This *is* the dream. Now we will tell the interpretation of it before the king. ³⁷You, O king, *are* a king of kings. For the God of heaven has given you a kingdom, power, strength, and glory; ³⁸and 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. ³⁹But after you shall arise another kingdom inferior to yours; then another, a third kingdom of bronze, which shall rule over all the earth. ⁴⁰And 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. ⁴¹Whereas 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. ⁴²And *as* the toes of the feet *were* partly of iron and partly of clay, *so* the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly fragile. ⁴³As 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. ⁴⁴And 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. ⁴⁵Inasmuch 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.”

⁴⁶ Then King Nebuchadnezzar fell on his face, prostrate before Daniel, and commanded that they should present an offering and incense to him. ⁴⁷ The king answered Daniel, and said, “Truly your God *is* the God of gods, the Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, since you could reveal this secret.” ⁴⁸ Then the king promoted Daniel and gave him many great gifts; and he made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon, and chief administrator over all the wise *men* of Babylon. ⁴⁹ Also Daniel petitioned the king, and he set Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego over the affairs of the province of Babylon; but Daniel *sat* in ^[P]the gate of the king.

OBSERVATION & UNDERSTANDING

In this text, we can see a contrast between the God that dwells among us and the gods of the pagans that do not.

It was impossible to guess this dream, as you can see how detailed Daniel shared his dream. What was the dream?

V31-35. He called on all of his wise men, elites to solve it for him.

You saw a great image consisted of:

- *Head – gold*
- *Chest and Arms - Silver*
- *Belly and Thighs – Bronze*
- *Legs – Iron*
- *Feet and Toes – Iron & soft clay*

*You watch while a stone was cut out without hands, which struck the image on its feet of iron and clay, and broke them in pieces. And they broke into pieces and flew away like chaff.
And the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.*

What was the interpretation?

V36-45. O king, are a king of kings. For the God of heaven has given you a kingdom, power, strength, and glory; ... He has given them into your hand and has made you ruler over them all – you are this head of gold.

- *Head of Gold – Babylon - You, king Nebuchadnezzar*
- *Chest and Arms – Silver – Medo -Persian Empire*
- *Belly and Thighs – Bronze – Greece (Greco-Macedonian Empire, Alexander the Great)*
- *Legs – Iron - Rome*
- *Feet and Toes – Iron & soft clay – Divided Roman empire. it's weak, not like an all-mighty king*

The Great Image in Nebuchadnezzar's Dream

The great image that God revealed to Nebuchadnezzar in a dream was interpreted by the prophet Daniel. Each section represents a world-ruling superpower. Each succeeding metal is less valuable, but each succeeding metal is stronger, as each empire was more powerful than the last.

Gold—Head

This section represented the empire of Babylon, of which Nebuchadnezzar was king.

Silver—Chest and Arms

The silver chest with two arms signified the empire of the Medes and Persians, which conquered and supplanted Babylon.

Bronze—Belly and Thighs

This section represented the Greco-Macedonian Empire of Alexander the Great, which swallowed up Persia.

Iron—Legs

The two legs of iron represented the Roman Empire. After Alexander's death, his Hellenistic empire continued in a divided form until its divisions were taken over by Rome. The two legs apparently signified the east-west division that characterized the Late Roman Empire.

Iron & Clay—Feet and Toes

Extending from the legs are feet and toes of iron mixed with clay—a brittle and unstable mixture because it would not bond well. These represent the final phase of the Roman Empire, which will be made up of ten kings, some strong and some weak.

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What is the key message of this passage?

V44 God will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed. A great God has made known to the king what shall be after this. Most likely God was revealing to Nebuchadnezzar the order of what powers of kingdom will come and go, one after another, and ultimately that His Kingdom that cannot be destroyed will be established. Many people talk about the accuracy of this interpretation, to a point where some believe that it had to be written in a historical view. This dream was a prophesy of what to come in BC600....

In Daniel's delivery of the interpretation, he clearly stated that while Nebuchadnezzar is a great king on the earth, there is a greater King above Him that rules over everything. And that this one true God is the one who allows all things. Also, pay attention to Daniel's delivery. Daniel is the sharing the revelation to the king, knowing that His God is above this king that he is talking to. Yet, his speaks the truth with much respect to Nebuchadnezzar without any attitude.

What did the stone that was cut out of the mountain without hands that broke the statue into pieces represent in v. 45?

V44 " 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."

This represents Jesus. The first coming of Jesus came to earth to establish His Kingdom that never perishes. The stone that was cut out without hands, represents that God Himself is doing it without any help from any mankind. It's not by our efforts, any of our doings, but only by God. All glory to Him, and Him alone.

How did the king respond to Daniels interpretation?

V46-49. Clearly God wanted to make this known to Nebuchadnezzar. After Daniel did the impossible of not only describing the dream, but also interpreting the dream, King Nebuchadnezzar falls on his face before Daniel. He states that "Truly your God is the God of gods, and Lord of kings." Nebuchadnezzar the most powerful king of the age. He acknowledges Daniel and wants to keep him around. He wanted to stay close to Daniel, who has access to this true God. Remember the times, they are living in a polytheistic environment with multiple gods. Whoever does the miracle, they most likely gave the respect to, although that may not directly lead to believing, people will take notice of the power.

Note that Daniel remembers his friends, and they were honored by the king together. Yet it states that the king kept Daniel in the courts within the king's gates.

Daniel was appointed over the training program. What does this mean?

V48. He now has been given the position to influence these wise men, to help educate these people of the coming King, the God of all gods. Daniel himself used to be a participant in this program. Imagine the influence that he has now by being in this position.

Some commentaries talk about the connection between the 3 wise men from the east who came looking for Jesus may have got to know about the savior because of Daniel's influence at this time. Whether it's true or not the Bible does not talk about it so it is only speculation, but it is a cool thought!

Since Nebuchadnezzar fell and acknowledged that Daniel's God is the true God, does that mean he became a believer of God?

Not yet. We will find out Nebuchadnezzar's true heart in the coming chapters and how he responds to God.

Has this Kingdom of God already come?

It's been introduced with the first coming of Jesus Christ. But it did not come in fullness.

In v35 it says "And the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth" this is speaking of God's kingdom being established after Christ's 2nd coming.

The stone is Jesus, His Kingdom will grow, it will not co-exist with other kingdoms, when that time comes His Kingdom will fill the whole earth.

Reference scriptures that talks about the Kingdom of God to come.

The kingdom of God is described in Scripture unlike any human kingdom.

- *Righteous kingdom of justice and peace – Romans 14:17*
- *No more preparing for war - Isaiah 2:4*
- *No more death or crying or pain - Revelation 21:4*

APPLICATION

1. **We can look forward to God's perfect kingdom coming, but what should we do in the meantime? Do we just wait? What is our role in all this?**

Although he was in captivity, Daniel used his gifts and influence in a pagan world. Daniel was a witness to all people around him and pointed them in the direction of the true and living God. No matter where we find ourselves, no matter how challenging our circumstances, we should have a confident hope that our God is in control and we can move forward by faith to impact this world. God has given us His principles, and empowered us with His Holy Spirit as we continue to minister and be active while we wait upon His kingdom.

- *Be witnesses to the end of the Earth - Acts 1:8*
- *Be ambassadors of reconciliation for Christ - 2 Corinthians 5*
- *Do what is good, act justly love kindness and be humble - Micah 6:8*
- *Defend the weak, poor and oppressed - Psalms 82:3*
- *Carry each others' burdens - Galatians 6:2*

2. **Nebuchadnezzar is amazed at what Daniel reveals and falls down and pays homage, but to whom? How does that relate to what Nebuchadnezzar says in verse 47. What impact do you expect this would have on him?**
3. **Daniel sees a stone strike the image and destroy it. Considering verses 44-45, what is this stone? How does this relate to what Jesus says about himself and his ministry? How does this relate to Christians today?**
4. **This scripture clearly describes that God is in fully control. He knows the kingdoms that will come and go. Not only He knows, but He is the one who is allowing the kingdoms, kings, and power to come and go. Knowing that, how does this apply to our perspective in our current situation in this world?**
5. **Pray for all believers to have this steadfast perspective of our living God like Daniel and that we will be able to stand firm and calm regardless of the environment that we are living in, and bring glory to God by living and demonstrating His wisdom, revelation, and truth.**