

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

BOOK OF DANIEL

KNOWING THE DREAM (DANIEL 2:24-30) "CHIEF BUTCHER"

Daniel receiving favor from Arioch was a big deal, and shows God's involvement

- God had already favored Daniel to be the top of his class in Babylonian Studies, so by this point he was already well known

CAN YOU TELL AND INTERPRET THE DREAM?

Daniel assures him (and kinda reaffirms what the Chaldeans said) that no priest, philosopher, or scientist could decipher the dream and put his mind to rest

V28 IS ABOUT THE END OF DAYS, OR THE TIME WHEN HUMAN KINGDOMS WILL CEASE AND THE KINGDOM OF GOD WILL REIGN ON EARTH

The interpretation Daniel is about to give goes from about 600 B.C. to the coming of Christ mentioned in Revelation 18-20

HEAVY IS THE HEAD THAT WEARS THE CROWN

To the most powerful man on earth, these dreams posed the question, "what next?"

- v29 and 30 are not about the dreams as much as the state of mind that Neby was in because of them.

WE SEE SOVEREIGNTY, GRACE, AND HUMILITY

Daniel makes it clear that God has shown Neby something supernatural, and that only Daniel, by the power of God, can offer the clarity of the dream

- Neby had not earned this clarity and grace, but we see again that God has a plan and will show grace where He chooses

THE STATUE (DANIEL 2:31-35)

A TALL, AMAZING, TERRIFYING STATUE

This image that Neby saw was not an idol, but a representation of how he saw himself, a giant force in the world

- Many believe Neby was paranoid about being overthrown because of break out factions and that he had overreached himself

THE HUGE STATUE WAS MADE OF A GOLD HEAD, SILVER CHEST AND ARMS, BRONZE STOMACH AND THIGHS, IRON LEGS, AND IRON-CLAY FEET

Quality and weight of the metal declines but, strength increases from head to toe with the exception of the clay toes

IN THE DREAM, NEBY IS JUST STARING

Up to this point in the dream, no action has taken place, but suddenly and supernaturally formed rock smashes the iron-clay feet and destroys them

- This makes the entire statue unstable and unable to stand, and it fell down and shattered so finely it was like wheat chaff blowing away

AFTER THE REMNANTS OF THE STATUE BLEW AWAY, THE STONE THAT MADE IT FALL GREW INTO A HUGE MOUNTAIN AND "FILLED THE WHOLE EARTH"

The political sovereignty of the world will be overtaken by the only true Kingdom

EMPIRES (DANIEL 2:36-43)

YOU ARE THE HEAD OF GOLD

Neby could barely breathe much less interrupt Daniel as he told him great details about his dream and that God had given him sovereignty over the known world

- Neby was not THE King of Kings, but was the king of all earthly kings at the time. Daniel made it clear Who was really in charge.

THE FIRST OF THE MENTIONED EMPIRES

Though Revelation mentions 7 empires that have existed throughout time, Daniel does not start with Egypt or Assyria, but Babylon as the first great empire

HAVING PAID HOMAGE, DANIEL MOVES ON

He moves quickly through the next two empires made of silver that represent the Medo-Persian Empire that lasted 200 years (539-334B.C.?)

- Two arms of the silver chest represent duality of the Medes and Persians

THE PERSIANS WERE INFERIOR BECAUSE BABYLON HAD BETTER POLITICAL AND CULTURAL LIFE

The Persians gained more territory, but the quality of the empire was not to Babylon's standard, therefore the metal on the statue shows that (gold to silver).

THE GRECIAN EMPIRE

The 3rd empire actually ruled over the whole earth, so its geographical impact was much larger than the previous two

- Alexander the Great defeated the Persians in 334 B.C. and was the largest empire of the ancient world. He was killed 8 years later and Greece broke into 4 parts

THE ROMAN EMPIRE

Iron is the strongest metal mentioned, and Rome most definitely smashed all competition, but Daniel spends little time on this empire, and moves into the toes

- Rome stood from 44B.C. to around 476 A.D. and is still the template for most western thought today

NOW COMES THE FUN PART...

The feet of the statue are a blend of the strongest metal, iron, and the most vulnerable building material, clay. These 2 elements do not "hold together".

- Symbolic of the blending of different governments and professing church

THE TOES OF THE FEET

Shortly before the 2nd coming of Christ, ten kingdoms or nations of unequal strength will unite to form a coalition that will rise from the ashes of the Roman Empire (ideals). In Daniel 7, we will see this will be the kingdom of the Antichrist

THE LAST KINGDOM (DANIEL 2:44-49)

DANIEL SAYS THAT IN THE LAST EMPIRE (THE FEET) "GOD OF HEAVEN WILL SET UP A KINGDOM THAT WILL NEVER BE DESTROYED"

We go back the Stone that came from the mountain and crushed the last empire, making all human empires crumble. The stone metaphor goes back to Gen. 49

TO MANY, HE WAS A STUMBLING BLOCK

Paul (1 Cor. 1:23) and Peter (1 Peter 2:4-7) both mention that Jesus was a stumbling block to all that refuse to wrap their minds around the methods of God.

- But, **to those that are open-minded and pursuing the truth, Jesus becomes the "cornerstone" of our existence**

TO SOME, HE BECOMES A DESTRUCTIVE STONE

To the rebellious empires and cultures of mankind, Jesus eventually becomes a stone that to "whom it falls will be crushed." (Matthew 21:44)

- This is a reference to the Stone that will once and for all crush the evil empires that has oppressed and persecuted God's children

Premillennialism: Not all, but most Christians believe this will lead us into a 1000 year reign of Christ on earth also mentioned in Revelation 20. This is a time of peace (Isaiah 65:25) when saints will help rule over a repopulated earth (similar to Adam in the Garden)

REMEMBER HOW TO FIGHT

This destruction of world powers does not come from physical force of Believers, but from God Himself.

We are to fight a spiritual battle via prayer, testimonies, and evangelism through a message of love, peace, and redemption

TRUE AND CERTAIN

Daniel assures Neby that these events will most definitely take place, and that God will be victorious. The fall of empires and evil is not by human hands, but God's.

WHEN THE KINGDOM COMES, IT WILL BE VIOLENT AND HIGHLY VISIBLE.

The stone, crushing, and the destruction will be observed by the world. (Revelation 18)

- Even before the final events of time, are we ready for the persecution and adversities we are promised to face? Don't we feel it now?

NEBUCHADNEZZAR SWINGS TO AN EXTREME

After the dream is told and interpreted, he goes from extreme anger to graciously letting the wise men live and elevating Daniel and his friends to prominent roles

- Daniel was humble, and though Neby didn't follow God yet, he did acknowledge God was "God of gods" and "Lord of kings"

RIGHTEOUSNESS AMID UNRIGHTEOUSNESS

Daniel was a honorable politician, official, and leader of the faculty over the wise men, proving that one can remain holy even in an unholy culture.

- This can only happen with **grace and relationship** with God. **Character only comes through an effort to emulate the King of kings**

CHARACTER AND ETERNITY

- Our true nature is defined by what we do when no one can see us. What are we doing in the dark?
- Do we understand that a time is coming when Christ will return, and empires as we know them will cease to exist?

PREPPING FOR CERTAIN TIMES

- Do we comprehend that we are guaranteed hard times in the Bible? Are we ready for the opposition ahead?
- Are we selfish, materialistic, unwilling to submit, learn, and grow? Are we willing to "take up a cross"?
- Is our mindset a Kingdom mindset?