

The LORD gives Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, a dream about future earthly kingdoms and how that the kingdom of Jesus Christ will supersede them all. The king did not understand this dream but the LORD uses Daniel to explain it and demonstrate that the LORD reigns supreme over all the earth.

Chapter 2 of Daniel opens with Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, having a dream that troubled him to the extent that he could not sleep at night. He calls for his wise men to explain the dream but because of his suspicions that they would fabricate an explanation for the dream rather than give him a genuine one he insisted that they first tell him what he had dreamed and then give the meaning. When the wise men were unable to do as he demanded, the king became angry and commanded that all the wise men in the kingdom be put to death. Daniel asks the king for a little time and promises to reveal both the dream and its meaning. Daniel and his companions call out to the LORD in prayer for help and the LORD responds by revealing the dream to Daniel in a night vision. Daniel then goes to the king and proceeds to explain the dream after declaring that the dream and its interpretation come from God.

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<sup>31</sup> Thou, O king, sawest, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible.

**“Thou, O king, sawest, and behold a great [large] image. This great image, whose brightness [splendor] was excellent [extreme; exceeding], stood before thee”** - At the beginning of the king’s dream he sees a very large and impressive statue apparently in the shape of a man. The word for “brightness” can mean brightness or splendor, so perhaps the statue was shining in the sun making its appearance very impressive.

**“and the form thereof was terrible [inspiring fear or terror]”** - The size and nature of the statue was intimidating, especially for someone who did not understand its purpose or meaning.

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<sup>32</sup> This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, <sup>33</sup> His legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay.

This statue was very unusual looking because each section was made of different materials. It’s head was of “fine” (high-quality) gold and it’s chest and arms (probably outstretched) were of silver. Its belly and thighs (down to the knees) were made of bronze, its legs (from the knees down) were of iron and the feet were of a iron and clay mixture. As you progress down the statue each new material is stronger than the one before (until you reach the feet) but the material is also worth less. Daniel will explain that these sections of the statue represent different major kingdoms that will reign on earth, starting with Babylon.

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<sup>34</sup> Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. <sup>35</sup> Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshingfloors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.

**“Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands”** - Nebuchadnezzar is staring at the statue until he sees a stone that no human hand had cut out. The fact that the stone did not come from any human hand will be significant in Daniel’s explanation.

**“which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces”** - This stone either rolls or flies into the image, impacting and destroying the feet of the statue, causing the whole thing to topple over. The point of impact is also significant as we’ll see later in Daniel’s explanation.

**“Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together”** - As the statue falls over, it shatters upon impact with the ground.

**“and became like the chaff of the summer threshingfloors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them”** - The statue is shattered into tiny pieces resembling chaff from a threshing floor, which the wind blows away until there is no trace of the statue left.

**“and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth”** - As intimidating as the statue had been, it was no match for the stone that destroyed and took its place and became an even greater presence in the earth.

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<sup>36</sup> This is the dream; and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king. <sup>37</sup> Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. <sup>38</sup> And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold.

**“This is the dream; and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king”** - Daniel has finished recounting the dream and will now explain its meaning.

**“Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory”** - Daniel acknowledges the power of Nebuchadnezzar but points out that God is the One Who placed Nebuchadnezzar in the position of being king of Babylon and gave him all the power, strength and glory that he currently possessed.

**“And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all”** - Daniel recognizes the scope of Nebuchadnezzar’s kingdom and authority but wants him to recognize that it was God Who gave him that authority.

**“Thou art this head of gold”** - The statue’s head of gold from the dream represents the glory of Nebuchadnezzar and the kingdom of Babylon. Apparently Nebuchadnezzar later forgets that it was God that gave him his glory and power because he gets uplifted in his own pride and ego in Daniel 4 until the LORD puts him in his place.

<sup>39</sup> And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth. <sup>40</sup> And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things: and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise.

**“And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee”** - This refers to the Medo-Persian empire which conquers Babylon in Daniel 5 when Belshazzar was king of Babylon. The Medo-Persian empire did not quite have the glory of the Babylonian empire.

**“and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth”** - This refers to the Greco-Macedonian Empire led by Alexander the Great who conquered the known world at the time. Alexander’s kingdom was stronger but did not have the glory of those that came before it.

**“And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron”** - This refers to the Roman empire, which was even stronger than the kingdoms that came before.

**“forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things: and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise”** - This describes the strength of the Roman empire that crushed all who resisted it.

<sup>41</sup> And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potters' clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay.

Notice that the feet are not referred to as a fifth kingdom but as a continuation of the fourth. The feet and toes represent the revived Roman empire that will be led by the Antichrist and will be destroyed and replaced by the kingdom of Jesus Christ. The ten toes mirror the ten horns of Daniel 7:24, Rev. 13:1, 17:12, which are ten kings who get their power from the Antichrist. Iron and clay represent a kingdom with strong elements but also with significant vulnerabilities.

<sup>42</sup> And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken.

<sup>43</sup> And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay.

The kingdom will not be totally unified as these kings either do not completely trust one another or they have conflicting goals that work against one another and prevent the kingdom from being as strong as it could be (or both). It may be that the Antichrist will not have absolute control and his kingdom will be weakened by the presence of the ten kings. Commentators even suggest that the phrase “they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men” may refer to the kingdom being weakened by being accountable to the whims of the citizens.

<sup>44</sup> And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.

**“And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed”** - During the reign of the Antichrist and the ten kings that have power under him is when Jesus Christ will return, destroy the Antichrist and replace the kingdoms of men with His kingdom. His kingdom will never be supplanted by another kingdom because He will reign forever.

**“and the kingdom shall not be left to other people”** - Unlike the other kingdoms which had their territory and power assimilated by the next conquering kingdom, Christ’s kingdom will never have to give way to another.

**“but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms”** - Jesus Christ will destroy the kingdom of the Antichrist and replace all human kingdoms with His own kingdom. He will have absolute sovereignty over the entire earth.

**“and it shall stand for ever”** - There will be no end to Christ’s kingdom.

<sup>45</sup> Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure.

**“Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands”** - This speaks to the fact that the kingdom represented by the stone (Christ’s kingdom) will not be created by human hands, for man will not have a part in creating and bringing Christ’s kingdom into reality. It will only be brought about by the will and power of God.

**“and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold”** - The kingdom of God will replace and supersede all the kingdoms represented by the image of iron, brass, clay, silver and gold.

**“the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter”** - Daniel is pointing out that what Nebuchadnezzar saw in his dream was the result of God revealing to the king what will happen in the future. This is amazing enough when God reveals the future to His people but for Him to reveal it to a pagan king is certainly noteworthy.

**“and the dream is certain [true; reliable], and the interpretation thereof sure [trustworthy]”** - Most dreams are the product of our brains working even while we are asleep and can be easily dismissed as being foolish and of no importance. However, Daniel wants the king to understand that this particular dream is relating true future events and that the interpretation provided by God through Daniel is trustworthy.