

The Book of Daniel Part 5

Daniel 2:31 – 2:45

by Erik Olsen

I. RECAP:

A. the mystery of God's will...

--Eph. 1:7-10: "In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace 8 which He made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence, 9 **having made known to us the mystery of His will**, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself, 10 that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might **gather together in one all things in Christ**, both which are in heaven and which are on earth — in Him."

B. all things work together for the good...

--Rom 11:12-33: "**Now if their fall [Israel's fall] is riches for the world, and their failure riches for the Gentiles, how much more their fullness! ... 33 Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!** How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out!"

--Acts 17:26-27: "And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has **determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings, 27 so that they should seek the Lord**, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us."

--*grope*: pseelafeéseian (Greek) which means *to handle, touch*

--same word used in Luke 24:39: "Look at my hands and my feet. It is I myself! Touch me and see; a ghost does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have."

II. THE TIMES OF THE GENTILES: HISTORICAL LEVEL

A. Israel's fall created a power vacuum...

--God gave Daniel the interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's prophetic vision which described 4 distinct "kingdoms" that emerge in the power vacuum

--Daniel 2:31 – 2:45 abridged: "2:31 [Daniel describes dream] ... 36 This is the dream. Now we will tell the interpretation of it before the king. ...38 [the **Babylonian Kingdom of Nebuchadnezzar is the] head of gold ... 39 after you shall rise another kingdom [of silver] inferior to yours; then another, a third kingdom of bronze, which shall rule over all the earth. And the fourth kingdom ... as strong as iron... 44 ... [then] 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..."**

B. history clearly reveals the kingdoms symbolized by the image in Nebuchadnezzar's dream:

kingdom 1	kingdom 2	kingdom 3	kingdom 4		kingdom 5
"head"	"breast and arms"	"belly and thighs"	"legs"	"feet & toes"	a stone "cut without hands"
gold	silver	brass	iron	iron mixed with clay	eternal
Babylonian	Medo-Persian	Greek	Roman imperialism and succession of powers that follow		Kingdom of God

C. the decreasing value of the metals from head to feet along with the different sections of the image are symbolic of general characteristics of each kingdom:

--composition from head to toes: value decreases and strength increases... symbolic of general characteristics of the 4 kingdoms

--head of gold:

--2:38: "you [Nebuchadnezzar] are this head"

--unlike the other kingdoms of man (2 - 4), Nebuchadnezzar ruled as an absolute monarch who was above the law

--*head*... Nebuchadnezzar

--gold... absolute monarch

--breast and arms of silver:

--2:39: "another kingdom inferior to yours"

--*silver*... monarchy that could not change the law like Nebuchadnezzar could

--*breast and two arms*... two merged kingdoms: the Medo-Persian empire

--belly and thighs of bronze:

--2:39: "a third kingdom which shall rule over all the earth"

--*brass*... no dynasty, rule by Alexander the Great's force of conquest

--*belly and two thighs*... after Alexander's death kingdom divided between two of his generals (Ptolemy and Seleucid)

--legs of iron and feet of iron and clay:

--"the fourth kingdom..."

--*legs of iron.. feet partly of iron and partly of clay*...

--began with Roman imperialism and includes 5 different stages ... complicated structure that becomes clearer with the prophetic visions of Daniel 7 and Revelation 13... (*we'll explore the fourth kingdom in detail when we get to Daniel 7*)

--imperialism: When the Romans conquered an area they sent Romans to rule there (ex: Pontius Pilate). This was different from all the preceding kingdoms (ex: King Zedechiah was appointed by Babylonians, Zerubbabel and Nehemiah were appointed by the Medo-Persians, and various Jewish high priests were appointed as governors of Jerusalem by the Greeks)

--prophetic image of Nebuchadnezzar's dream is the start of a prophetic picture (the outline of the *Times of the Gentiles*) that is completed in Revelation:

--Daniel 2:

--survey of all 5 kingdoms from man's perspective

--Daniel 7:

--survey of all 5 kingdoms from God's perspective

--special focus on 4th kingdom and its various stages

--Daniel 8:

--special focus on 2nd and 3rd kingdoms

--allusion to 5th stage of the 4th kingdom

--Daniel 10-11:

--special focus on 2nd and 3rd kingdoms

--Daniel 12:

-brief overview of 5th stage of 4th kingdom

-brief overview of 5th kingdom

--Revelation 13:

--focus on 4th kingdom

--special focus on 5th stage of 4th kingdom

--other passages...

--various passages in Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Revelation, and other books of the Bible give further details about the 5th kingdom and latter stages of the 4th kingdom

--Rev. 13 gives further detail to non-descript beast in Daniel 7

--parallel passages: Daniel 2... Daniel 7... Revelation 13

--most of Revelation focuses on 5th stage of 4th kingdom because this is the time period that leads up to Christ's second coming.

--as we progress through Daniel we'll be taking a closer look at the other visions... and along the way see fascinating personal details about Daniel's life...

D. Jesus Christ is the Rock that crushes the image in Nebuchadnezzar's dream

--Dan 2:34-35: "[What Nebuchadnezzar saw after the image...] You 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. 35 Then 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.

--Daniel 2:44: "And 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."

--in scripture "rock" is always symbolic of Christ

--Psalm 95:1: "Oh come, let us sing to the LORD! Let us shout joyfully to **the Rock of our salvation.**"

--1 Cor 10:4-5 "...and all [the Israelites during the 40 year wilderness wandering] drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and **that Rock was Christ.**

--Daniel 2 speaks of Christ figuratively, but the parallel passages of Daniel 7 and Rev. 13 speak of Him literally in great detail

--Daniel 7:9-14...

III. LIVING WITH THE END IN SIGHT... THERE IS NO ESCAPING THE ROCK!

--just like the world powers cannot stand against the power of God, so we cannot stand innocent before God:

--Romans 3:19-24: "Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, **that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God....** 23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24 **being justified freely by His grace** through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus."

--**Hebrews 2:1-3:** "Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away. 2 For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward, 3 **how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation.**"

--called to holy living yet totally dependent on the grace of God:

--1 Peter 1:13-16: "Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and **rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ**; 14 as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance; 15 but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, 16 because it is written, "Be holy, for I am holy."