Study in Daniel - Part 2

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Date: 01 January 2000

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[0:00] In God's blessing, we'll turn to the part of scripture we read, the second chapter of the book of Daniel. And verse 34 in particular.

Daniel chapter 2 verse 34. Thou sawest till a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and break them to pieces.
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 threshing floors. 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. A stone cut without hands. Now, last time we saw how Daniel was taken captive from Judah when he was around 17 years of age in 605 BC.
And he was taken away captive along with the very cream of the king's court and the nobility, taken away captive by Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon.
[1:39] And we saw how Daniel, along with his three close friends, were able to take a stand for the Lord against the power of the world. And we saw how they stood against the assaults of Babylon.

And how they kept the faith of God. And God rewarded them by putting them into a position of government. And we noticed that chapter 1, verse 19, contains these words, Therefore, they stood before the king.
And we saw that that meant that they stood before him in government. Or they served him in an office of government. Now, that was only God's work beginning.
And really, it was only Daniel's work beginning, too. God had a lot to do in Babylon. Because, as I mentioned last week, it looked as though the power of evil had triumphed over the power of good. But God was going to bring his own people out of Babylon. And he was going to destroy the power of Babylon. And he was going to largely use Daniel to do it.
[2:44] And so he's going to, first of all, lift Daniel higher. And he's going to make him ruler over the province of Babylon itself. He's going to make him the chief ruler of the whole city.

And in doing so, he's going to raise his three friends, too, to a position of power in another part. Of the empire. And the means which God uses to do that is a dream which he gives to the king, Nebuchadnezzar.
Now, that again reminds us of how powerful God is. The heart of the king is in the hand of God. And when God is doing his own work and bringing to pass his own purposes, he has many mysterious ways in which he brings it about.
This dream that Nebuchadnezzar dreams through the night is a dream sent by God. And it's a dream that troubles him. And it's remarkable that the most powerful man in the world at that time, who was Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, had his whole life turned upside down by a dream which God gave him.
Now, history records that certainly at a particular point in his life, Nebuchadnezzar appeared to be quite an anxious and an insecure man, in spite of all the power that he had derived for himself.
[4:03] For example, at this particular time, he appears to have taken on some aimless military exploits, as though he was somehow trying to reinforce to himself his own power and his might.

It appears that he was constantly agitated about his kingdom, about the size of it and the safety of it. And that relates to what I was talking about in the morning, how people like that are constantly deprived of sleep and constantly worried and constantly anxious about the kingdoms that they have amassed for themselves.

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And it's quite possible that when he lay himself down to sleep, his mind was agitated on these matters. Certainly it tells us that he dreamed dreams. Now, this chapter focuses on one dream which God gave him, but I've no doubt that from the way in which Daniel speaks to him and the way in which the chapter opens, that he was dreaming anyway and his sleep was very restless.
But God broke into these dreams and he broke into that sleep by giving him a dream that was very markedly from himself. And in his sleep, he was gazing and suddenly there appeared in front of him a visage of an image or a statue that was brilliant to look upon.
It was a shining metal statue made of composite metals, gold, silver, bronze and iron. And we're told in verse 31 that the image terrified him.
[5:31] It had a terrifying effect upon Nebuchadnezzar. Now, unfortunately for him, in the morning he had forgotten what the dream was, but his spirit remained agitated.

Now, I think it's interesting in that connection just to notice this, that in the Far East at this time, it was held to be a bad omen if a significant dream was forgotten.
In other words, if you had an impression that you had seen something significant, but in the morning you could not remember exactly what it was, that was held by the interpreters of dreams to be a bad omen for the future.
And that is why Nebuchadnezzar's spirit is so out of sorts. Now, we're going to see in a moment that although his court is filled with interpreters of dreams, with astrologers, with magicians, with psychologists, with all kinds of people, he doesn't trust any of them.
We'll see that in a moment. But we'll notice that he feels this time that he has dreamed a dream that speaks to him of God speaking to him.
[6:36] He is conscious that the Lord himself has spoken to him in a dream. Now, I'm sure many of you know that experience, not perhaps in a dream alone, but maybe in certain providences in your life or certain things that have happened.

You are conscious that God has spoken and that the thing which has happened to you has come to you directly from the hand of God who is shaking you and speaking to you concerning these things.
And that was exactly how Nebuchadnezzar felt. But he had no God to turn to. He did not know the true God. And immediately he called for all the astrologers, the magicians, and the sorcerers.
In verse 2, the king commanded to call the magicians, the astrologers, the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans to show the king his dreams. Now, these are four different words, but if I was going to lump them all together for you to get an understanding of what these people do, it is a cross between a magician, an astrologer, and a psychologist.
That is the best way to understand it. Those people studied the mind, they studied the subconscious, and they constantly tried to relate these things to the movement of the stars and the influences of the heavenly bodies upon the planet and upon our souls.
[7:59] That basically is what these people were concerned with doing. And they used to specialize in the science of interpreting dreams. And archaeologists have discovered some of these manuals.

They had long, elaborate manuals. And they took a record of what dream was dreamed when, or dreamt when, the events that happened to that person after the dream, and they would try and relate it and build up a kind of case so that they could establish what dreams meant.
Now, it became so tortuous and so long and so involved that there were a few specialists in this whole sphere. And you'll notice that Nebuchadnezzar calls them all into his presence because his sleep had broken from him and his spirit was troubled.
And he's anxious to know the meaning of the dream. Now, of course, they ask him, well, what did you see? And immediately, Nebuchadnezzar flies into a rage.
And the reason he flies into a rage is because he's become, he's come to suspect, perhaps over some period of time, that these people aren't really honest anyway. He says, I know you.
[9:10] I know that you just want to hear my dream so you can kind of work it out and give some kind of interpretation. But he says, I'm tired of that. I'm tired of that. You tell me the dream. And if you can tell me what the dream was, then I'll listen to your interpretation as though it is worth something.

And of course, they played with him and said, what you're asking is unreasonable, unimpossible. It is a power that belongs to the gods and they do not dwell with flesh. There is no one who can tell you what you dreamt.

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Tell us your dream and we will tell you the meaning of it. And Nebuchadnezzar flies into a nutter rage. We're told that he was very furious and angry or he was angry and very furious.
And he issued the command that all the wise men of Babylon be destroyed, that they be slain and that their houses be made dunghills to put the site of their houses to the most disreputable use. That is what it means. And so the edict was given that every wise man in the kingdom, those who are professional advisors to the king, that they be destroyed.
[10:18] Now, of course, that included Daniel. Because he and his three friends had been admitted into that inner circle in verse 19 of chapter 1.

So a command was given by Nebuchadnezzar that threatened the life of Daniel. Now, it's always interesting, but when God is doing anything, first of all, he allows things to become dark.
You can notice that all the time in God's word. First of all, there's something that makes you say, it's impossible. No good can come, or it's finished. And then, just when that's said, and that's thought, God works, and he does this, he does, and he executes his plan.
And that's exactly what you find here. One minute, Daniel's life, and the life of his friends, is in jeopardy. But God is only using that to show his own power, and his own glory.
Now, Daniel remains calm, and he goes to Arioch, the man who's been entrusted with executing this task, and he just asks simply, why is the decree so hasty from the king?
[11:28] He doesn't even say it's wrong, he just says, why is the king moving at this speed over the matter? He says, will you arrange for me to get an audience with the king? Arioch does it.

Obviously, he already has been won by the godliness of Daniel. And Arioch is admitted into the presence of Nebuchadnezzar. And Daniel says to him, simply, give me time, and I will show you the dream.
And of course, that requires faith, and Daniel's part. He's putting the character of God, as it were, on the line. He says, you give me time, and I will show you the dream. He has faith that God will reveal it to him.
And Daniel immediately goes back to his servants, and they begin to pray together. And what a good example that is. Just as Esther gathered some people to pray, so here Daniel gathers the people to pray together that the Lord would do his work.
That's a good example. It's good for us as a congregation to have a congregational prayer meeting. It is good for us too to have private prayer meetings where people gather to pray for needs which you have and which you share with one another.
[12:35] That is what Daniel did with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. And sure enough, in a short time, God revealed the secret to Daniel in a night vision.

And Daniel indicates to Ariok that he has the answer. And interestingly, Ariok goes in before Nebuchadnezzar, and he tries to claim the credit for it himself. He says, I found a man.
And of course, when Nebuchadnezzar questions Daniel, Daniel immediately gives the glory to God. Here's the difference. I'll come to that later on. One is man-centered, the other is God-centered. Daniel goes in and he says immediately that it is God who has given him the answer. God alone knows these things, but God has revealed it to him.
And then he begins to tell Nebuchadnezzar his dream and its meaning. Now I want to look with you at two things. The statue and what it signified.
[13:34] And then secondly, the stone cut without hands and what it signified. The statue and what it signified and the stone and what it signified.

Now the statue we're told in verse 31, Thou, O king, sawest and behold a great image or statue, the great image whose brightness was excellent stood before thee and the form thereof was terrible or terrifying.
Now, again, it's interesting that Babylonian archaeologists have discovered statues made of composite metals of this kind. But this was a large statue that Nebuchadnezzar saw in his dream and it seemed to radiate its brightness and unusual word was excellent.
It was something that shone at him and something that caused him to be terrified something that spoke of might and something that spoke of power. Now, Daniel identifies what this statue means. Its head was made of gold, the chest and the arms were made of silver and then the stomach and the upper part of the legs were made of bronze. The word brass here actually means bronze, it is an alloy.

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[14:52] And then the bottom part of the legs and the feet were made of iron. but the feet themselves were made of iron mixed with clay or mixed, I think we could say, with china.

So part of it was strong, part of the legs were strong and part was brittle or weak. So you had the four metals except that the iron was mingled with clay.
Now, Daniel explains what the head of gold means and from that we can easily understand what the rest means. Daniel says to him, Nebuchadnezzar, these are four kingdoms which you have seen.
The first, the head of gold is you and your own kingdom. As Daniel says, thou art the head of gold. Thou art the head of gold.
And the Babylonian kingdom was perhaps the first great world kingdom or the first great empire. And it was renowned for gold. Babylon itself was a splendid city.
[15:57] It was known as the golden city. And of course the hanging gardens of Babylon are known as one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. It was a wealthy city and a wealthy empire.

But it only stood for 60 years from 605 BC to 540 BC. That is as long as the Babylonian empire stood.
And then afterwards Daniel said another inferior kingdom shall arise. And this was the chest and the arms. And it was inferior. It was silver. And this was the kingdom of the Medes and the Persians which took over from Babylon.
And it wasn't inferior in size. In fact, it was bigger in size. And in fact, it lasted longer too. This kingdom lasted for 200 years from 540 BC to 333 BC.
But it wasn't as glorious to look at. And one way of seeing that is to compare the two capitals. If you would even compare Babylon, as it is seen in its ruins, with Shushan, the capital of the Persian empire, the Persian capital is inferior to the other.
[17:12] So its glory is not as great. Then Daniel says a third king or a third kingdom shall arise. And this is the belly or the stomach and the thighs made of bronze.

And this refers to the Greek empire, which took over from the Persian empire. And the Greek empire was welded by Alexander the Great, a man who has become famous.
And the Greek empire was marked out here for its size. We're told in verse 39, after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee and another third kingdom of brass or bronze which shall bear rule over all the earth.
And Alexander the Great's empire had gone further than any empire before it. And again it lasted 200 years from 333 BC to 140 BC.
And then lastly we have the legs of iron and the feet that are a mixture of iron and clay. Now you'll notice that attention is drawn to this in the chapter.
[18:25] Verse 40 Daniel stops at this kingdom because it's while this kingdom stands that things are going to happen. And it's the Roman kingdom or the Roman empire.

Look at verse 40. Verse 40. And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron. Now most of you will know that the Roman empire was famous for its military might.
The Roman army was feared everywhere. It just crushed everything that it came into contact with. The fourth kingdom, verse 40, shall be strong as iron. For as much as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things.
But we're told later on by Daniel that there's a weakness in that kingdom. That part of the legs have clay mingled with iron. And that tells us that this kingdom is divided in spite of its strength.
And that was true. The Roman empire was precarious because of the amount of foreigners admitted into power and influence. And eventually it was destroyed in the ancient world, well known in history today.
[19:31] Now I want you to notice one or two things about this vision. First of all, you have one statue. Now notice that. Four empires but one statue.

What does that tell us? Well it tells us that somehow these empires are united or they're related to each other or they are unified. They may in some way be separate in time but there is something that welds them together and makes them a part of a whole.
And what that is is simply this, that they are motivated by the same principles, by the same goals and by the same ambitions. One is Babylonian, another Persian, another Greek, another Rome, one empire rises and it falls and another takes its place but they are all one.

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It is one statue, not four separate statues but one. And the question rises, what is it that welds these empires together? What is it that makes them one?
Well the answer lies in this, that the statue is in the form of a man. It's in the form of a man. And that's the key or that's the clue.
[20:50] These empires are welded together by their desire to exalt man, to glorify man. These empires and kings were characterized by self glorification or self deification, making themselves God and exalting themselves.

That is what marked them out. It is man worship, selfishness and rebellion against God that characterized all these kingdoms.
It is in the form of a man. And this is the spirit of the fall. Now I've indicated that several times and it's important for us to get a handle on it. That what really marks us out as sinners is this streak that runs through us that insists on us ruling our own lives.
And that's deep in you as it's deep in me. And unless the scepter of Christ's kingdom has touched your heart and unless it has conquered you and won you by love and by power into his kingdom, then you serve yourself.
You do not serve the Lord, you are in rebellion against him and self sits on the throne. That is the spirit of the fall. Now in this connection I want you to notice something very interesting.
[22:07] God's word is so meticulous in its detail. You go back to chapter 1 here and verse 2 you find a very interesting expression and it's put right at the beginning of the book of Daniel as a clue.

We're told in Daniel 1 verse 2 that the Lord gave Jehoiakim the king of Judah into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar with part of the vessels of the house of God which he carried to the land of Shinar to the house of his God.
Now what's interesting there is the name that's given to Babylon, the land of Shinar. That name only appears one other time in the scriptures and that's a clue for you in your study to go for it.
It appears in Genesis chapter 11 verse 1 and it takes us right back to the first rebellion, the first organized rebellion when Nimrod gathered the people to build the Tower of Babel.
And the Tower of Babel was what? Well it was a celebration of mankind and of mankind's achievements and it had God nowhere in it. It was a mark of rebellion against God.
[23:23] It was man taking pride. The Tower was at the center of the city and the Tower was a focal point for everybody and it said we will make our civilization, we will make our rules, we will make our laws, away with God's word, away with his kingdom and we will establish our own laws, our own nation.

And of course God came down and scattered the people. He separated them by severing their languages, giving them different languages to speak, and the rebellion of the Tower of Babel stopped but Babylon never stopped.
And this expression Shiner here, the land of Shiner is connecting this Babylon empire with what was started there way back just after the flood. It's the spirit of the fall and it's the spirit of man to put man in the place of God.
And it didn't stop with the Roman empire either. It didn't stop there, it's still here. It's in our own country. We're building a millennium dome.
What for? For 2,000 years of what? Of Christianity. Is Christ in the millennium dome? There's not much sign of anyone having a desire to put Christ there.
[24:38] We do know that there's going to be a vast man there. And apparently you can walk through him so that you can admire the glory of his body, the way the veins work and the way everything comes together.

This vast statue of a man which you can walk through. And what's the millennium dome about? Well, they'll tell you. It's about man's achievements, where we've come and what we've attained to. What on earth is that but a modern day tower of Babel? That is precisely what it is. When the Lord Jesus Christ was born into the world, there was no room for him in the end.
None. And there is no room for him in the millennium dome, because there is no room for him in your heart. Is that the case with yourself? Who sits on the throne of your heart tonight, my friend? Is it yourself? Is it somebody else? Or is it the Lord Jesus Christ? That is the question. That is the vital question. And all these kingdoms were linked together as one, because they put man at the center of everything, and God was pushed outside.

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[25:47] Oh, how different. Hear what Christ says, except a man humble himself as this little child, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven.

You see, the essence of Christianity is a willingness to be led. The very essence of Christianity is not my will, but thy will be done.
And except that backbone of pride and self is broken, we cannot enter this kingdom. No, we have to acknowledge our sinnership and cast ourselves upon God.
If a man will serve me, the Lord said, let him follow me, let him take up his cross and deny himself and follow me. Or as he says elsewhere, all that exalt, if anyone exalts himself, he shall be abased, but he that humbles himself shall be exalted.
Ah, friends, have you gone down on your knees and put Christ on the throne of your heart? Or are you still on that throne yourself? That is the image. And just as it speaks of kingdoms, it speaks of individuals.
[26:54] If Christ does not rule in me, then I rule myself. And my destiny, as we'll see in a moment, is a lost eternity. But this is where the vision takes a strange turn in verse 34.

Daniel says to Nebuchadnezzar, thou sawest, or the word means gazing, you are gazing hard at this vision, till a stone, he says, was cut out without hands, which smote the image on its feet, and break them to pieces.
And not only were the feet broken to pieces, but the brass, the bronze, the silver, the gold, the whole image was broken into pieces, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floor.
It was pulverized, so that the wind carried them away, and no place was found for them. And just as that was pulverized and blew away, the stone grew, and it began to grow and grow, until it became a mountain that filled the whole earth.
earth. Now, what was that stone? Well, we'll come to it in detail in a moment, but we're told that it was another kingdom. It was God's kingdom. And what Daniel is saying to Nebuchadnezzar is that God is going to intervene in human history in a way in which he hasn't intervened before.
[28:23] He has always been at work, and he's always been active, and he has always had a people, but he is going to come into human history at the time of these kingdoms. You'll notice, at the time of the legs and the feet, he's going to come into human history at the time of the Romine Empire, and there he's going to deal a blow to these kingdoms that will scatter them to the four winds, and he will establish his kingdom then, and it will grow until it covers the whole earth.

I'll tell you one reason why this is important, because people used to say, well, Daniel couldn't possibly have known that unless he was writing after the event, or these things were written after the event.
Now, friends, you cannot possibly hold to that kind of thing, and I just want to make that perfectly clear to you, that there are scrolls of Daniel's prophecy that you can date back to the fourth century, B.C., not A.D., but B.C., and these scrolls are clearly copies, and that's why it's important for us to understand that this work was written by Daniel in the fifth century, in the sixth century.
That is when it was written. How could he have the knowledge of these successive kingdoms coming? Look, he wrote it. Here it is. How could he have that knowledge so particular as to know of this stone coming and smashing the feet in the days of the Roman Empire that God would establish his kingdom?
because the spirit of the Lord was upon him, and he was taught of the Lord, and he was read of the Lord, and this was God's word. It's God's plan, and he was going to do it, and he was going to bring it to pass, and so he did.
[30:07] Now, I want to look with you at this stone because it contains wonderful lessons, and I want to say this first. When Daniel was explaining the kingdoms, he said to Babylon, he said to Nebuchadnezzar, about the head of the image, he said, this gold head is you, thou art the head of gold.

Now, I want you to notice that carefully. He didn't say your empire is the head of gold. That was true, but he went further and said, you personally are the head of gold.
Now, what Daniel's doing there is he's wrapping up the kingdom and the king in one. Babylon and its king constitute the head of gold.
Now, I think that's a clue that the Holy Spirit has given us when we come to the stone, because the stone is not just the kingdom of Christ, it is the Christ of the kingdom. The stone doesn't just tell us about the kingdom that God is planting in this world.

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The stone also tells us about the king of that kingdom who is the Lord Jesus Christ. Look first at this. it is cut out without hands.
[31:22] Verse 34. Though sawest till a stone was cut out without hands. Now, obviously it was cut out of a mountain.

Now, I don't know if you should press a detail like this, and I really don't wish to press it. But if you're going to ask, what does that mountain itself represent? Maybe it represents nothing.
But if it represents something, I suppose we could understand it to be the eternal decree and purpose of God. That like a mountain is overshadowing even this statue in the plain.
Human governments rise and fall. Human kingdoms with man at the center rise and they fall, and here is this mountain at the side, which is God and his purpose, overlooking and overseeing all things.
Suddenly, out of the side of this mountain, there's a stone cut. And it's nothing to look at. It's nothing great to look at. But it's a stone cut. And it's cut without hands.
[32:25] Why does Daniel say to Nebuchadnezzar that this stone is cut without hands? Because it's not got man in it. That's why. The origin of this kingdom isn't man.

Man is not at the center of it. He hasn't made it, formed, or fashioned it. This comes from God. It is God working. The stone is cut without man.
And how true that is of Christ's kingdom. Remember him standing before Pontius Pilate. And Pontius Pilate is the representative of the legs and the feet. The man of Iran.
The man of Rome. And the Lord Jesus Christ says to him, My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, then would my disciples fight.
But my kingdom is not of this world. It was not of this world. And it is not of this world. The king, the weapons that you fight with, friend, as a child of God, are not the weapons of the world.
[33:24] And you must never use the weapons of the world to bring about even ends that are good in themselves. No. The Lord Jesus Christ said once to Peter, he said, I didn't come to bring peace on earth, I came to bring a sword.

And Peter took out two swords, as though the Lord was speaking literally. And Christ says it is enough. Even Peter there carried swords. And there was the idea amongst them, somehow or other, that a temporal fight was necessary to gain the ends.
No, it is not. The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but God has given you prayer, and God has given you his word. And these are mighty powerful weapons that bring down the strongholds of the world.
My kingdom is not of this world, no, it is from heaven. It is ruled by heaven's laws, and by heaven's principles, and it is a heavenly king.
It is cut without hands. Oh, how blessed, my friends, to have one kingdom in this world tonight, that isn't made by man, and ruled by man. There is one kingdom tonight in this world that is made by God, and that is ruled by God.
[34:38] And as we'll see in a moment, it will triumph. And how true it is of the king of the kingdom too, that he was cut without hands. Is Christ himself of man?

No. The power of the Holy Ghost shall overshadow thee, and that holy thing conceived of thee shall be called the Son of God.
He is conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost in the dark womb of the virgin Mary, because this is the Son of God, cut without hands.
This is not a man trying to sort out men's problems. This is God coming to seek and to save that which was lost. The king of the kingdom is God.
It's cut out of the mountain without hands. This is God's remedy. This is God's work. God's God. And he comes to us as a man sent from God. And you'll notice too that this stone is so insignificant to look at.
[35:44] You imagine a stone cut out of the mountain and here it is coming towards this statue that is so formidable and so strong. And you would almost laugh at the thought of a stone coming face to face with iron.

Well so what you say if a stone is going to smash into the side of a massive statue that is made of iron, bronze, silver and gold. But when this stone smites the iron it disintegrates.
I'll come to that in a moment. It does not only break in pieces it is pulverized. It becomes chaff which wind drives to and fro. How insignificant it looked.

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Was that not true of the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ? There is one man and it is Jesus of Nazareth. He has no great political connections.
He has no great upbringing in terms of wealth or of power. He has twelve apostles that other people termed ignorant and unlearned men. Who would say that that was the foundation stone of any kingdom?
[36:52] If you were living in Palestine in the first century AD what would you have thought of the thing? What would you have thought of the man? When there was hardly anyone left with him but twelve?

When all the disciples walked away and only twelve stayed with him? Would you have thought that here is a kingdom that is going to shake the whole world? You would have laughed at the thing and laughed at the thought that Jesus Christ said that my kingdom or the kingdom of God is like a grain of mustard seed.
Before it is planted it is the smallest and the least of all the grains. But when it is grown up it becomes a tree so great that the birds of the air lodge in the branches thereof.
Or my kingdom or the kingdom of God he says is like leaven which a woman took just a little leaven and she hid it and kneaded it into three measures of meal until the whole was leavened.
That is Christ's kingdom. It began small but look at it tonight. Look still at the kingdom of Christ. In spite of the assaults and the battering and the bruising and the persecution over two thousand years look at it in Africa, in Asia, in South America.
[38:03] Look at its history so proud so triumphant. The Lord Jesus Christ is a kingdom that began so small but has grown and is still growing to envelop the whole world.

And what of Christ himself? Well as I mentioned did he not look insignificant? Was he not to the Jews a root out of a dry ground having no form or comeliness?
From a poor family, not well connected, nothing like that. No, but this is a stone not cut by men's hands. Not cut by men's hands.
And that is why he triumphs. And that is why he conquers. A stone smashes the statue. And when it smashes the statue it becomes an immovable mountain itself.
In verse 35 right at the end we're told that the stone that smote the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth. Verse 44 The God of heaven sets up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed and the kingdom shall not be left to other people.
[39:15] See, all these kingdoms were left to others. I suppose you could say that the Persian kingdom just kind of swallowed up the Babylonian one. The Greek one swallowed up the Persian one. The Roman one swallowed up the Greek one.

But this kingdom shall not be left to another. It's not as though at some point in time the king of this kingdom is going to say I have had enough. Someone else take over. Or some other empire come and conquer this one.
No. This is the kingdom that matters. And this is the kingdom that will never be moved. It will never be shaken. And unless you belong to this kingdom, my friend, you can never stand.
You can never be saved. You must belong to the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ by enlisting under his banner, believing in him and trusting in him.
It shall never be destroyed. The stone just grew like a mountain to cover the whole earth. And that's still going on. And that's still not finished.
[40:13] It is still not finished. The glory of God shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. And if the Antichrist shall yet wreak havoc, and if he shall do his own work, and there shall be a day, we're told, that before the end time, when Satan himself is let loose, and there shall be another assault upon Christ's kingdom, it shall not last.

It shall not last. Because the glory of God shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. That shall be the final state. when the king stands upon the earth, when the Lord Jesus Christ shall return, that is the end of all things.
The end of all things, and his kingdom shall triumph. Notice especially this, that it smashes the statue. It smashes the statue.
We're told that the silver, the gold, and everything, in verse 35, became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors.
Now there's a couple of things here that I want to notice, and I'll be as brief as I can. First of all, you could ask, well, how did the Babylonian Empire and the Greek Empire fall when this stone hit the

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Roman Empire, or when this stone smashed the statue?
[41:35] Well, I think we should understand that in this way. this work of Christ in dying on the cross, when he took away the powers of the powers and the principalities, it had an effect that stretched backwards as well as stretched forwards.

In other words, it was the actual triumph of Christ over Satan, over man centeredness. It was his triumph over it. It's the effect of that that reached back through time and caused Babylon to fall and crossed Greece to fall.
Now, somebody could say, well, they fell because of wickedness. It's a well-known fact that the Greek Empire and the Roman Empire fell because of immorality and sensuality. Yes, but really they fell by Christ's blow.
It was the effect of the cross stretching backwards that caused these things to come down. Why do empires fall? Because God brings them down, because Christ brings them down.
And on the cross, the Lord Jesus Christ judged everything that is man centered and everything that is sinful. He judged it. And the cross of Christ is a stone that smashes into everything that is man centered.
[42:53] And tonight, it must be smashing into you. It might be smashing into hundreds all over the world. I pray that it would smash you, if you pardon the expression, in the right way. I pray that it would break you in the right way.

that the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ would hit you and dethrone yourself from your heart. And that Christ Jesus would rule in your heart. That is the best thing.
That is the good thing. To transfer your citizenship from man centeredness to God centeredness. Because I'll tell you friend, you have the truth here, that once this stone smashes the statue, great is the fall of it.
we're told that it became like the chaff of the summer threshing flood. Now that's a strange picture. And I'm closing really with this. It's a strange picture because you would expect if a metallic statue smashes, you would expect it to smash in chunks or in bits.
But we're told that it became as light as chaff. And the wind, the word is ruach or spirit. the wind came away, blew it away, so that no place was found for it.
[44:11] Not only did it lie there broken, not that at all in fact, but it was taken by the wind and it was carried away, where? Into oblivion, into outer darkness.

It was wiped off the face of the earth altogether. As the psalmist says, the wicked are like the chaff which the wind drives to and fro.
How? In judgment shall not stand such as ungodly are. You can never stand on the judgment day if you're without Christ. Nor in the assembly of the just shall the wicked men appear.
They are like the chaff which the wind drives to and fro. And Daniel says no place was found for them. Is there any place in the world where they can be? When God renews this earth and makes a new heaven and a new earth wherein dwells righteousness, is there one place in it where these people can be found?
If I die ruling my own life, is there one spot in the universe of God where I can live? The answer is no. No place was found for it because it was put into the outer darkness.
[45:24] It was put into the place of the lost and the place of the damned, where there is weeping, where there is wailing, and where there is gnashing of teeth. I thought myself so substantial.

I thought myself gold. I thought myself silver. But when this rock pulverizes me, I am nothing. If it pulverizes me in grace, that is good.
But if it pulverizes me in judgment, then I am just blown away and I can never dwell in God's new creation.
I can only take my place with the lost, with the devil, and with his angels. Do you remember what Christ said? He said, the stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner.
If you stumble on this stone, he says, that is one thing. But if this stone falls on you, it will grind you to powder. Oh, how good to come to him in grace before we must come to him in judgment.
[46:35] Which king do you serve? When Daniel had finished telling the interpretation, Nebuchadnezzar immediately promoted him.

And he made him ruler over the province of Babylon itself. himself and he became the chief of the governors and of the wise men. In other words, he was second really to Nebuchadnezzar himself.

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And Daniel saw to it that his three friends were promoted in other parts of the empire. And that's going to lead us into their lives because God is going to use them too. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.
And he's going to put them into a fire. But the Lord is going to graciously deliver them. Let us pray. O Lord, help us to belong to that kingdom of which thou art the king, the kingdom that will last through ages all.
We pray that thou would take away self or any other from the throne of our heart, that we might worship and serve the king alone.
[47:44] O bless the gospel to us and help us.

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