

Daniel 2:31-49 - Nebuchadnezzar's Dream, Part 2

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COURSE COMMENTARY

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2:31-35 - A Great Image

- **Image of a Man**

The image has a head, chest and arms, a belly and thighs, legs, feet, and toes.

The image is evidently a huge statue of a MAN.

Image represents the pride and extended period of rule of the kingdom of man (in opposition to the kingdom of God which will subsequently destroy it).

Image is in the form of a HUMAN because it would ultimately represent humanism in all its proud rebellion and imagined independence from God.

Some parts of the anatomy appear to be incidental (e.g., arms, belly, thighs, legs) whereas others are found to be significant (e.g., toes).

- **Composition of the Image**

Divided anatomically into six sections: (1) head (Dan. 2:32,38); (2) chest and arms (Dan. 2:32); (3) belly and thighs (Dan. 2:32); (4) legs (Dan. 2:33); (5) feet (Dan. 2:33-34,41); (6) toes (Dan. 2:42);

Divided into five materials: (1) gold; (2) silver; (3) bronze; (4) iron; (5) clay.

- **Images and Beasts**

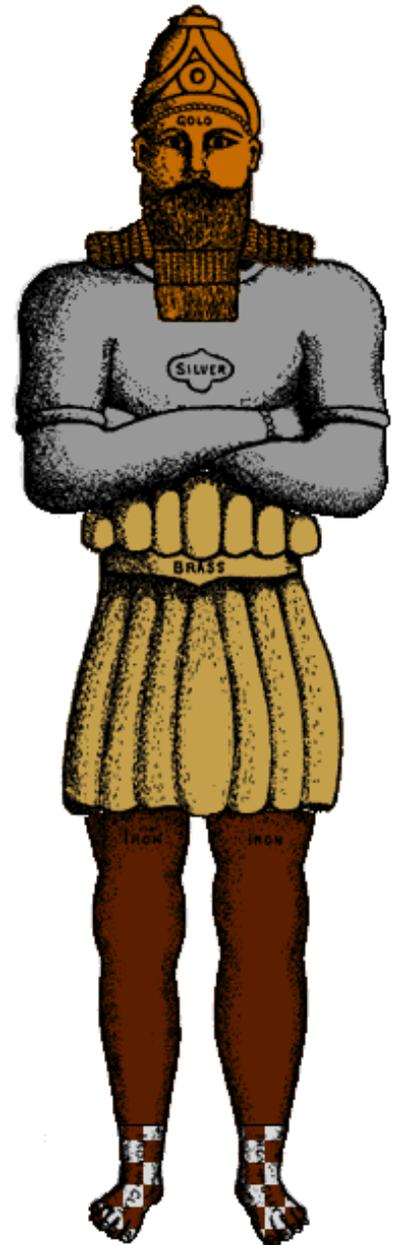
Progressive revelation of Scripture will reveal a continued interplay between **images** (of man) and **beasts**.

Nebuchadnezzar's dream is of an **image** comprised of various metals denoting a **sequence of kingdoms** (Dan. 2).

Nebuchadnezzar rejects the divine revelation and asserts his own eternal significance by setting up an **image** made entirely of gold and requiring its worship under the penalty of death (Dan. 3:1-6). Daniel's companions refuse to worship the image and are saved by God.

The pride of Nebuchadnezzar is judged--he is given the heart of a **beast** (Dan. 4:16,33).

The Great Image



A color-enhanced version of the original work of Clarence Larkin, now in the public domain. Enhanced image is placed in the public domain.

Daniel receives divine revelation concerning the same sequence of kingdoms from God's perspective revealing their true nature as voracious **beasts** (Dan. 7). The final beast is said to be exceedingly dreadful (Dan. 7:19).

John receives divine revelation concerning the final **beast**, the Antichrist (Rev. 13:1).

An **image** is erected to the **beast** which all men are required to worship on the threat of death (Rev. 13:14-15). God saves those who refuse to worship the image (Rev. 6:9-11; 7:4,9-10; 12:6,14-16).

2:31-35 - Stone Strikes

- **Cut Without Hands**

An image/statue is typically formed by the hands of man, requiring smelting of metals and molding or sculpting or molding--just like the statue of gold in Daniel 3.

The stone has not been profaned by the influence of man's will or work--this speaks of its untainted origin from God alone.

- **Crushed Together**

The image is struck **on its feet of iron and clay** (Dan. 2:34).

This determines when the stone strikes, something we'll look at in greater depth **in the next session**.

Struck on the feet, yet all the materials are said to be crushed together (Dan. 2:35).

- **Stages of Destruction**

First, the stone strikes on the feet.

Second, all the materials become like chaff.

Third, the wind carries them away so that **no trace** of them remains.

Fourth, the stone becomes a mountain filling the whole earth. Elsewhere we find mountains used as symbols for kingdoms (Ps. 30:7; Ps. 68:15-16; Isa. 41:15; Jer. 51:25; 17:9-10; Zec. 4:7).

2:36-40 - Four Kingdoms

- **Head of Gold**

Nebuchadnezzar and his kingdom (Babylon) is explicitly identified as the "head of gold" (Dan. 2:38).

Nebuchadnezzar is called "king of kings," and given dominion by God.

The role of "king of kings" had been originally promised to the line of David. God-given dominion had now moved from Jewish into Gentile hands.

Mention of Nebuchadnezzar's authority over the animal realm recalls the dominion originally given to Adam over the entire creation on earth (Gen. 1:26-28; 2:19-20; 9:2; Ps. 8:4-8; 115:16).

- **Chest and Arms of Silver**

"After you shall arise another kingdom **inferior** to yours" (Dan. 2:39)

Subsequent revelation (Daniel 7; 8), and historical developments (Daniel 5) will identify this kingdom of Medo-Persia.

- **Belly and Thighs of Bronze**
"A third kingdom of bronze" (Dan. 2:39).

As we'll establish in the session on the [Sequence of Kingdoms](#), this kingdom appears to be Greece.

- **Legs of Iron**
"Fourth kingdom... as strong as iron" (Dan. 2:40).

As we'll establish in the session on the [Sequence of Kingdoms](#), this kingdom appears to be Rome.

2:41-45 - Iron and Clay

- **Feet of Iron and Clay**
Iron becomes mixed with a new material: clay.

The mixture indicates division (Dan. 2:41).

The iron fragments represent continued strength, the clay weakness. The overall combination is fragile. (Dan. 2:42).

The mixing process fails to produce a uniform result: the iron and clay remain as separate fragments which don't adhere.

The mixing process involves mingling "with the seed of men."

- **Toes of Iron and Clay**
The toes are singled out from the feet (Dan. 2:42).

We will find out some [50 Years Later](#), when Daniel 7 is given, that the toes on this image correspond to the ten horns on the fourth terrible beast in Daniel's night vision, which are ten kings (Dan. 7:24). They are the same ten horns that John sees in the book of Revelation which are ten [contemporaneous](#) kings (Rev. 17:12).

- **What is the Clay?**
The clay is similar, but different, than the metals.

Different from the metals--which have more similarity to one another and represent kingdoms.

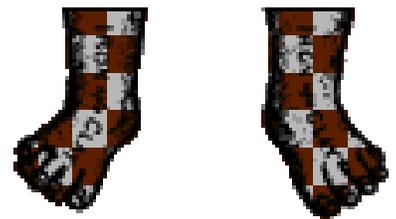
Similar to the metals--each different material is probably associated with a similar concept of rule or government.

The Scriptures use dust/clay/earth to reflect the earthy origin and fragile nature of man (Gen. 2:7, 19; 3:19; Job 10:9; 33:6; Ps. 103:14; Ecc. 3:20; 12:7; Luke 3:8; 1Cor. 15:47) and his moldability in the hands of God (Isa. 29:16; 45:9; 64:8; Jer. 18:4-6; Rom. 9:20-23).

- **Mingling with the Seed of Men**
An attempt to unify the diverse cultural elements by intermarriage?

The attempted co-mingling will not result in a homogeneous mix--which is why the clay and iron remain in separate pieces.

Feet of Iron and Clay (Rome Divided)



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2:41-45 - Kingdom of God

- **When the Stone Strikes**

"In the days of **these kings** the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed" (Dan. 2:44)

One of several indicators which establishes the **time** when the stone strikes.

Which kings are "these kings"?

Three main possibilities: (1) leaders of the metal kingdoms (Dan. 2:38-40); (2) inferred from the toes; (3) represented by the iron clay mixture of the previous verse (Dan. 2:43) which occurs among the toes (Dan. 2:41).

We discuss the timing when the stone strikes in the session about the **sequence of kingdoms**.

- **An Eternal Kingdom**

The stone which destroys the image also represents a kingdom which fills the entire earth--the kingdom of God.

This is the kingdom which was offered to Israel at the first advent, "the kingdom of God is in your midst" (Luke 17:21, NASB), but which was rejected such that the king was crucified.

This is the Millennial Kingdom, when Jesus returns to rule on the throne of David in Jerusalem (Isa. 9:6-7; Mat. 25:31; Luke 1:32-33; Rev. 12:5).

The Striking Stone



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2:46-49 - Nebuchadnezzar Responds

- **Nebuchadnezzar Worships God**

Nebuchadnezzar presents an offering and incense to Daniel.

Nebuchadnezzar's words indicate he is responding to Daniel's God, not Daniel himself.

- **Promotion by God**

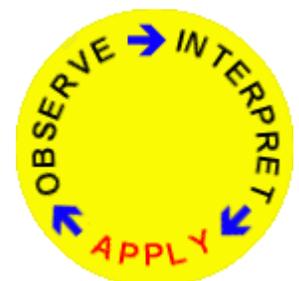
Daniel made ruler over the province of Babylon.

Daniel's companions administer over the province under Daniel.

Daniel made chief administrator over all the wise men.

Application

- **Promotion by God**
- **Overcoming Fear of Death**
- **Meaning of Life**
- **Only One Kingdom Will Last**



- Power of Group Prayer
- God is in Control
- Deflecting Praise
- The Sinful Power of Self-Will