

GOD'S PLAN FOR MAN'S RULE

(Daniel 2:31-45)

Daniel 2:31–45-----³¹ “**You, O king,** were watching; and behold, a great image! This great image, whose splendor *was* excellent, stood before you; and its form *was* awesome. ³² This image’s head *was* of fine gold, its chest and arms of silver, its belly and thighs of bronze, ³³ its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay. ³⁴ **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. ³⁶ “This *is* the dream. Now we will tell the interpretation of it before the king. ³⁷ **You, O king,** *are* a king of kings. For the God of heaven has given you a kingdom, power, strength, and glory; ³⁸ and wherever the children of men dwell, or the beasts of the field and the birds of the heaven, He has given *them* into your hand, and has made you ruler over them all—you *are* this head of gold. ³⁹ **But after you shall** arise another kingdom inferior to yours; then another, a third kingdom of bronze, which shall rule over all the earth. ⁴⁰ And the fourth kingdom shall be as strong as iron, inasmuch as iron breaks in pieces and shatters everything; and like iron that crushes, *that kingdom* will break in pieces and crush all the others. ⁴¹ **Whereas you saw** the feet and toes, partly of potter’s clay and partly of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; yet the strength of the iron shall be in it, just as you saw the iron mixed with ceramic clay. ⁴² And *as* the toes of the feet *were* partly of iron and partly of clay, *so* the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly fragile. ⁴³ **As you saw iron mixed** with ceramic clay, they will mingle with the seed of men; but they will not adhere to one another, just as iron does not mix with clay. 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. ⁴⁵ **Inasmuch as you** saw that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold—the great God has made known to the king what will come to pass after this. The dream is certain, and its interpretation is sure.”

At the beginning of each new year, as you stand in line at the grocery store, you will see **all kinds of tabloid magazines** and newspapers that claim to make predictions about what will happen in the coming year. Many times, the predictions are about events that occur regularly and are going to happen anyway. **But the predictions** that God gave to Daniel are not about the next year, or the next decade, or the next century. God reveals to Daniel what will happen in regard to human governments from his day 600 years before Jesus until the second coming of Christ.

Former Dallas Seminary president and professor John Walvoord wrote:

“Nowhere else in Scripture, except in Daniel 7, is a more comprehensive picture given of world history as it stretched from the time of Daniel, 600 years before Christ, to the consummation at the second advent of Christ. It is most remarkable that Daniel was not only given this broad revelation of the course of what Christ called ‘the times of the Gentiles’ (Lk 21:24), **but also the**

chronological prophecy of Israel’s history stretching from the rebuilding of Jerusalem to the second advent of Christ. These two major [focuses] of the book of Daniel justify the general description of the book as world history in outline with special reference to the nation of Israel.”

Title: God’s Plan for Man’s Rule

(Prayer)

The theme of the book of Daniel is “the sovereignty of God,” and we have defined it like this:

Sovereignty has to do with the absolute control of God—His unlimited power and control over humanity and history (past, present, and future). Sovereignty means that even though humans and human institutions may totally rebel against God and His desires, God will ultimately accomplish His plans and purposes for mankind.

Gleason Archer put it this way:

“The theme running through the whole book is that the fortunes of kings and the affairs of men are subject to God’s decrees, and that he is able to accomplish his will despite the most determined opposition of the mightiest potentates on earth.”

So what secrets did God reveal to Daniel about His plans for the future in Daniel 2? To answer this, we need to look at Daniel’s interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream starting in v. 37.

| Nebuchadnezzar’s Dream of the Statue | |
|---|---|
| The materials | Their interpretation |
| Gold | The Babylonian Empire (605-560 BC) 2:37-38----- You, O king, <i>are</i> a king of kings. For the God of heaven has given you a kingdom, power, strength, and glory; 38 and wherever the children of men dwell, or the beasts of the field and the birds of the heaven, He has given <i>them</i> into your hand, and has made you ruler over them all— you <i>are</i> this head of gold. |
| Silver | The Medo-Persian Empire (539-331 BC) 2:39a----- But after you shall arise another kingdom inferior to yours... |
| Bronze | The Greek Empire (331-31 BC) 2:39b----- ...then another, a third kingdom of bronze, which shall rule over all the earth. |

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| Iron | <p>The Roman Empire (31 BC - 476 AD—West) (31 BC - 1423 AD—East)</p> <p>2:40----And the fourth kingdom shall be as strong as iron, inasmuch as iron breaks in pieces and shatters everything; and like iron that crushes, <i>that kingdom</i> will break in pieces and crush all the others.</p> |
| <p>Post-Roman era not included (1423 through today). The kingdom of iron and clay exists side by side and then is utterly destroyed. Nothing like this has occurred yet in history. Thus, still future.</p> | |
| Iron and Clay | <p>The revived Roman Empire at Christ's second coming</p> <p>2:41-43----Whereas you saw the feet and toes, partly of potter's clay and partly of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; yet the strength of the iron shall be in it, just as you saw the iron mixed with ceramic clay. 42 And <i>as</i> the toes of the feet <i>were</i> partly of iron and partly of clay, <i>so</i> the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly fragile. 43 As you saw iron mixed with ceramic clay, they will mingle with the seed of men; but they will not adhere to one another, just as iron does not mix with clay.</p> |
| Stone | <p>The Messianic Kingdom of Christ</p> <p>2:44-45----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. 45 Inasmuch as you saw that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold—the great God has made known to the king what will come to pass after this. The dream is certain, and its interpretation is sure.”</p> |

Lessons:

1. God, not man is sovereign in world affairs

Daniel 2:47 ----- The king answered Daniel, and said, “Truly your God is the God of gods, the Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, since you could reveal this secret.”

2. Our sovereign God has a plan for the world

He will allow humans to rule and will then send Christ to rule forever. There will be no government ruled by sinful humans ever again.

3. God is ordering history according to His plan

What Daniel told Nebuchadnezzar has perfectly come to pass thus far and, of course will come to pass just as he said.