

---

DANIEL 2: 1 In the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuchadnezzar dreamed dreams; and his spirit was troubled, and his sleep went from him.

---

Nebuchadnezzar, in the second year of his reign, (or in the fourth, according to the Jewish account, which takes in the first two years in which he reigned conjointly with his father), had a dream which greatly troubled him; but of which nothing remained in the morning but the uneasy impression. Hence the diviners, when brought in before the king, could give no interpretation, as they were not in possession of the dream, Dan 2:1-13. Daniel then, having obtained favor from God, is made acquainted with the dream, and its interpretation, Dan 2:14-19; for which he blesses God in a lofty and beautiful ode, Dan 2:20-23; and reveals both unto the king, telling him first the particulars of the dream, Dan 2:24-35, and then interpreting it of the four great monarchies. The then existing Chaldean empire, represented by the head of gold, is the first; the next is the Medo-Persian; the third, the Macedonian or Grecian; the fourth, the Roman, which should break every other kingdom in pieces, but which in its last stage, should be divided into ten kingdoms, represented by the ten toes of the image, as they are in another vision (Daniel 7) by the ten horns of the fourth beast. He likewise informs the king that in the time of this last monarchy, viz., the Roman, God would set up the kingdom of the Messiah; which, though small in its commencement, should ultimately be extended over the whole earth, Dan 2:36-45. Daniel and his three friends, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, (named by the prince of the eunuchs, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego), are then promoted by the king to great honor, Dan 2:46-49.

#### Verse 1

The second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar - That is, the second year of his reigning alone, for he was king two years before his father's death. See the notes on Dan 1:1 (note). This was therefore the fifth year of his reign, and the fourth of the captivity of Daniel.

Nebuchadnezzar dreamed dreams wherewith his spirit was troubled - The dream had made a deep and solemn impression upon his mind; and, having forgotten all but general circumstances, his mind was distressed.

---

DANIEL 2: 2 Then the king commanded to call the magicians, and the enchanters, and the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans, to tell the king his dreams. So they came in and stood before the king.

---

#### Verse 2

The magicians - חַרְטֻמִּים *chartummim*. See the note on Gen 41:8 (note).

The astrologers - אַשְׁפִּיִּם *ashshaphim*. Perhaps from נָשַׁף *nashaph*, to breathe, because they laid claim to Divine inspiration; but probably the persons in question were the philosophers and astronomers among the Babylonians.

The sorcerers - מְכַשְׁפִּים *mechashshephim*. See the note on Deu 18:10, and on Exo 22:18 (note), and Lev 19:31 (note), where several of these arts are explained.

The Chaldeans - Who these were is difficult to be ascertained. They might be a college of learned men, where all arts and sciences were professed and taught. The Chaldeans were the most ancient philosophers of the world; they might have been originally inhabitants of the Babylonian Irak; and still have preserved to themselves exclusively the name of Chaldeans, to distinguish themselves from other nations and peoples who inhabited the one hundred and twenty provinces of which the Babylonish government was composed.

---

DANIEL 2: 3 The king said to them, I have dreamed a dream, and my spirit is troubled to know the dream.

DANIEL 2: 4 Then spoke the Chaldeans to the king in the Syrian language, O king, live forever: tell your servants the dream, and we will show the interpretation.

---

#### Verse 4

Then spake the Chaldeans to the king in Syriac - אַרַמִּית aramith, the language of Aram or Syria. What has been generally called the Chaldee.

O king, live for ever - מַלְכָּא לְעֹלְמִין חַיִּי Malca leolmin cheyi. With these words the Chaldee part of Daniel commences; and continues to the end of the seventh chapter. These kinds of compliments are still in use in the East Indies. A superior gives a blessing to an inferior by saying to him, when the latter is in the act of doing him reverence, "Long life to thee." A poor man, going into the presence of a king to solicit a favor, uses the same kind of address: O father, thou art the support of the destitute; mayest thou live to old age! - Ward's Customs.

---

DANIEL 2: 5 The king answered the Chaldeans, The thing is gone from me: if you don't make known to me the dream and its interpretation, you shall be cut in pieces, and your houses shall be made a dunghill.

---

#### Verse 5

Ye shall be cut in pieces - This was arbitrary and tyrannical in the extreme; but, in the order of God's providence, it was overruled to serve the most important purpose.

---

DANIEL 2: 6 But if you show the dream and its interpretation, you shall receive of me gifts and rewards and great honour: therefore show me the dream and its interpretation.

DANIEL 2: 7 They answered the second time and said, Let the king tell his servants the dream, and we will show the interpretation.

DANIEL 2: 8 The king answered, I know of a certainty that you would gain time, because you see the thing is gone from me.

---

#### Verse 8

That ye would gain the time - The king means either that they wished to prolong the time that he might recollect it, or get indifferent about it; or that they might invent something in the place of it; or make their escape to save their lives, after having packed up their valuables. See Dan 2:9.

---

DANIEL 2: 9 But if you don't make known to me the dream, there is but one law for you; for you have prepared lying and corrupt words to speak before me, until the time be changed: therefore tell me the dream, and I shall know that you can show me its interpretation.

DANIEL 2: 10 The Chaldeans answered before the king, and said, There is not a man on the earth who can show the king's matter, because no king, lord, or ruler, has asked such a thing of any magician, or enchanter, or Chaldean.

---

#### Verse 10

There is not a man upon the earth - The thing is utterly impossible to man. This was their decision: and when Daniel gave the dream, with its interpretation, they knew that the spirit of the holy gods was in him. So, even according to their own theology, he was immeasurably greater than the wisest in Babylon or in the world.

---

DANIEL 2: 11 It is a rare thing that the king requires, and there is no other who can show it before the king, except the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh.

DANIEL 2: 12 For this cause the king was angry and very furious, and commanded to destroy all the wise men of Babylon.

DANIEL 2: 13 So the decree went out, and the wise men were to be slain; and they sought Daniel and his companions to be slain.

---

#### Verse 13

They sought Daniel and his fellows - As the decree stated that all the wise men of Babylon should be slain, the four young Hebrews, being reputed among the wisest, were considered as sentenced to death also.

---

DANIEL 2: 14 Then Daniel returned answer with counsel and prudence to Arioch the captain of the king's guard, who was gone out to kill the wise men of Babylon;

---

#### Verse 14

Captain of the king's guard - Chief of the king's executioners or slaughter men. Margin, רב תבחיא rab tabachaiya, chief of the butchers, he that took off the heads of those whom the king ordered to be slain, because they had in any case displeased him. "Go and bring me the head of Giaffer." The honorable butcher went and brought the head in a bag on a dish. It was Herod's chief butcher that brought the head of John the Baptist in a dish to the delicate daughter of Herodias. This was the

custom of the country. No law, no judge, no jury. The will or caprice of the king governed all things. Happy England! know and value thy excellent privileges!

---

DANIEL 2: 15 he answered Arioch the king's captain, Why is the decree so urgent from the king? Then Arioch made the thing known to Daniel.

DANIEL 2: 16 Daniel went in, and desired of the king that he would appoint him a time, and he would show the king the interpretation.

---

Verse 16

That he would give him time - That is, that he might seek unto God for a revelation of the thing. The Chaldeans dared not even to promise this; they would only pledge themselves for the interpretation, provided the king would furnish the dream. Daniel engages both to find the lost dream, and to give the proper interpretation.

---

DANIEL 2: 17 Then Daniel went to his house, and made the thing known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions:

DANIEL 2: 18 that they would desire mercies of the God of heaven concerning this secret; that Daniel and his companions should not perish with the rest of the wise men of Babylon.

---

Verse 18

That they would desire mercies - For this Daniel had requested a little time; and doubtless both he and his three companions prayed incessantly till God gave the wished for revelation; but whether it was given that same sight, we do not know.

---

DANIEL 2: 19 Then was the secret revealed to Daniel in a vision of the night. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven.

---

Verse 19

Then was the secret revealed - in a night vision - Daniel either dreamed it, or it was represented to his mind by an immediate inspiration.

---

DANIEL 2: 20 Daniel answered, Blessed be the name of God forever and ever; for wisdom and might are his.

---

Verse 20

Wisdom and might are his - He knows all things, and can do all things.

DANIEL 2: 21 He changes the times and the seasons; he removes kings, and sets up kings; he gives wisdom to the wise, and knowledge to those who have understanding;

---

Verse 21

He changeth the times - Time, duration, succession are his, and under his dominion. It is in the course of his providence that one king is put down, and another raised up; and therefore he can distinctly tell what he has purposed to do in the great empires of the earth.

---

DANIEL 2: 22 he reveals the deep and secret things; he knows what is in the darkness, and the light dwells with him.

DANIEL 2: 23 I thank you, and praise you, you God of my fathers, who have given me wisdom and might, and have now made known to me what we desired of you; for you have made known to us the king's matter.

---

Verse 23

I thank thee and praise thee - No wonder he should feel gratitude, when God by this merciful interference had saved both the life of him and his fellows; and was about to reflect the highest credit on the God of the Jews, and on the people themselves.

---

DANIEL 2: 24 Therefore Daniel went in to Arioch, whom the king had appointed to destroy the wise men of Babylon; he went and said thus to him: Don't destroy the wise men of Babylon; bring me in before the king, and I will show to the king the interpretation.

---

Verse 24

Destroy not the wise men - The decree was suspended till it should be seen whether Daniel could tell the dream, and give its interpretation.

---

DANIEL 2: 25 Then Arioch brought in Daniel before the king in haste, and said thus to him, I have found a man of the children of the captivity of Judah, who will make known to the king the interpretation.

DANIEL 2: 26 The king answered Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, Are you able to make known to me the dream which I have seen, and its interpretation?

DANIEL 2: 27 Daniel answered before the king, and said, The secret which the king has demanded can neither wise men, enchanters, magicians, nor soothsayers, show to the king;

---

## Verse 27

Cannot the wise men - Cannot your own able men, aided by your gods, tell you the secret? This question was necessary in order that the king might see the foolishness of depending on the one, or worshipping the other.

The soothsayers - One of our old words: "The tellers of truth:" but גזרין gazerin is the name of another class of those curious artists, unless we suppose it to mean the same as the Chaldeans, Dan 2:2. They are supposed to be persons who divined by numbers, amulets, etc. There are many conjectures about them, which, whatever learning they show, cast little light upon this place.

DANIEL 2: 28 but there is a God in heaven who reveals secrets, and he has made known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days. Your dream, and the visions of your head on your bed, are these:

## Verse 28

There is a God in heaven - To distinguish him from those idols, the works of men's hands; and from the false gods in which the Chaldeans trusted.

In the latter days - A phrase which, in the prophets, generally means the times of the Messiah. God is about to show what shall take place from this time to the latest ages of the world. And the vision most certainly contains a very extensive and consecutive prophecy; which I shall treat more largely at the close of the chapter, giving in the mean time a short exposition.

DANIEL 2: 29 as for you, O king, your thoughts came on your bed, what should happen hereafter; and he who reveals secrets has made known to you what shall happen.

DANIEL 2: 30 But as for me, this secret is not revealed to me for any wisdom that I have more than any living, but to the intent that the interpretation may be made known to the king, and that you may know the thoughts of your heart.

DANIEL 2: 31 You, O king, saw, and behold, a great image. This image, which was mighty, and whose brightness was excellent, stood before you; and its aspect was awesome.

## Verse 31

A great image - Representing the four great monarchies.

DANIEL 2: 32 As for this image, its head was of fine gold, its breast and its arms of silver, its belly and its thighs of brass,

## Verse 32

Head was of fine gold - The Babylonish empire, the first and greatest.

Breast and his arms of silver - The Medo-Persian empire, under Cyrus, etc.

His belly and his thighs of brass - The Macedonian empire, under Alexander the Great, and his successors.

---

DANIEL 2: 33 its legs of iron, its feet part of iron, and part of clay.

---

Verse 33

His legs of iron - The Roman government.

His feet part of iron and part of clay - The same, mixed with the barbaric nations, and divided into ten kingdoms. See at the end of the chapter.

---

DANIEL 2: 34 You saw until a stone was cut out without hands, which struck the image on its feet that were of iron and clay, and broke them in pieces.

---

Verse 34

A stone was cut out - The fifth monarchy; the spiritual kingdom of the Lord Jesus, which is to last for ever, and diffuse itself over the whole earth.

---

DANIEL 2: 35 Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken in pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away, so that no place was found for them: and the stone that struck the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.

---

Verse 35

The stone - became a great mountain - There is the kingdom **באבן** eben, of the stone, and the kingdom of the mountain. See at the end at the chapter.

---

DANIEL 2: 36 This is the dream; and we will tell its interpretation before the king.

DANIEL 2: 37 You, O king, are king of kings, to whom the God of heaven has given the kingdom, the power, and the strength, and the glory;

---

Verse 37

The God of heaven - Not given by thy own gods, nor acquired by thy own skill and prowess; it is a Divine gift.

Power - To rule this kingdom.

And strength - To defend it against all foes.

And glory - Great honor and dignity.

---

DANIEL 2: 38 and wherever the children of men dwell, the animals of the field and the birds of the sky has he given into your hand, and has made you to rule over them all: you are the head of gold.

---

Verse 38

Thou art this head of gold - See on Dan 2:31-34 (note), and at the end.

---

DANIEL 2: 39 After you shall arise another kingdom inferior to you; and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth.

DANIEL 2: 40 The fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron, because iron breaks in pieces and subdues all things; and as iron that crushes all these, shall it break in pieces and crush.

DANIEL 2: 41 Whereas you saw the feet and toes, part of potters' clay, and part of iron, it shall be a divided kingdom; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, because you saw the iron mixed with miry clay.

DANIEL 2: 42 As the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken.

DANIEL 2: 43 Whereas you saw the iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men; but they shall not cling to one another, even as iron does not mingle with clay.

DANIEL 2: 44 In the days of those kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed, nor shall its sovereignty be left to another people; but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.

---

Verse 44

A kingdom which shall never be destroyed - The extensive and extending empire of Christ.

Shall not be left to other people - All the preceding empires have swallowed up each other successively; but this shall remain to the end of the world.

---

DANIEL 2: 45 Because you saw that a stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God has made known to the king what shall happen hereafter: and the dream is certain, and its interpretation sure.

---

Verse 45



The dream is certain - It contains a just representation of things as they shall be.

And the interpretation thereof sure - The parts of the dream being truly explained.

A Discourse on Nebuchadnezzar's Dream Dan 2:41-45

I shall now consider this most important vision more at large, and connect it with a portion of the previous history of the Jewish people.

The kingdoms of Israel and Judah after a series of the most unparalleled ingratitude and rebellion, against displays of mercy and benevolence, only equaled by their rebellions, were at last, according to repeated threatenings, given over into the hands of their enemies. The inhabitants of the former country were subdued and carried away captives by the Assyrians; and those of the latter, by the Chaldeans.

The people of Israel never recovered their ancient territories; and were so disposed of by their conquerors, that they either became amalgamated with the heathen nations, so as to be utterly undistinguishable; or they were transported to some foreign and recluse place of settlement, that the land of their residence, though repeatedly sought for and guessed at, has for more than two thousand years been totally unknown.

Judah, after having been harassed by the Chaldeans, Egyptians, and others, was at last invaded by Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon; Jerusalem besieged and taken; and Jehoiachin the king, who had before become tributary to the Babylonians, with his mother, wives, officers of state, and chief military commanders, princes, and mighty men of valor, to the amount of ten thousand; and all the artificers, smiths, etc., to the number of one thousand, with all that were fit for war, he carried captives to Babylon; leaving only the poorest of the people behind, under the government of Mattaniah, son of the late king Josiah, and uncle to Jehoiachin; and, having changed his name to Zedekiah, gave him a nominal authority as king over the wretched remains of the people. Zedekiah, after having reigned nine years, rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar, who, coming against Jerusalem with all his forces, besieged it; and having reduced it to the last extremity by famine, and made a breach in the walls, took the city, pillaged and destroyed the temple by fire, slew the sons of Zedekiah before his face, then put out his eyes, and carried him bound in brazen fetters to Babylon, 2 Kings, chap. 24 and 25. Thus, the temple of God, the most glorious building ever laid on the face of the earth, was profaned, pillaged, and burnt, with the king's palace, and all the houses of the Jewish nobility, in the eleventh year of Zedekiah, - the nineteenth of Nebuchadnezzar, - the first of the forty-eight Olympiad, - the one hundred and sixtieth current year of the era of Nabonassar, - four hundred and twenty-four years, three months, and eight days from the time in which Solomon laid its foundation stone!

In the same month in which the city was taken, and the temple burnt, Nebuzar-adan, commander in chief of the Babylonish forces, carried off the spoils of the temple, with the Jewish treasures, and the principal part of the residue of the people; and brought them also to Babylon. And thus Judah was carried away out of her own land, four hundred and sixty-eight years after David began to reign over it; from the division under Rehoboam, three hundred and eighty-eight years; from the destruction of the kingdom of Israel, one hundred and thirty-four years; in the year of the world, three thousand four hundred and sixteen; and before the nativity of our Lord, five hundred and eighty-eight.

In the fourth year of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, A.M. 3397, b.c. 607, Nebuchadnezzar, having besieged Jerusalem, and made its king tributary, carried away a number of captives; and among them was the Prophet Daniel, then in his youth, who became, for his wisdom, and knowledge of

future events, very eminent at Babylon; and, with some other Jewish captives, great favorites of Nebuchadnezzar the king; who made Daniel president of all the wise men of his city. It was in the second year of the reign of this king, that a circumstance occurred which, though at first it threatened the destruction of the prophet, finally issued in the increase of his reputation and celebrity.

As prophecy is one of the strongest proofs of the authenticity of what professes to be a Divine revelation, God endued this man with a large portion of his Spirit, so that he clearly predicted some of the most astonishing political occurrences and changes which have ever taken place on the earth; no less than the rise, distinguishing characteristics, and termination of the Four great monarchies or empires, which have been so celebrated in all the histories of the world. And as the Babylonian, under which he then lived, was one of these monarchies, and was shortly to be absorbed by the Medo-Persian, which was to succeed it, he made Nebuchadnezzar, the then reigning monarch, by means of a most singular dream, the particulars of which he had forgotten, the instrument that appeared to give birth to a prediction, in which the ruin of his own empire was foretold; as well as other mighty changes which should take place in the political state of the world, for at least the term of one thousand years next ensuing. Nor did the prophetic Spirit in this eminent man limit his predictions to these; but showed at the same time the origin and nature of that Fifth monarchy, which, under the great King of kings, should be administered and prevail to the end of time.

The dream itself, with its interpretation, and the exact and impressive manner in which the predictions relative to the four great monarchies have been fulfilled, and those which regard the fifth monarchy are in the course of being accomplished, are the subjects to which I wish to call the reader's most serious and deliberate attention.

This image, so circumstantially described from the thirty-eighth to the forty-fourth verse, was, as we learn from the prophet's general solution, intended to point out the rise and fall of four different empires and states; and the final prevalence and establishment of a fifth empire, that shall never have an end, and which shall commence in the last days, Dan 2:28; a phrase commonly used in the prophets to signify the times of the Messiah, and in the New Testament, his advent to judge the world.

Before we proceed to particular parts, we may remark in general, that the whole account strongly indicates: -

1. The especial providence of God in behalf of the Jews at that time. For, although suffering grievously because of their sins, being deprived of both their political and personal liberty, God shows them that he has not abandoned them; and the existence of a prophet among them is a proof of his fatherly care and unremitted attention to their eternal welfare.
2. The particular interference of God to manifest the superiority of his truth, to wean an idolatrous nation from their vanity and superstition, and lead them to that God who is the fountain of truth, the revealer of secrets, and the governor of all things. And,
3. The direct inspiration of God immediately teaching his servant things which could be known only to God himself, and thus showing the Babylonians that his prophets had spoken by an unerring Spirit; that the Jews were the depositaries of the true religion; that He was the only true God; and as he was omniscient, so he was omnipotent; and the things which his wisdom had predicted, his power could and would accomplish.

The sum of the account given in this chapter is the following: -

1. Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, in the second year of his reign, about A.M. 3401, and b.c. 603, had a remarkable dream, which, although it made a deep impression on his mind, yet, on his awakening, he found it impossible to recollect; the general impression only remaining.
2. He summoned his wise men, astrologers, etc., told them that he had a dream or vision, which he had forgotten; and commanded them to tell him the dream, and give its interpretation.
3. They request the king to tell them the dream; and promise, then, to make known the meaning. This he could not do, having forgotten it; yet he insists on their compliance on pain of death.
4. To tell the king his dream they find impossible; and a decree for the destruction of the wise men of Babylon is issued, in which Daniel and his fellows are included.
5. Daniel, hearing of it, speaks to Arioch, captain of the king's guard or the royal executioner; desires to be brought before the king; and promises to tell the dream, etc.
6. He is introduced; and immediately tells the king what he had dreamed, and shows him its interpretation.

#### The Dream

A vast image, exceedingly luminous, of terrible form, and composed of different substances, appears in a night vision to the king, of which the following is the description: -

- I. Its head was of fine gold.
- II. Its breast and arms of silver.
- III. Its belly and thighs of brass.
- IV. Its legs of iron, and its feet and toes of iron and clay. While gazing on this image he sees: -
- V. A stone cut out of a mountain without hands, which smites the image on its feet, and dashes it all to pieces; and the gold, and silver, brass, iron, and clay become as small and as light as chaff.
- VI. A wind carries the whole away, so that no place is found for them.
- VII. The stone becomes a great mountain, and fills the earth.

In order to explain this, certain Data must be laid down.

1. This image is considered a political representation of as many different governments, as it was composed of materials; and as all these materials are successively inferior to each other, so are the governments in a descending ratio.
2. The human figure has been used, both by historians and geographers, to represent the rise, progress, establishment, and decay of empires, as well as the relative situation and importance of the different parts of the government. Thus Florus, in the proaemium to his Roman history, represents the Romans under the form of a human being, in its different stages, from infancy to old age, viz.

*Si quis ergo populum Romanum quasi hominem consideret, totamque ejus aetatem percenseat, ut Coeperit, utque Adoleverit, ut quasi ad quemdam Juventae florem pervenerit; ut postea velut Consenuerit, quatuor gradus progressusque ejus inveniet.*

1. Prima aetas sub Regibus fuit, prope ducentos quinquaginta per annos, quibus circum ipsam matrem suam cum finitimis luctatus est. Haec erit ejus Infantia.
2. Sequens a Bruto, Collatinoque consulibus, in Appium Claudium, Quinctiumque Fulvium consules, ducentos quinquaginta annos habet, quibus Italiam subegit. Hoc fuit tempus viris armisque exercitatissimi! ideo quis Adolescentiam dixerit.
3. Dehinc ad Caesarem Augustum, ducenti quinquaginta anni, quibus totum orbem pacavit. Hic jam ipsa Juventa Imperii, et quasi quaedam robusta Maturitas.
4. A Caesare Augusto in saeculum, nostrum, sunt non multo minus anni ducenti, quibus inertia Caesarum quasi Consenuit atque Decoxit. L. An. Flori Prooem.

1. Infancy; first stage - under Kings, from Romulus to Tarquinius Superbus; about two hundred and fifty years.

2. Youth; second stage - under Consuls, from Brutus and Collatinus to Appius Claudius and M. Fulvius; about two hundred and fifty years.

3. Manhood; third stage - the empire from the conquest of Italy to Caesar Augustus; about two hundred and fifty years.

4. Old Age; fourth stage - from Augustus, through the twelve Caesars, down to a.d. 200; about two hundred years.

Geographers have made similar representations, The Germanic empire, in the totality of its dependent states, has been represented by a map in the form of a man; different parts being pointed out by head, breast, arm, belly, thighs, legs, feet, etc., according to their geographical and political relation to the empire in general.

3. Different metals are used to express different degrees of political strength, excellence, durability, etc.

4. Clay, earth, dust, are emblems of weakness, instability, etc.

5. Mountains express, in Scripture, mighty empires, kingdoms, and states.

6. Stone signifies Jesus Christ, Gen 49:24; "From thence" (of the posterity of Jacob) "is the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel." That our blessed Lord, "the good shepherd," Joh 10:11-17, is here intended, will appear most plainly from the following passages; Isa 8:14 : "And he shall be for a sanctuary; but for a Stone Of stumbling and for a Rock of offense to both the houses of Israel." Isa 28:16 : "Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a Stone, a tried Stone, a precious corner Stone, a sure foundation; he that believeth shall not make haste." 1Pet 2:4, 1Pet 2:6, 1Pet 2:8. Collate these with Psa 118:22 : "The Stone which the builders refused is become the head Stone of the corner." Mat 21:42; Mar 12:10; Luk 20:17; Act 4:11; in which latter quotations the whole is positively applied to Christ; as also 1Pet 2:4-8 : "To whom coming as unto a living Stone," etc.; who seems to have all the preceding passages in view. See also Isa 2:2 : "The mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains," etc.

7. This stone is said to be cut out without hands, Dan 2:34. Without hands signifies that which is spiritual. So 2Cor 5:1, a house not made with hands means a spiritual building.

Explanation

The Chaldean empire, called the Assyrian in its commencement, the Chaldean from the country, the Babylonish from its chief city.

I. Head of Gold. This was the first monarchy, begun by Nimrod, A.M. 1771, b.c. 2233, and ending with the death of Belshazzar, A.M. 3466, b.c. 538, after having lasted nearly seventeen hundred years. In the time of Nebuchadnezzar it extended over Chaldea, Assyria, Arabia, Syria, and Palestine. He, Nebuchadnezzar, was the head or gold.

II. Breasts and Arms of Silver. The Medo-Persian empire; which properly began under Darius the Mede, allowing him to be the same with Cyaxares, son of Astyages, and uncle to Cyrus the great, son of Cambyses. He first fought under his uncle Cyaxares, defeated Neriglissar, king of the Assyrians, and Craesus, king of the Lydians; and, by the capture of Babylon, b.c. 538, terminated the Chaldean empire. On the death of his father Cambyses, and his uncle Cyaxares, b.c. 536, he became sole governor of the Medes and Persians, and thus established a potent empire on the ruins of that of the Chaldeans.

III. Belly and Thighs of Brass. The Macedonian or Greek empire, founded by Alexander the Great. He subdued Greece, penetrated into Asia, took Tyre, reduced Egypt, overthrew Darius Codomanus at Arbela, Oct. 2, A.M. 3673, b.c. 331, and thus terminated the Persian monarchy. He crossed the Caucasus, subdued Hyrcania, and penetrated India as far as the Ganges; and having conquered all the countries that lay between the Adriatic sea and this river, the Ganges, he died A.M. 3681, b.c. 323; and after his death his empire became divided among his generals, Cassander, Lysimachus, Ptolemy, and Seleucus. Cassander had Macedon and Greece; Lysimachus had Thrace, and those parts of Asia which lay on the Hellespont and Bosphorus; Ptolemy had Egypt, Lybia, Arabia, Palestine, and Coelesyria; Seleucus had Babylon, Media, Susiana, Persia, Assyria, Bactria, Hyrcania, and all other provinces, even to the Ganges. Thus this empire, founded on the ruin of that of the Persians, "had rule over all the earth."

IV. Legs of Iron, and Feet and Toes of Iron and Clay. I think this means, in the first place, the kingdom of the Lagidae, in Egypt; and the kingdom of the Seleucidae, in Syria. And, secondly, the Roman empire, which was properly composed of them.

1. Ptolemy Lagus, one of Alexander's generals, began the new kingdom of Egypt, A.M. 3692, b.c. 312, which was continued through a long race of sovereigns, till A.M. 3974, b.c. 30; when Octavius Caesar took Alexandria, having in the preceding year defeated Anthony and Cleopatra at the battle of Actium, and so Egypt became a Roman province. Thus ended the kingdom of the Lagidae, after it had lasted two hundred and eighty-two years.

2. Seleucus Nicator, another of Alexander's generals, began the new kingdom of Syria, A.M. 3692, b.c. 312, which continued through a long race of sovereigns, till A.M. 3939, b.c. 65, when Pompey dethroned Antiochus Asiaticus, and Syria became a Roman province after it had lasted two hundred and forty-seven years. That the two legs of iron meant the kingdom of the Lagidae and that of the Seleucidae, seems strongly intimated by the characters given in the text. "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," Dan 2:40.

1. The iron here not only marks the strength of these kingdoms, but also their violence and cruelty towards the people of God. History is full of the miseries which the kings of Egypt and Syria inflicted on the Jews.

2. It is said that these legs should break in pieces and bruise. How many generals and princes were destroyed by Seleucus Nicator, and by Ptolemy, son of Lagus! Seleucus, particularly, could not consider himself secure on his throne till he had destroyed Antigonus, Nicanor, and Demetrius; and Ptolemy endeavored to secure himself by the ruin of Perdiccas, and the rest of his enemies.

3. The dividing of the kingdom, the iron and clayey mixture of the feet, point out the continual divisions which prevailed in those empires; and the mixture of the good and evil qualities which appeared in the successors of Seleucus and Ptolemy; none of them possessing the good qualities of the founders of those monarchies; neither their valor, wisdom, nor prudence.

4. The efforts which these princes made to strengthen their respective governments by alliances, which all proved not only useless but injurious, are here pointed out by their mingling themselves with the seed of men. "But they shall not cleave one to another," Dan 2:43. Antiochus Theos, king of Syria, married both Laodice and Berenice, daughters of Ptolemy Philadelphus, king of Egypt. Antiochus Magnus, king of Syria, gave his daughter Cleopatra to Ptolemy Epiphanes, king of Egypt; but these marriages, instead of being the means of consolidating the union between those kingdoms, contributed more than any thing else to divide them, and excite the most bloody and destructive wars. In Dan 7:7, the prophet, having the same subject in view, says, "I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it," and in Dan 8:22 : "Now that being broken," the horn of the rough goat, the Grecian monarchy, "whereas four stood up for it, four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation, but not in his power." These and other declarations point out those peculiar circumstances that distinctly mark the kingdom of the Seleucidae, and that of the Lagidae; both of which rose out of the Macedonian or Grecian empire, and both terminated in that of the Romans.

3. These Two Legs of Iron became absorbed in the Roman government, which also partook of the iron nature; strong, military, and extensive in its victories; and by its various conquests united to and amalgamated with itself various nations, some strong, and some weak, so as to be fitly represented in the symbolical image by feet and toes, partly of iron and partly of clay. Thus, as the Lagidae and Seleucidae arose out of the wreck of the Grecian empire; so the Roman empire arose out of their ruin. But the empire became weakened by its conquests; and although, by mingling themselves with the seed of men, that is, by strong leagues, and matrimonial alliances, as mentioned above they endeavored to secure a perpetual sovereignty, yet they did not cleave to each other, and they also were swallowed up by the barbarous northern nations; and thus terminated those four most powerful monarchies.

V. "A stone cut out of the mountain without hands."

1. That Jesus Christ has been represented by a stone, we have already seen; but this stone refers chiefly to his Church, which is represented as a spiritual building which he supports as a foundation stone, connects and strengthens as a corner stone, and finishes and adorns as a top stone! He is called a stone also in reference to the prejudice conceived against him by his countrymen. Because he did not come in worldly pomp they therefore refused to receive him; and to them he is represented as a stone of stumbling, and rock of offense.

2. But here he is represented under another notion, viz., that of a stone projected from a catapult, or some military engine, which smote the image on its feet; that is, it smote the then existing government at its foundation, or principles of support; and by destroying these, brought the whole into ruin.

3. By this stroke the clay, the iron, the brass, the silver, and the gold were broken to pieces, and became like chaff which the wind carried away. Now we have already seen that the Roman empire, which had absorbed the kingdoms of the Lagidae and Seleucidae, was represented by the legs of iron, and feet and toes of iron and clay; but as we find that not only the iron and clay, but also the brass, silver, and gold were confounded and destroyed by that stroke, it follows that there was then remaining in and compacted with the Roman government, something of the distinguishing marks and principles of all the preceding empires; not only as to their territorial possessions, but also as to their distinctive characteristics. There were at the time here referred to in the Roman empire, the splendor of the Chaldeans, the riches of the Persians, the discipline of the Greeks, and the strength of the Egyptian and Syrian governments, mingled with the incoherence and imbecility of those empires, kingdoms, and states which the Romans had subdued. In short, with every political excellence, it contains the principles of its own destruction, and its persecution of the Church of Christ accelerated its ruin.

4. As the stone represents Christ and his governing influence, it is here said to be a kingdom, that is, a state of prevailing rule and government; and was to arise in the days of those kings or kingdoms, Dan 2:44. And this is literally true; for its rise was when the Roman government, partaking of all the characteristics of the preceding empires, was at its zenith of imperial splendor, military glory, legislative authority, and literary eminence. It took place a few years after the battle of Actium, and when Rome was at peace with the whole world, September 2, b.c. 31.

5. This stone or government was cut out of the mountain, arose in and under the Roman government, Judea being, at the time of the birth of Christ, a Roman province.

6. It was cut out without hands; probably alluding to the miraculous birth of our Lord, but particularly to the spiritual nature of his kingdom and government, in which no worldly policy, human maxims, or military force were employed; for it was not by might nor power, but by the Spirit of the Lord of hosts. Two things may be here distinguished:

1. The government or kingdom of the Stone.

2. The government or kingdom of the Mountain.

1. The kingdom of the Stone smites, breaks to pieces, and destroys all the other kingdoms, till no vestige of them remains, and till the whole earth is subdued by it.

2. The kingdom of the Mountain fills, and continues to govern, all that has been thus subdued, maintaining endless peace and righteousness in the earth.

First, The stone began to strike the image, when the apostles went out into every part of the Roman empire, pulling down idolatry, and founding Christian Churches.

Secondly, But the great blow was given to the heathen Roman empire by the conversion of Constantine, just at the time when it was an epitome of the four great monarchies, being under the government of Four Emperors at once, a.d. 308: Constantius, who governed Gaul, Spain, and Britain; Galerius, who had Illyricum, Thrace and Asia; Severus, who had Italy and Africa; and Maximin, who had the East and Egypt.

1. The conversion of Constantine took place while he was in Gaul, a.d. 312, by the appearance of a luminous cross in the sky above the sun, a little after noon-day, with this inscription, *Ev τούτω νικά*, "By this conquer;" Euseb. De Vit. Const. lib. 1 cap. 28. In a.d. 324 he totally defeated Licinius, who had shared the empire with him, and became sole emperor. He terminated the reign of idolatry in

a.d. 331, by an edict ordering the destruction of all the heathen temples. This made Christianity the religion of the empire.

2. The stroke which thus destroyed idolatry in the Roman empire is continual in its effects; and must be so till idolatry be destroyed over the face of the earth, and the universe filled with the knowledge of Christ.

3. This smiting has been continued by all the means which God in his providence and mercy has used for the dissemination of Christianity, from the time of Constantine to the present: and particularly now, by means of the British and Foreign Bible society, and its countless ramifications, and by the numerous missionaries sent by Christian societies to almost every part of the globe. Thus far the kingdom of the stone. In Dan 2:44, the kingdom of the stone, grown into a great mountain and filling the whole earth, is particularly described by various characters.

1. It is a kingdom which the God of heaven sets up. That this means the whole dispensation of the Gospel, and the moral effects produced by it in the souls of men and in the world, needs little proof; for our Lord, referring to this and other prophecies in this book, calls its influence and his Gospel the kingdom of God, and the kingdom of heaven; showing thereby that it is a kingdom not of this world - not raised by human ambition, the lust of rule, or military conquest; but a spiritual kingdom, raised and maintained by the grace of God himself in which he himself lives and rules governing by his own laws, influencing and directing by his own Spirit; producing, not wars and contentions, but glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace and good will among men.

2. This is called the kingdom of heaven, because it is to be a counterpart of the kingdom of glory. The kingdom of God, says the apostle, is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, (Rom 14:17); righteousness, without any sin; peace, without inward disturbance; joy, without any mental unhappiness. An eternity of righteousness, peace, and spiritual joy constitutes Heaven; nor can we conceive in that state any thing higher or more excellent than these.

3. This kingdom shall never be destroyed: it is the everlasting Gospel, and the work of the everlasting God. As it neither originates in nor is dependent on the passions of men, it cannot be destroyed. All other governments, from the imperfection of their nature, contain in them the seeds of their own destruction. Kings die, ministers change, subjects are not permanent; new relations arise, and with them new measures, new passions, and new projects; and these produce political changes, and often political ruin. But this government, being the government of God, cannot be affected by the changes and chances to which mortal things are exposed.

4. This kingdom shall not be left to other people. Every dispensation of God, prior to Christianity, supposed another by which it was to be succeeded.

1. Holy patriarchs and their families were the first people among whom the kingdom of God was found.

2. Hebrews, in Egypt and in the wilderness, were the next.

3. Jews, in the promised land, were a third denomination.

4. And after the division of the kingdoms, captivity, and dispersion of the Jews, the Israel of God became a fourth denomination.

5. Under the Gospel, Christian is the name of the people of this kingdom. Every thing in the construction of the Gospel system, as well as its own declarations, shows that it is not to be succeeded by any other dispensation: its name can never be changed; and Christian will be the only



denomination of the people of God while sun and moon endure. All former empires have changed, and the very names of the people have changed with them. The Assyrians were lost in the Chaldeans and Babylonians; the Babylonians were lost in the Medes; the Medes in the Persians; the Persians in the Greeks; and the Greeks in the Syrians and Egyptians; these in the Romans; and the Romans in the Goths, and a variety of other nations. Nor does the name of those ancient governments, nor the people who lived under them, remain on the face of the earth in the present day! They are only found in the page of history. This spiritual kingdom shall never be transferred, and the name of its subjects shall never be changed.

5. It shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms; that is, the preaching and influence of Christianity shall destroy idolatry universally. They did so in the Roman empire, which was the epitome of all the rest. But this was not done by the sword, nor by any secular influence. Christians wage no wars for the propagation of Christianity; for the religion of Christ breathes nothing but love to God, and peace and good will to all mankind. The sum of the Gospel is contained in these words of Christ: "God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life - for the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save." For his own cause, God fights in the course of his providence. He depresses one, and exalts another; but permits not his own people to join with him in the infliction of judgments. It is by his own Spirit and energy that his kingdom is propagated and maintained in the world; and by the same his enemies are confounded. All false religions, as well as falsified and corrupted systems of Christianity, have had recourse to the sword, because they were conscious they had No God, no influence but what was merely human.

6. The kingdom of Christ breaks in pieces and consumes all other kingdoms; that is, it destroys every thing in every earthly government where it is received, that is opposed to the glory of God and the peace and happiness of men, and yet in such a way as to leave all political governments unchanged. No law or principle in Christianity is directed against the political code of any country. Britain is Christian without the alteration of her Magna Charta or her constitution. All the other empires, kingdoms, and states on the face of the earth, may become Christian and preserve their characteristic forms of political government. If there be in them any thing hostile to Christianity, and the peace and happiness of the subject, the Wind of God - the Divine Spirit, will fan or winnow it away, so that no more place shall be found for it. But this he will do in the way of his ordinary providence; and by his influence on their hearts, dispose truly Christianized rulers to alter or abrogate whatever their laws contain inimical to the mild sway of the scepter of Christ.

7. And it shall stand for ever. This is its final characteristic. It shall prevail over the whole world; it shall pervade every government; it shall be the basis of every code of laws; it shall be professed by every people of the earth: "The Gentiles shall come to its light, and kings to the brightness of its rising." The whole earth shall be subdued by its influence, and the whole earth filled with its glory.

8. The actual constitution, establishment, and maintenance of this kingdom belong to the Lord; yet he will use human means in the whole administration of his government. His Word must be distributed, and that word must be Preached. Hence, under God, Bibles and Missionaries are the grand means to be employed in things concerning his kingdom. Bibles must be printed, sent out, and dispersed; Missionaries, called of God to the work, and filled with the Divine Spirit, must be equipped, sent out, and maintained; therefore expenses must necessarily be incurred. Here the people now of the kingdom must be helpers. It is The duty, therefore, of every soul professing Christianity to lend a helping hand to send forth the Bible; and wherever the Bible is sent, to send a missionary, full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, to enforce its truths.

9. The duration of the kingdom of the mountain upon earth. The world has now lasted nearly six thousand years, and a very ancient tradition has predicted its termination at the close of that period. Its duration has been divided into three grand periods, each comprising two thousand years, which should be closed by a period without terminating limits; and these have been supposed to have their types in the six days' work of the creation, and the seventh day, called Sabbath or rest.

1. There have been two thousand years from the creation without any written revelation from God; this was called the patriarchal dispensation.

2. There have been two thousand years under the law, where there has been a written revelation, a succession of prophets, and a Divine ecclesiastical establishment. This has been termed the Mosaic dispensation.

3. One thousand eight hundred and twenty-nine years have passed since the true epoch of the nativity of our blessed Lord; and this is called the Gospel or Christian dispensation, which is now within one hundred and seventy-one years of closing its two thousand!

According to the ancient tradition there were,

1. Two thousand years void; that is, without the law.

2. Two thousand years under the law. And,

3. Two thousand years under the Messiah.

And at the termination of the third the endless Sabbath should commence. The comments on this ancient tradition go on to state, that at the termination of each day's work of the creation it was said, The evening and the morning were the first, second, third, fourth, fifth, and sixth day; but when the Sabbath is introduced, and God is said to rest from his work, and to have hallowed this day, there is no mention of the evening and the morning being the seventh day. That is left without termination; and therefore a proper type of the eternal Sabbath, that rest which remains for the people of God.

And are we indeed so near that time when the elements of all things shall be dissolved by fervent heat; when the heavens shall be shrivelled up like a scroll, and the earth and all it contains be burned up? Is the fifth empire, the kingdom of the stone and the kingdom of the mountain, so near its termination? Are all vision and prophecy about to be sealed up, and the whole earth to be illuminated with the bright beams of the Sun of righteousness? Are the finally incorrigible and impenitent about to be swept off the face of the earth by the besom of destruction while the righteous shall be able to lift up their heads with ineffable joy, knowing their final redemption is at hand? Are we so near the eve of that period when "they who turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars for ever and ever?" What sort of persons should we then be in all holy conversation and godliness? Where is our zeal for God? Where the sounding of our bowels over the perishing nations who have not yet come under the yoke of the Gospel? Multitudes of whom are not under the yoke, because they have never heard of it; and they have not heard of it, because those who enjoy the blessings of the Gospel of Jesus have not felt (or have not obeyed the feeling) the imperious duty of dividing their heavenly bread with those who are famishing with hunger, and giving the water of life to those who are dying of thirst. How shall they appear in that great day when the conquests of the Lion of the tribe of Judah are ended; when the mediatorial kingdom is delivered up unto the Father, and the Judge of quick and dead sits on the great white throne, and to those on his left hand says, "I was hungry, and ye gave me no meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink." I say, How shall they appear who have made no exertions to tell the lost nations of the earth the necessity for preparing

to meet their God; and showing them the means of doing it, by affording them the blessings of the Gospel of the grace of God? Let us beware lest the stone that struck the motley image, and dashed it to pieces, fall on us, and grind us to powder.

Bibles are sent out by millions into heathen countries; but how shall they hear without a preacher; and how shall they understand the things which they read, unless those who know the things of God teach them? Let us haste, then, and send missionaries after the Bibles. God is mightily at work in the earth: let us be workers together with him, that we receive not the grace of God in vain. He that giveth to those poor (emphatically poor, for they are without God in the world, and consequently without the true riches) lendeth unto the Lord; and let him look what he layeth out, and it shall be paid unto him again. For "he that converteth a sinner from the error of his ways shall save a soul from death, and hide a multitude of sins." God does not call on us to shake hands with all secular, social, and family comfort, and bid farewell to the whole; and go to the heathen with the glad tidings of great joy: but he loudly calls on us to assist in sending those who, in the true spirit of sacrifice, the love of Christ constraining them, say, "Here are we! O Lord, send us." Let these servants of God run to and fro; that by their ministry knowledge may be increased. Amen.

---

DANIEL 2: 46 Then the king Nebuchadnezzar fell on his face, and worshipped Daniel, and commanded that they should offer an offering and sweet odours to him.

---

Verse 46

The king - fell upon his face - Prostrated himself: this was the fullest act of adoration among the ancients.

Worshipped Daniel - Supposing him to be a god, or Divine being. No doubt Daniel forbade him; for to receive this would have been gross idolatry.

---

DANIEL 2: 47 The king answered to Daniel, and said, Of a truth your God is the God of gods, and the Lord of kings, and a revealler of secrets, since you have been able to reveal this secret.

---

Verse 47

Your God is a God of gods - He is greater than all others.

And a Lord of kings - He governs both in heaven and earth.

---

DANIEL 2: 48 Then the king made Daniel great, and gave him many great gifts, and made him to rule over the whole province of Babylon, and to be chief governor over all the wise men of Babylon.

---

Verse 48

Made Daniel a great man - By,

1. Giving him many rich gifts.
2. By making him governor over the whole province of Babylon. And,
3. By making him the chief or president over all the wise men.

---

DANIEL 2: 49 Daniel requested of the king, and he appointed Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, over the affairs of the province of Babylon: but Daniel was in the gate of the king.

---

Verse 49

Daniel requested of the king, and he set Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego over the affairs of the province of Babylon - He wished his three companions promoted, who had shared his anxieties, and helped him by their prayers. They all had places of trust, in which they could do much good, and prevent much evil.

Daniel sat in the gate of the king - That is, was the chief officer in the palace; and the greatest confidant and counselor of the king. But whatever his influence and that of his friends was, it extended only over the province of Babylon; not through the empire.