

# CHAPTER 2

## INTRODUCTION TO DANIEL 2

The subject of this chapter is a dream which Nebuchadnezzar had dreamed, but had forgot; upon which he calls his magicians and astrologers together, to tell him it, and the interpretation of it; threatening them with death if they did not, and promising them great rewards and honour if they did, (<sup>2011</sup>Daniel 2:1-6), they urge the unreasonableness of the demand, and the impossibility of the thing; which so highly incensed the king, that he ordered their immediate destruction, (<sup>2017</sup>Daniel 2:7-13), Daniel and his companions being in danger, he goes in to the king, and desires time, and he would show him what he had dreamed; which being granted, he spent it in prayer to God, (<sup>2014</sup>Daniel 2:14-18), and the thing being revealed to him, he gave thanks to God, (<sup>2019</sup>Daniel 2:19-23), and being introduced to the king, he both told him his dream, and the interpretation of it; which concerned the four monarchies of the world, and the everlasting kingdom of the Messiah, (<sup>2024</sup>Daniel 2:24-45), upon which he was highly honoured, and greatly promoted by the king, (<sup>2016</sup>Daniel 2:46-49).

**Ver. 1.** *And in the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar*, etc.] It was in the first year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign that Daniel was carried captive, (<sup>2011</sup>Jeremiah 25:1), three years Daniel had been under tutors; at the end of which he was presented to the king, as is related in the preceding chapter; and yet the following dream was in the second of his reign: this creates a difficulty, which is solved by some thus: in the second year after the destruction of the temple, so the Jewish chronicle<sup>f62</sup>, with which Jarchi agrees; others, as Aben Ezra, in the second year of his monarchy, after he had subdued all the nations round about; and so Josephus says<sup>f63</sup>, it was in the second year after the destruction of the Egyptians. R. Moses the priest, in Aben Ezra, would have it to be the second year to his reign, to the end of it, when there were only two years wanting to it; a very unusual way of reckoning indeed! and therefore justly rejected by Aben Ezra: but all these dates are too late, since Daniel long before these times was well known, and in great fame for his wisdom; whereas, at this time, it does not appear that he was much known, or in

great request: it is better either to render it, “in the second year”, that is, after Daniel and his companions had been presented to the king, and promoted;

*even in the reign of Nebuchadnezzar*, as opposed to the reign of Darius or Cyrus, in which he flourished also: or rather this was the second year of Nebuchadnezzar’s reigning alone; for he had been taken into partnership in the throne with his father before his death, as Berosus<sup>f64</sup> observes, which is said to be two years; so that this second year was the fourth year of his reign, reckoning from the time he reigned conjunctly with his father, though the second of his reigning alone: yet it seems best of all to render the words, with Noldius<sup>f65</sup>, but in the second year, in the reign of Nebuchadnezzar; that is, in the second year of Daniel’s ministry in or under the reign of Nebuchadnezzar; who continued at court under different reigns, till the first of Cyrus: this was, according to Bishop Usher<sup>f66</sup>, and Mr. Whiston<sup>f67</sup>, in the year of the world 3401 A.M., and before Christ 603. Mr. Bedford<sup>f68</sup> places it in 604:

*Nebuchadnezzar dreamed dreams*; which, though but one, yet, relating to various things, the several parts of the human body, and the different metals the form he saw was made of, as well as the four monarchies it signified, is called “dreams”. Jacchiades says, he first dreamed the dream, and then the interpretation of it; which is the reason of the plural number: wherewith his spirit was troubled; it gave his mind a great deal of trouble while he was dreaming it; and when he awaked, though he could not recover it, yet he had some confused broken ideas of it; it had left some impressions upon him, which gave him great uneasiness, and the more as he could not recollect any part of it; his mind was agitated, and tossed to and fro, and under the greatest perplexity:

*and his sleep brake from him*; went away from him, through the strangeness of the dream, and the effect it had upon him.

**Ver. 2.** *Then the king commanded to call the magicians*, etc.] He ordered his servants in waiting to send immediately for the wise men, the philosophers of that age and kingdom, that studied the things of nature, and the natural causes of things:

*and the astrologers*; that cast nativities, and pretended by the position and influence of the stars to know what would befall men:

*and the sorcerers*; or wizards, that made use of familiar spirits, and the help of the devil; necromancers that consulted the dead, in order to get knowledge of future things:

*and the Chaldeans*; so called, not from their country; for probably all the preceding were Chaldeans by nation; but inasmuch as the study of judiciary astrology, and other unlawful arts, greatly obtained in Chaldea; hence those that were addicted to them had this name<sup>f69</sup>:

*for to show the king his dreams*; both what it was he dreamed, and what the interpretation or meaning of it was: so they came, and stood before the king; they came immediately, with great readiness and willingness, esteeming it a great honour done them to be sent for by the king, and admitted into his chamber; and hoping it would turn much both to their credit and profit; and being come, they stood waiting his will and pleasure.

**Ver. 3.** *And the king said unto them, I have dreamed a dream*, etc.] What before is called dreams is here expressed in the singular, a dream; for it was but one dream, though it contained in it various things; this the king could remember, that he had a dream; for it had left some impression on his mind, though he could not call to mind what it was about. Aben Ezra makes mention of one of their Gaons or Rabbins, that affirmed that Nebuchadnezzar knew his dream, but was willing to try the wise men; but, as he observes, he could not surely believe the words of Daniel:

*and my spirit was troubled to know the dream*; both that, and the meaning of it; he says nothing as yet about the interpretation of it; concluding that, if they could tell him the dream, they could explain it to him; or then it would be time enough to inquire after that.

**Ver. 4.** *Then spake the Chaldeans to the king in, Syriac*, etc.] These spake, either because the interpretation of dreams particularly belonged to them; or else as being the chief of the wise men, and of greatest authority; or as chosen by the rest, and spake in their name; and indeed this appellation may include them all, being all of the same country, though they might differ in their profession: they spake in the Syriac or Babylonish language, the same with the Chaldee, being their mother tongue, and that of the king too; and therefore could more easily speak it themselves, and be more easily understood by him, than if they had spoke in another; (see Gill on “~~2004~~ Daniel 1:4”) and from hence, to the end of the “seventh” chapter,

Daniel writes in Chaldee; the things he treats of chiefly relating to the Chaldeans:

*O king, live for ever*; which is a wish of long life, health, and prosperity; and does not intend an everlasting continuance in this world, or an eternal life in another, to the knowledge of which they might be strangers: this was an usual form of salutation of kings in these eastern nations; like to this is that of Sinaetus, a Persian, to Artaxerxes Mnemon<sup>f70</sup>

“O King Artaxerxes, reign for ever;”

so said<sup>f71</sup> Artabazus, a faithful friend of Darius, to Alexander the great, when he met him with the friends and relations of Darius,

“O king, may you flourish in perpetual happiness:”

*tell thy servants the dream, and we will show the interpretation*; this was not the thing that was asked of them, but the dream itself; and if that had been told them, they promise more than there is reason to believe they would have fulfilled, had that been done; it is more than the Egyptian magicians could do, even when Pharaoh had told them his dream: this they said partly to get time, and partly to make a show of their skill and knowledge; though in a very vain and arrogant manner.

**Ver. 5.** *The king answered and said to the Chaldeans*, etc.] In the same language they spoke to him:

*the thing is gone from me*; either the dream was gone from him; it was out of his mind, he had forgot it, and could not call it to remembrance; he had been dreaming of monarchies and kingdoms, which are themselves but dreams and tales, and empty things that pass away, and which he might have learned from hence: or, as it may be rendered, “the word is confirmed by me”<sup>f72</sup>. Saadiah says, that some observe that the word here used has the signification of strength or firmness; and so Aben Ezra interprets the word, is stable and firm; to which agrees the Syriac version,

“most sure is the word which I pronounce;”

referring not to the dream, but to what follows the king’s declaration, both with respect to threatenings and promises:

*if ye will not make known unto me the dream, with the interpretation thereof*; the king speaks as if he thought it was in their power, but they

were unwilling to do it; though no doubt, had they been able, they would have readily done it, both for their credit and advantage:

*ye shall be cut in pieces*; not only cut in two, but into various pieces, limb by limb, as Agag by Samuel, and the Ammonites by David; and which was a punishment often inflicted in the eastern nations; as Orpheus was cut to pieces by the Thracian women, and Bessus by order of Alexander the great<sup>f73</sup>; much the same punishment as, with us, to be hanged, drawn, and quartered:

*and your houses shall be made a dunghill*; be destroyed, and never rebuilt more, but put to the most contemptible uses: and this was common among the Romans; when any were found plotting against the government, or guilty of treason, they were not only capitally punished, but their houses were pulled down, or the names of them changed; or, however, were not used for dwelling houses; so the house of Caius Cassius was pulled down and demolished for his affectation of government, and for treason; and that of M. Maulins Capitolinus, who was suspected of seizing the government, after he was thrown from the rock, was made a mint of; and that of Spuflus Melius for the same crime, after he had suffered, was by reproach called Aequimelium; and of the like kind many instances are given<sup>f74</sup> and so among the Grecians; Pausanias<sup>f75</sup> relates of Astylus Crotoniata, that by way of punishment, and as a mark of infamy upon him for a crime he had done, his house was appointed for a public prison. Herodotus<sup>f76</sup> reports Leutychides, general of the Lacedemonians in Thessalian expedition, that having received money by way of bribery, for which he was tried and condemned, though he made his escape, his house was demolished; and the same usage and custom remains to this day in France: thus the unhappy Damien, a madman, who of late stabbed the French king; one part of his sentence was, that the house in which he was born should be pulled down, as he himself also was pulled and cut to pieces; (see ~~2~~2 Kings 10:27).

**Ver. 6.** *But if ye show the dream, and the interpretation thereof*, etc.]

Which he was extremely intent upon to know; and therefore makes use of every way to obtain it, first by threatenings, to terrify, and next by promises, to allure:

*ye shall receive of me gifts, and rewards, and great honour*; gold, silver, jewels, rich apparel, houses, lands, and great promotion to some of the highest places of honour, trust, and profit, in the kingdom, as Daniel afterwards had:

*therefore show me the dream, and the interpretation thereof*; at once, directly, without any more ado; for the king was impatient of it.

**Ver. 7.** *They answered again, and said*, etc.] Or, a “second”<sup>f77</sup> time; repeating the same words, having nothing more to say:

*let the king tell his servants the dream, and we will show the interpretation thereof*; the first part was but right and reasonable, though the latter was mere boasting and arrogance.

**Ver. 8.** *The king answered and said, I know of certainty*, etc.] I see plainly and clearly what you are at, and am fully assured you mean nothing, but that

*ye would gain the time*: or buy<sup>f78</sup>, or redeem time, as in (~~4:16~~ Ephesians 5:16), prolong time, put off the answer to longer time; spin out time, as people do in buying and selling; or have it in their possession and power when to answer; and so by gaining time, or being master of it, might hope something would turn up to their advantage, and extricate them out of their present difficulties:

*because ye see the thing is gone from me*; the dream he could not remember; or because the decree was certain which he had determined concerning them; (see Gill on “~~2:15~~ Daniel 2:5”).

**Ver. 9.** *But if ye will not make known unto me the dream*, etc.] For the present he does not insist upon the interpretation, only the dream itself, at least this is now only mentioned; concluding that if they could do the one, they could do the other, as is after observed:

*there is but one decree for you*; for them all; and that was the decree of death; which should never be revoked or mitigated, or the sentence be changed for another; but should certainly be executed, and in which they were all involved, not one should escape:

*for ye have prepared lying and corrupt words to speak before me*; framed a deceitful answer to impose upon and screen yourselves:

*till the time be changed*; either that he could remember his dream, and tell them it himself; or all the images and impressions of it were wore off his mind, so that they could tell him anything, and he not be able to disprove them; or he would grow indifferent to it, and his passionate desire after it cool, and he be careless whether he knew it or not; or he or they should

die; or he might be engaged in other affairs, and be called abroad to war, as he had been; or some thing or other turn up, whereby they might escape the ruin threatened. Saadiah fixes the time to noon, when the conversation of kings ceased, and they were otherwise engaged:

*therefore tell me the dream, and I shall know that ye can show me the interpretation thereof*; for by being able to tell a dream that was past, it might be concluded they were able to tell what was to come, signified by that dream; and if they could not declare what was past, how should it be thought that they could foretell things to come?

**Ver. 10.** *The Chaldeans answered before the King, and said*, etc.] As follows, in order to appease his wrath, and cool his resentment, and bring him to reason:

*there is not a man upon the earth can show the king's matter*; or, “upon the dry land”<sup>f79</sup>: upon the continent, throughout the whole world, in any country whatever; not one single man can be found, be he ever so wise and learned, that can show the king what he requires; and yet Daniel afterwards did; and so it appears, by this confession, that he was greater than they, or any other of the same profession with them: this is one argument they use to convince the king of the unreasonableness of his demand; it being such that no man on earth was equal to; another follows:

*therefore there is no king, lord, nor ruler*; there neither is, nor never was, any potentate or prince, be who he will; whether, as Jacchiades distinguishes them, a “king” over many provinces, whose empire is very large; or “lord” over many cities; or “ruler” over many villages belonging to one city; in short, no man of power and authority, whether supreme or subordinate:

*that asked things at any magician, or astrologer, or Chaldean*; never was such a thing required of any before; no instance, they suggest, could be produced in ancient history, or in the present age, in any kingdom or court under the heavens, of such a request being made; or that anything of this kind was ever insisted upon; and therefore hoped the king would not insist upon it; and which no doubt was true: Pharaoh required of his wise men to tell him the interpretation of his dream, but not the dream itself.

**Ver. 11.** *And it is a rare thing the king requireth*, &c.] Meaning not scarce, or seldom heard of; for they had before asserted it never had been

required; but that it was hard and difficult, yea, with them, and as they supposed with any other, impossible to be done:

*and there is none other that can show it before the king, except the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh*; these men own there was a God, though, they held, more than one; and the omniscience of God, though they seem to have no notion of his omnipresence; and to suggest as if he had no concern with mortals; had no regard to men on earth, nor communicated the knowledge of things unto them. Jarchi, Aben Ezra, and Saadiah, interpret this of angels, who are incorporeal; but the superior deities of the Gentiles are rather designed; who were supposed to dwell in heaven, and to have no conversation with men on earth; these, it is owned, could declare to the king what he desired, and no other; and therefore should not persist in his demand on them.

**Ver. 12.** *For this cause the king was angry, and very furious*, etc.] Not only because they could not tell his dream, and the interpretation of it; but because they represented him as requiring a thing unreasonable and impossible, which had never been done by any potentate but himself, and could never be answered but by the gods: this threw him into an excess of wrath and fury; which in those tyrannical and despotic princes was exceeding great and terrible:

*and commanded to destroy all the wise men of Babylon*; not only those that were now in his presence, but all others; concluding from this instance that they were an useless set of men, yea, deceivers and impostors.

**Ver. 13.** *And the decree went forth that the wise men should be slain*, etc.] Or, “and the wise men were slain”<sup>f80</sup>, as the Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, and Syriac versions render it; and so Saadiah: orders were given by the king to his proper officers, and his edict was published, and his will made known in the usual manner; upon which the wise men, at least some of them, were slain; very probably those who were in the king’s presence, and at court; and the officers were gone out to slay the rest:

*and they sought Daniel and his fellows to be slain*; who had the character of wise men, and might be envied at court, and so the officers took this opportunity, having these orders, to slay them: there was, no doubt, a particular providence, that Daniel and his friends should not be at court at this time; both that the vanity of the Chaldean wisdom and arts might be the more manifest and made known, and the divine and superior wisdom



and knowledge of Daniel might be more conspicuous, and his fame be spread in Babylon, and in other provinces.

**Ver. 14.** *Then Daniel answered with counsel and wisdom*, etc.] In a discreet manner, using soft words and gentle language, humbly and modestly inquiring what should be the meaning of all this. The Vulgate Latin version is, “he inquired of the law and decree”<sup>f81</sup>; what was the reason of the king’s orders, which this officer had in commission to execute; with which others agree: or, “he made to return the counsel and decree”<sup>f82</sup>, as some choose to render it; he stopped the execution of it for the present, by his inquiries and prudent behaviour but neither seem to agree with what follows; the first sense is best:

*to Arioch the captain of the king’s guards*: there was a king of this name, (<sup>-0141-</sup>Genesis 14:1), this man, according to the Septuagint version, and others that follow it, was the chief of the king’s cooks; and Aben Ezra says the word in the Arabic language so signifies: or, as it may be rendered, “the chief of the slaughterers”<sup>f83</sup>; the executioners of malefactors, so Jarchi; he was the king’s chief executioner, with which agrees the business he was now charged with: the Vulgate Latin version calls him the prince of the militia; and others the king’s provost marshal:

*which was gone forth to slay the wise men of Babylon*; who by the king’s order went forth from the court into the city, to slay all in Babylon who went under the character of wise men; they were not among those that could not answer the king’s demand, since they declared none could do it; and therefore he ordered them all to be slain, as a set of useless men in his kingdom.

**Ver. 15.** *And he answered and said to Arioch the king’s captain*, etc.] Or governor<sup>f84</sup>; over the persons before mentioned; either the king’s guard or militia, or cooks or executioners: before, the manner in which Daniel answered is observed; here, the matter of it, as follows:

*why is the decree so hasty from the King?* or, “why this rash”, hasty, or cruel (as the Vulgate Latin version) decree from the king? for so it was: what is the cause and reason of it?

*then Arioch made the thing known to Daniel*; who before was ignorant of it; he was not with the wise men before the king; either they did not care he should go with them, and therefore called him not; or he did not choose to go himself, being under no temptation by the rewards offered, and

especially having no summons from the king himself: this being his case, Arioch informs him of the whole affair; how that the king had dreamed a dream, and forgot it; and had sent for the wise men to tell him both it and the interpretation; but they not being able to do it, and declaring also that it was impossible to be done, the king had given orders to slay all of that character.

**Ver. 16.** *Then Daniel went in*, etc.] Or “went up”<sup>f85</sup>; to the king’s palace, which might be built on an eminence; or into his chamber, where he probably was; or in some upper room, very likely introduced by Arioch; and which was a bold and daring action in them both: in Arioch, to cease from doing his orders, and entering into the king’s presence before he had; and in Daniel, to appear before him, having the name of a wise man, when the king was in such a fury; all which was owing to the providence of God, that wrought upon the heart of Arioch, to listen to what Daniel said, and inspired them both with courage to go in to the king:

*and desired of the king that he would give him time*; not two or three days, but only that night, till morning, as Saadia observes; and this with a view not to read books, or study any art; or, by reasoning with himself, or conversation with others, to get knowledge; but to pray to God:

*and that he would show the king the interpretation*; that is, of his dream, and the dream itself; being persuaded in his own mind that God would hear his prayers, and make it known to him. The king granted him his request, though he upbraided the wise men of their design to gain time; but perhaps, upon the sight of Daniel, he remembered him again, and how superior in wisdom he was to all his magicians and wise men; and besides, Daniel gave him hope, yea, assurance, of showing his dream, and the interpretation of it, which his mind was very eager after; but chiefly this subsiding of his wrath, and his indulging Daniel in his request, were owing to the overruling providence of God.

**Ver. 17.** *Then Daniel went to his house*, etc.] Which Sanctius thinks was in the king’s palace; very probably it might be near it, somewhere in the city of Babylon; for that it should be twenty miles from that city, as Benjamin of Tudela relates<sup>f86</sup>, is not likely; since Arioch’s orders reached to none but the wise men of Babylon, and where he sought for and found Daniel; hither he went, to be alone, and to seek the Lord in secret:

*and made the thing known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions*; who either dwelt in the same house with him, or not far off; whom he sent for and acquainted with all that had passed, both between the king and the wise men, and the consequence of that; and between him and the king, and what promise he had made, relying on his God and theirs.

**Ver. 18.** *That they would desire mercies of the God of heaven concerning this secret*, etc.] His view in sending for them, and informing them of this whole affair, was to engage them in prayer to God with him; even to that God that made the heaven, and dwells there, and is above all, and sees and knows what is done in earth, and rules both in heaven and in earth according to his will; to entreat his mercy, whose mercies are manifold, and not plead any merits of their own; and that he would, in compassion to them, and the lives of others that were in danger, make known this secret of the king's dream, and the interpretation of it; which could never be found out by the sagacity of men, or by any art they are masters of: this Daniel requested of them, as knowing that it was their duty and interest, as well as his, to unite in prayer unto God on this account, and that the joint and fervent prayer of righteous men avails much with him:

*that Daniel and his fellows should not perish with the rest of the wise men of Babylon*; which they were in danger of: this was the mercy they were to implore, being in distress, and this the interest they had in this affair; a strong argument to induce them to it.

**Ver. 19.** *Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a night vision*, etc.] That is, after Daniel and his companions had importunately sought the Lord by prayer, the secret of the king's dream, and the interpretation of it, were made known to Daniel, and to him only; he being the person designed in Providence to be raised to great honour and dignity by means of it; this was done either the same night, or the night following, and, as some think, in a dream, and that he dreamed the same dream Nebuchadnezzar did, which he remembered, though the king forgot it; or, however, the same image was represented, to him, whether sleeping or waking, and the meaning of it given him:

*then Daniel blessed the God of heaven*: gave thanks to him, that he had heard his prayer, and indulged him in his request; which thanksgiving, blessing, or praise, is expressed in the following words:

**Ver. 20.** *Daniel answered and said*, etc.] That is, he began his prayer, as Jacchiades observes, or his thanksgiving, and expressed it in the following manner:

*blessed be the name of God for ever and ever*: a form of blessing God, or a wish that he may be blessed by men for evermore; for there is that in his name, in his nature, in his perfections, and in his works, which require that praise be given him now, and to all eternity:

*for wisdom and might are his*; “wisdom” in forming the scheme of things, and “might” or power in the execution of them; “wisdom” in revealing the secret of the dream to Daniel, and “might” to accomplish the various events predicted in it: for what Daniel here and afterwards observes has a very peculiar regard to the present affair, for which his heart was warm with gratitude and thankfulness.

**Ver. 21.** *And he changeth the times and the season*, etc.] Not only of day and night, summer and winter, and times and seasons of prosperity and adversity; but all the changes and revolutions in states and kingdoms, in all times and ages, are from him; and particularly those pointed at in the following dream, in the Babylonian, Persian, Grecian, and Roman monarchies:

*he removeth kings, and setteth up kings*; he is King of kings, and Lord of lords; by him they reign, and continue on their thrones, as long as he pleases; and then he removes them by death or otherwise, and places others in their stead; and who are sometimes raised from a low estate; and this he does in the ordinary course of Providence; (see <sup>15716</sup> Psalm 75:6,7) and particularly Daniel might have in view the removal of the Babylonian monarchs, and setting up kings of the race of the Medes and Persians; and then the degrading them, and advancing the Grecians to the height of monarchy; and then reducing of them, and raising the Romans to a greater degree of power and authority; and at last crushing them all in their turns, to make way for the kingdom of his Son:

*he giveth wisdom to the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding*: an increase of wisdom and knowledge, to wise politicians and counsellors of state, to form wise schemes of peace or war, to make wise laws, and govern kingdoms in a prudent manner; and to wise master builders or ministers of the word, to speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, to diffuse the knowledge of Christ everywhere, and make known

the mysteries of grace to the sons of men; particularly to Daniel and his companions, who were wise and knowing men, the interpretation of the king's dream.

**Ver. 22.** *He revealeth the deep and secret things*, etc.] The purposes of his own heart, which are the deep things of God, and the secrets that belong to him, and which are opened in providence by the execution of them; the “*arcana imperii*”, or secrets of state, committed to men designed for government; the secrets or mysteries of grace, the deep things of the Gospel, made known to Gospel ministers; and particularly the deep and impenetrable secret of the king's dream, and the interpretation of it, revealed to Daniel:

*he knoweth what is in the darkness*; the actions of men committed in darkness; the schemes that are drawn in the privy councils and cabinets of princes; yea, the thoughts of men's hearts, which he in the utmost recesses of them, as well as their dreams in the night season; and particularly this of the king's, and which must have been buried in darkness, had he not revealed it:

*and the light dwelleth with him*; he is light itself, and the Father of lights; the light of nature, grace, and glory, is with him, and from him; the light of the word, the light of prophecy, and the light of the glorious Gospel; and also the Light of the world, the sun of righteousness, the Messiah; and of him some of the ancient Jews interpret this passage. R. Aba Serungia<sup>f87</sup>, mentioning this passage, “and the light dwelleth with him”, adds, this is the King Messiah, as it is said, “arise, shine”, etc.; and his commentator<sup>f88</sup> observes, that the sense of it is, he (God) retains the Messiah with himself, and does not send him forth unto us; (see ~~49B~~ Psalm 43:3), and elsewhere<sup>f89</sup>, in answer to the question, what is the name of the Messiah? among others, this is said, his name is Light, as it is said, “and the light dwelleth with him”: and this is a name that is often given to Christ, and he takes to himself in the New Testament; (see ~~49C~~ John 1:7-9 3:19 8:12 9:5 12:35,46) where he is called the “Light”, that Light, the true Light, and the Light of the world; as he is both of Jews and Gentiles, even of all his people throughout the world: indeed, the light of nature, which every man has, is from him, as the Creator of all; and the light of grace, and the increase of it, which any are favoured with, is given by him; and all the light of knowledge in divine things, and of spiritual joy and comfort, beams from him the sun of righteousness: the light of the latter day, which will be so

very great, as to be as the light of seven days, and to make the sun and moon unnecessary in a figurative sense, will be owing to him; as well as all that light of life and glory, the saints shall possess to all eternity, will be communicated through him: and Christ, who is this light, “dwells” with God; he who is the same with the divine Word, was with God, and dwells with him to all eternity; in the fulness of time this Word or Light was made flesh, or was clothed with it, and dwelt with men; when it was, that became a light into the world, of which he often speaks; and having done his work, ascended to heaven, and now dwells with God in human nature; and will come again, and dwell with men on earth a thousand years, when he will be the light of the New Jerusalem state; and, after that, will take his people with him to heavens, and dwell with God, and they with him, for evermore. This shows that this Light, or the divine “Logos”, is a person distinct from God the Father, with whom he dwells; that he is an eternal one, God never being without this Light and Word; and that he is all abiding light to his saints, and will be for evermore.

**Ver. 23.** *I thank thee, and praise thee, O thou God my fathers*, etc.] His remote ancestors, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and more near progenitors, to whom God had made promises, and revealed his secrets in time past, and still continued his favours to Daniel; for which he was abundantly thankful, and owned and confessed the goodness of God to him, and praised him on account of it:

*who hast given me wisdom and might*; or “strength”<sup>f90</sup>; courage and fortitude of mind, to go in to the king when in his fury, to promise to show his dream, and the interpretation of it; and strength of faith in prayer to God to obtain it, and who gave him wisdom to know it: Jacchiades interprets this might of power to save his own life, and the life of others:

*and hast made known unto me now what we desired of thee*; for though it was only made known to Daniel, yet it was in consequence of the united prayers of him and his companions, to which he ascribes it; which shows his great modesty and humility, not to attribute it to his own prayer, and the interest he had in God, as a God hearing prayer:

*for thou hast now made known unto us the king’s matter*; or “word”<sup>f91</sup>; which he required of the wise men, namely, his dream, and the interpretation of it; this being made known to Daniel, he communicated it to his friends.

**Ver. 24.** *Therefore Daniel went in unto Arioch,* etc.] Into his apartments at court, or wherever he was in quest of the wise men, of which Daniel had knowledge; this he did as soon as the secret was revealed to him, though not before he had given thanks to God:

*whom the king had ordained to destroy the wise men of Babylon;* this is a description of Arioch, from the office assigned him by King Nebuchadnezzar, who had appointed him to see this his will and pleasure accomplished:

*he went and said thus unto him, destroy not the wise men of Babylon:* that is, do not go on to destroy them, for some he had destroyed; this Daniel said, not from any special love he bore them, though some of them might have been his preceptors in the language and literature of the Chaldeans, and so he might have a natural affection for them, and indeed might say this out of common humanity; but this did not arise from any love he had to their wicked arts, which he abhorred, but from love of justice; for, however wicked these men might be, or however deserving of death on other accounts, yet not on this account, for not doing what was impossible for them to do:

*bring me in before the king, and I will show unto the king the interpretation;* that is, of the dream, and that itself: by this it seems that Daniel, as yet, was not so well known at court, nor of so much esteem and authority there, as to go in to the king of himself, but needed one to introduce him; and which confirms what has been supposed on (<sup>2016</sup>Daniel 2:16).

**Ver. 25.** *Then Arioch brought in Daniel before the king in haste,* etc.] As knowing how impatient the king was to have his dream, and the interpretation of it, told him; and how pleasing this would be to him, and be a means of ingratiating and establishing him in his affections, as well as for the sake of saving the lives of the wise men:

*and said thus unto him, I have found a man of the captives of Judah:* as if he had made it his business to inquire after a man capable of answering the king's demands; whereas he sought after Daniel at first, not for this purpose, but to destroy him; and now Daniel made his application to him for introduction to the king, and was not looked after by Arioch; but he here did as courtiers do, make the most of everything to their own advantage, to insinuate themselves into the favour of princes: it looks by

this as if Arioch did not know of Daniel's having been with the king before, and of the promise he had made him; that granting him time, he would satisfy him in the matter requested, which he was now ready to do, as he had told Arioch; and therefore he adds,

*that will make known unto the king the interpretation;* that is, of his dream.

**Ver. 26.** *The king answered and said to Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar,* etc.] The name given him by the prince of the eunuchs, (<sup>2000</sup>Daniel 1:7), and by which he was known to Nebuchadnezzar; and very likely he called him now by this name, which is the reason of its being mentioned:

*art thou able to make known unto me the dream which I have seen, and the interpretation thereof?* this he said, either as doubting and questioning, or as admiring that one so young should be able to do that, which his seniors, the wise men in Babylon, could not do; or he put this question, as impatient to hear what he must expect from him, whether the performance of his promise, or such an answer as the wise men had given him.

**Ver. 27.** *Daniel answered in the presence of the king,* etc.] Boldly, and without fear:

*and said, the secret which the king hath demanded:* so he calls it, to show that it was something divine, which came from God, and could only be revealed by him, and was not to be found out by any art of man:

*cannot the wise men, the astrologers, the magicians, the soothsayers show unto the king;* this he premises to the revelation of the secret, not only to observe the unreasonableness of the king's demand upon them, and the injustice of putting men to death for it; but that the discovery of the whole might appear to be truly divine, and God might have all the glory; it being what no class of men whatever could ever have made known unto him. The last word, rendered "soothsayers"<sup>f92</sup>, is not used before; the Septuagint version leaves it untranslated, and calls them Gazarenes; and so Saadiah says, it is the name of a nation or people so called; but Jarchi takes them to be a sort of men that had confederacy with devils: the word signifies such that "cut" into parts, as the soothsayers, who cut up creatures, and looked into their entrails, and by them made their judgment of events; or as the astrologers, who cut and divide the heavens into parts, and by them divide future things; or determine, as Jacchiades says, what shall befall men; for the word is used also in the sense of determining or decreeing; hence,



Saadia says, some interpret it of princes, who by their words determine the affairs of kingdoms: by some it is rendered “fatalists”<sup>f93</sup>, who declare to men what their fate will be; but neither of these could show this secret to the king.

**Ver. 28.** *But there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets*, etc.] By this Daniel meant to inform the king that there was but one God, in opposition to the notion of polytheism, that obtained among the Heathens; that this one God is in heaven, and presides over all persons and things on earth; and that to him alone belongs the revelation of secrets, and not to Heathen gods, or to any magician, astrologer, etc.; and of this kind was the king’s dream, a secret impenetrable by men:

*and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days*: in the latter days of his monarchy, which should be subverted, and succeeded by another; and in ages after that, during the Persian, Grecian, and Roman monarchies; and in the days of the Messiah, even in the latter of his days:

*thy dream, and the visions of thy head upon thy bed, are these*; which were of God, and of great importance; and, that the king might observe it, Daniel introduces these words with what goes before, and says what follows:

**Ver. 29.** *As for thee, O king*, etc.] So far as thou hast any concern in this matter, or with respect to thee, the following was thy case; these the circumstances and situation in which thou wert:

*thy thoughts came into thy mind upon thy bed, which should come to pass hereafter*; as he lay on his bed, either sleeping or waking, very probably the latter, his thoughts were employed about this great monarchy he had erected, and what would be the issue of it; and was very desirous of knowing what successors he should have in it, and how long it would continue, and what would be the fate of it; when he fell asleep upon this, and had a dream agreeable to his waking thoughts:

*and he that revealeth secrets*: a periphrasis of the God of heaven, as in the preceding verse:

*maketh known unto thee what shall come to pass*; this he did by the dream he gave him, though he had forgot it; and now by restoring that, and the interpretation of it, by Daniel.

**Ver. 30.** *But as for me*, etc.] As to the part I have in this affair, I can ascribe nothing to myself; it is all owing to the God of heaven, the recovery of the dream, and its interpretation:

*this secret is not revealed to me for any wisdom that I have more than any living*; not that he thought or affirmed that he had more wisdom than any man living, as the Vulgate Latin version and others suggest; but as the king might think he had, by revealing this secret to him, and that it was owing to that; but that he had not such wisdom, and, whatever he had, which was the gift of God, it was not through that, or any sagacity and penetration into things he was master of, superior to others, that it was revealed to him; and therefore would not have it placed to any such account; this he said in great modesty, and in order to set the king right, and that God might have all the glory:

*but for their sakes that shall make known the interpretation to the king*; meaning not only himself, and his companions concerned with him, that they might be promoted to honour and dignity, but the whole body of the Jews in captivity, with which they were in connection; that they might meet with more civil and kind treatment, for the sake of the God they worshipped, who revealed this secret to the king: or, “but that they might make known”, etc.<sup>f94</sup>; the three Persons in the Godhead, as some; the angels, as others; the ministers of God, as Aben Ezra: or rather it may be rendered impersonally,

*but that the interpretation might be made known to the king*<sup>f95</sup> as by the Vulgate Latin, as it follows:

*and that thou mightest know the thoughts of thy heart*; both what they were, which were forgotten, and the meaning of them.

**Ver. 31.** *Thou, O king, sawest*, etc.] Or, “wast seeing”<sup>f96</sup>; not with the eyes of his body, but in his fancy and imagination; as he was dreaming, he thought he saw such an appearance, so it seemed to him, as follows:

*and behold a great image*; or, “one great image”<sup>f97</sup>; not painted, but a massive statue made of various metals, as is afterwards declared: such, though not so large as this, as the king had been used to see, which he had in his garden and palace, and which he worshipped; but this was of a monstrous size, a perfect colossus, and but one, though it consisted of various parts; it was in the form of a great man, as Saadiah and Jacchides observe; and represented each of the monarchies of this world governed by

men; and these being expressed by an image, show how vain and delusory, how frail and transitory, are the kingdoms of the earth, and the glory of them:

*this great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee*: right over against him, and near him, as he thought; so that he had a full view of it, and saw it at its full length and size, and its dazzling lustre, arising from the various metals of gold, silver, brass, and iron, it was made of; which was exceeding bright, and made it look very majestic:

*and the form thereof was terrible*; either there was something in the countenance menacing and horrid; or the whole form, being so gigantic, struck the king with admiration, and was even terrible to him; and it may denote the terror that kings, especially arbitrary and despotic ones, strike their subjects with.

**Ver. 32.** *This image's head was of fine gold*, etc.] The prophet begins with the superior part of this image, and descends to the lower, because of the order and condition of the monarchies it represents: this signifies the Babylonian monarchy, as afterwards explained; called the "head", being the first and chief of the monarchies; and compared to "fine gold", because of the glory, excellency, and duration of it:

*his breast and his arms of silver*; its two arms, including its hands and its breast, to which they were joined, were of silver, a metal of less value than gold; designing the monarchy of the Medes and Persians, which are the two arms, and which centred in Cyrus, who was by his father a Persian, by his mother a Mede; and upon whom, after his uncle's death, the whole monarchy devolved:

*his belly and his thighs of brass*; a baser metal still; this points at the Macedonian or Grecian monarchy, set up by Alexander, signified by the "belly", for intemperance and luxury; as the two "thighs" denote his principal successors, the Selucidae and Lagidae, the Syrian and Egyptian kings; and these of brass, because of the sounding fame of them, as Jerom.

**Ver. 33.** *His legs of iron*, etc.] A coarser metal than the former, but very strong; and designs the strong and potent monarchy of the Romans, the last of the four monarchies, governed chiefly by two consuls: and was divided, in the times of Theodosius, into the eastern and western empire, which may be signified by the two legs:

*his feet part of iron and part of clay*<sup>f98</sup>; or some “of them of iron, and some of them of clay” that is, the ten toes of the feet, which represent the ten kingdoms the western empire was divided into, some of which were potent, others weak; for this cannot be understood of the same feet and toes being a mixture, composed partly of one, and partly of the other; since iron and clay will not mix together, (~~20B~~ Daniel 2:43) and will not agree with the form of expression. Jerom interprets this part of the vision of the image to the same sense, who lived about the time when it was fulfilling; for in his days was the irruption of the barbarous nations into the empire; who often speaks of them in his writings<sup>f99</sup>, and of the Roman empire being in a weak and ruinous condition on the account of them. His comment on this text is this,

“the fourth kingdom, which clearly belongs to the Romans, is the iron that breaks and subdues all things; but his feet and toes are partly iron, and partly clay, which is most manifestly verified at this time; for as in the beginning nothing was stronger and harder than the Roman empire, so in the end of things nothing weaker; when both in civil wars, and against divers nations, we stand in need of the help of other barbarous people.”

And whereas he had been blamed for giving this sense of the passage, he vindicates himself elsewhere by saying<sup>f100</sup>,

“if, in the exposition of the image, and the difference of its feet and toes, I interpret the iron and clay of the Roman kingdom, which the Scripture foreshows should be first and then weak, let them not impute, it to me, but to the prophet; for so we must not flatter princes, as that the truth of the holy Scriptures should be neglected; nor is the general disputation of one person an injury;”

that is, of any great moment to the government.

**Ver. 34.** *Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands*, etc.] Or, “wast seeing”<sup>f101</sup>; the king continued looking upon the image that stood before him, as he thought, as long as he could see it, till he saw a “stone”: an emblem of the Messiah, as it often is in Scripture, (~~04B~~ Genesis 49:24 ~~08B~~ Psalm 118:22 ~~20B~~ Isaiah 8:14 28:16 ~~30B~~ Zechariah 3:8), because of his strength, firmness, and duration; and so it is interpreted here by many Jewish writers, ancient and modern, as well as by Christians; and also of his kingdom, or of him in his kingly office; (see ~~20B~~ Daniel 2:44). In an ancient

book<sup>f102</sup> of theirs, written by R. Simeon Ben Jochai, the author interprets this stone, cut out of the mountain without hands, to be the same with him who in (<sup><0424></sup>Genesis 49:24), is called the Shepherd and Stone of Israel; as it is by Saadiah Gaon, a later writer; and in another of their writings<sup>f103</sup>, reckoned by them very ancient, it is said, that the ninth king (for they speak of ten) shall be the King Messiah, who shall reign from one end of the world to the other, according to that passage, “the stone which smote the image”, etc. (<sup><0235></sup>Daniel 2:35) and in one of their ancient Midrashes<sup>f104</sup>, or expositions, it is interpreted of the King Messiah: and so R. Abraham Seba<sup>f105</sup>, on those words, “from thence is the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel”, (<sup><0424></sup>Genesis 49:24); observes, the King Messiah does not come but by the worthiness of Jacob, as it is said, “thou sawest, till that stone cut out without hands, because of Jacob”. This is said to be “cut out without hands”; that is, the hands of men, as Saadiah and Jacchiades explain it; not cut out by workmen, as stones usually are out of quarries; but was taken out by an unseen hand, and by invisible power, even purely divine: this may point at the wondrous incarnation of Christ, who was made of a woman, of a virgin, without the help of a man, by the power of God; (see <sup><S082></sup>Hebrews 8:2 9:11), and at his kingdom, which was like a single stone at first, very small, and was cut out and separated from the world, and set up and maintained, not by human, but divine power, and being of a spiritual nature, (<sup><0424></sup>2 Corinthians 5:1 <sup><S021></sup>Colossians 2:11):

*which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces*; this seems to represent this image as in a plain, when, from a mountain hanging over it, a stone is taken by an invisible hand, and rolled upon it; which falling on its feet, breaks them to pieces, and in course the whole statue falls, and is broken to shivers; this respects what is yet to be done in the latter day, when Christ will take to himself his great power, and reign, and subdue, and destroy the ten kings or kingdoms that are given to antichrist, and him himself, and the remainder of the several monarchies, and in which they will all end.

**Ver. 35.** *Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together*, etc.] The feet, the basis of the image, being broken, the whole body of it fell, and with its own weight was broken to pieces; an emblem this of the utter dissolution of all the monarchies and kingdoms of the earth, signified by these several metals:

*and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors;* which is exceeding small and light:

*and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them;* for the several metals, and the monarchies signified by them, which were no more: the allusion is to the manner of winnowing corn in the eastern countries upon mountains, when the chaff was carried away by the wind, and seen no more:

*and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the earth;* Christ's kingdom, from small beginnings, has increased, and will more and more, until the whole earth is subject to it: this began to have its accomplishment in the first times of the Gospel, especially when the Roman empire, as Pagan, was destroyed by Constantine, and the kingdom of Christ was set up in it; and it received a further accomplishment at the time of the Reformation, when Rome Papal had a deadly blow given it, and the Gospel of Christ was spread in several nations and kingdoms; but it will receive its full accomplishment when both the eastern and western antichrists shall be destroyed, and the kingdoms of this world shall become the Lord's and his Christ's, (~~Gen~~ Revelation 11:15).

**Ver. 36.** *This is the dream,* etc.] Which Nebuchadnezzar dreamed, but had forgot, and was now punctually and exactly made known to him; for the truth of which he is appealed unto; for, no doubt, by this account, the whole of his dream, and every circumstance of it, were brought to his mind:

*and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king;* for though both the dream, and the interpretation of it, were only revealed to Daniel; yet he joins his companions with him, partly because they were now present, and chiefly because they were assisting to him in prayer for it.

**Ver. 37.** *Thou, O king, art a king of kings,* etc.] Having many kings subject and tributary to him, or would have; as the kings of Judah, Ammon, Moab, and others, and who were even his captives and prisoners; (see ~~Gen~~ Jeremiah 52:32). Jarchi and Saadiah join this with the next clause, "the God of heaven", and interpret it of him thus, thou, O King Nebuchadnezzar, "the King of kings, who is the God of heaven, hath given unto thee", etc.; so some in the Talmud understand it of God<sup>f106</sup>; but this is contrary to the accents:

*for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory*; that is, a very powerful, strong, and glorious kingdom, famous for its mighty armies, strong fortresses, and great riches, from all which the king had great honour and glory; and this he had not by his ancestors, or his own military skill and prowess, but by the favour and gift of God.

**Ver. 38.** *And wheresoever the children of men dwell*, etc.] Not in every part of the habitable world, but in every part of his large dominion inhabited by men:

*the beasts of the field, and the fowls of the heaven, hath he given into thine hand*; all parks, chases, and forests (so that none might hunt or hawk without his permission), as well as the persons and habitations of men, were at his dispose; showing the despotic power and sovereign sway he had over his subjects:

*and hath made thee ruler over all*: men, beasts, and fowl: he not only conquered the Egyptians, Tyrians, and Jews, and other nations about them; but, according to Megasthenes<sup>f107</sup> he exceeded Hercules in strength, and conquered Lybia and Iberia, and carried colonies of them into Pontus; and, as Strabo<sup>f108</sup> says, carried his arms as far as the pillars of Hercules:

*thou art this head of gold*; or who was represented by the golden head of the image he had seen in his dream; not he personally only, but his successors Evilmerodach and Belshazzar, and the Babylonish monarchy, as possessed by them; for this refers not back to the Assyrian monarchy, from the time of Nimrod, but to its more flourishing condition in Nebuchadnezzar and his sons; called a “head”, because the first of the monarchies; and golden, in comparison of other kingdoms then in being, and because of the riches of it, which the Babylonians were covetous of; hence Babylon is called the golden city, (<sup>2340</sup>Isaiah 14:4) and it may be, because not so wicked and cruel to the Jews as the later monarchies were: from hence the poets have been thought by some to have taken their notion of the golden, silver, and iron ages, as growing worse and worse; but this distinction is observed by Hesiod, who lived many years before this vision was seen.

**Ver. 39.** *And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee*, etc.] This is the kingdom of the Medes and Persians, signified by the breasts and arms of silver, an inferior metal to gold; this rose up, not immediately after the death of Nebuchadnezzar, but after his successors, when Belshazzar his

grandson was slain, and Babylon taken by Cyrus; now though this monarchy was as large at the first as the Babylonish monarchy, nay, larger, as it had Media and Persia added to it, new conquests made by Cyrus, and was as rich and as opulent in his times; yet in later kings it shrunk much, in its peace and prosperity, grandeur and glory, as in the times of Cambyses and the Magi; and especially in the reigns of Cyrus the younger, and of Artaxerxes Mnemon; and at last ceased in Darius Codomannus, conquered by Alexander; and was worse than the former monarchy, being more cruel under some of its princes to the people of the Jews:

*and another third kingdom of brass*: this is the Grecian monarchy, which succeeded the Persian, and therefore called the third kingdom, and is signified by the belly and thighs of brass of the image (see Gill on ~~“2013”~~ Daniel 2:32”);

*which shall bear rule over all the earth*; not the land of Israel, as Saadiah restrains it, but the whole world, as Alexander did, at least in his own opinion; who thought he had conquered the whole world, and wept because there was not another to conquer; and it is certain he did subdue a great part of it. Justin<sup>f109</sup> says,

“that when he was returning to Babylon from the uttermost shores of the sea, it was told him that the embassies of the Carthaginians and other cities of Africa, and also of Spain, Sicily, France, Sardinia, and some out of Italy, were waiting for his coming; the terror of his name so struck the whole world, that all nations complimented him as their king destined for them.”

And Pliny reports<sup>f110</sup> of Macedonia, that

“it formerly (that is, in the times of Alexander) governed the world; this (says he) passed over Asia, Armenia, Iberia, Albania, Cappadocia, Syria, Egypt, Taurus, and Caucasus; this ruled over the Bactrians, Medes, and Persians, possessing the whole east; this also was conqueror of India.”

**Ver. 40.** *And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron*, etc.] This is not the kingdom of the Lagidae and Seleucidae, the successors of Alexander, as some have thought; for these are designed by the thighs in the third kingdom; and, besides, the kingdom of Christ was to arise in the time of this fourth kingdom, which it did not in that; nor the kingdom of Gog, or the empire of the Turks, as Saadiah, Aben Ezra, and Jarchi; but the Roman



empire, which is compared to iron for its strength, firmness, and duration in itself; and for its power over other nations; and also for its cruelty to the Jews above all others, in utterly destroying their city, temple, and nation:

*forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things*; so this kingdom has subdued and conquered all others; not the Jews only, but the Persians, Egyptians, Syrians, Africans, French, Germans, yea, all the world: *and as iron that breaketh*, or “even as iron breaketh all these”,

*shall it break in pieces, and bruise*; all nations and kingdoms; hence Rome has been called the mistress of the world, and its empire in Scripture is called the whole world, (~~411~~Luke 2:1 ~~678~~Revelation 17:18).

**Ver. 41.** *And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potter’s clay, and part of iron*, etc.] That is, some of the toes of the feet were of iron, and others of them of clay: these toes, which are ten, as the toes of men are, design the ten kings or kingdoms, into which the western Roman empire was divided, by the coming in of the Goths, and Hunns, and Vandals, into it; and are the same with the ten horns of the beast, and the ten kings which gave their kingdoms to it, (~~601~~Revelation 13:1 17:12,13,17), (see Gill on “~~2072~~Daniel 7:24”), some of which were strong like iron, and continued long; others were like clay, and of a less duration:

*the kingdom shall be divided*; which some understand of the division of it into the eastern and western empires; but rather it means the division of the latter into the ten kingdoms, set up in it by the barbarous nations. Abarbinel and Jacchiades interpret it of the Roman empire being divided into Mahometans and Christians, very wrongly:

*but there shall be in it of the strength the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay*; notwithstanding this irruption and inundation of the northern nations into the empire; yet still retained, something of the strength and power of the old Romans, which were mingled among those barbarous nations, comparable to miry clay.

**Ver. 42.** *And as the toes of the feet were part of iron and part of clay*, etc.] Or some of them of iron, and so were strong and powerful, as some of these kingdoms were; and some of clay, and so were weak and easily crushed, and did not stand long:

*so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken*; this is not unfitly interpreted by some of the two fold power which has prevailed in these ten kingdoms, through the policy of the pope of Rome, the secular and ecclesiastic power; the latter often encroaching upon and prevailing over the other, which has tended to the weakening of these states.

**Ver. 43.** *And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay*, etc.] That is, iron among the clay; otherwise iron and clay will not mix and cement together, as is affirmed in the latter part of the verse; but as some of these toes were of iron, and others of clay, or some part of them were iron, and some part of them of clay,

*they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men*; the Romans shall mix with people of other and many nations that shall come in among them, and unite in setting up kingdoms; or these kingdoms set up shall intermarry with each other, in order to strengthen their alliances, and support their interests: thus France, Spain, Portugal, and other nations; those of the royal families marry with each other, with such views:

*but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay*; and yet these ties of marriage and of blood shall not cause them to cleave to and abide by one another; but ambition and worldly interests will engage them to take part with each other's enemies, or to go to war with one another, to the weakening and hurting each other; and thus the potsherds of the earth will dash one another to pieces; and those who are more powerful, like the iron, will trample the weaker like miry clay under their feet.

**Ver. 44.** *And in the days of these kings*, etc. Not of the Babylonian, Persian, and Grecian kings; nor, indeed, of the old Roman kings, or emperors; but in the days of these ten kings, or kingdoms, into which the Roman empire is divided, signified by the ten toes, of different power and strength. Indeed the kingdom of Christ began to be set up in the times of Augustus Caesar, under whom Christ was born; and of Tiberius, under whom he was crucified; and was continued and increased in the reigns of others, until it obtained very much in the times of Constantine; and, after it suffered a diminution under the Papacy, was revived at the Reformation; but will not be set up in its glory until Christ has overcome the ten kings, or kingdoms, and put it into their hearts to hate and burn the antichristian whore; and when she and all the antichristian states will be destroyed by the pouring out of the vials: and then in their days

*shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed;* this is the kingdom of the Messiah, as is owned by both ancient and modern Jews: so it is said in an ancient book<sup>f111</sup> of theirs,

“in the time of the King Messiah, Israel shall be one nation in the earth, and one people to the holy blessed God; as it is written, in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, etc.”;

and in another of their writings<sup>f112</sup>, esteemed very ancient, it is said,

“the Ishmaelites shall do fifteen things in the earth in the last days; the last of which mentioned is, they shall erect an edifice in the temple; at length two brothers shall rise up against them, and in their days shall spring up the branch of the Son of David; as it is said, in the days of these kings, etc.”;

and both Jarchi and Aben Ezra interpret this kingdom of the kingdom of the Messiah; and so Jacchiades, a much later writer, says the last kingdom is that of the Messiah: and another modern Jewish writer says<sup>f113</sup>, in the time of the King Messiah there shall be but one kingdom, and but one King; and this the King, the true Messiah; but the rest of the kingdoms and their kings shall not subsist in his time; as it is written, “in the days of these kings etc.”; which kingdom is no other than his church on earth, where he reigns; has his throne; holds forth his sceptre; gives out his laws, and is obeyed: and, though this is already in the world, yet it is not so visible, stable, and glorious, as it will be at the close of the fourth monarchy, which is meant by its being set up, confirmed, and established; and this will be done by the God of heaven, the Maker and possessor of it, and who dwells in it, and rules there, and over all the earth; and therefore Christ’s church, or kingdom, is often called the kingdom of heaven; and when it is thus established, it will ever remain visible; its glory will be no more eclipsed; and much less subverted and overthrown, by all the powers of earth and hell. Christ was set up as King from everlasting, and the elect of God were appointed and given him as a kingdom as early; and in and over these he reigns by his Spirit and grace in time, when they are effectually called, and brought into subjection to him; these are governed by laws of his making: he is owned by them as their Lord and King, and they yield a ready and cheerful obedience to his commands, and he protects and defends them from their enemies; and such a kingdom Christ has always had from the beginning of the world: but there was a particular time in which it was to

be set up in a more visible and glorious manner: it was set up in the days of his flesh on earth, though it came not with observation, or was attended with outward pomp and grandeur, it being spiritual, and not of this world; upon his ascension to heaven it appeared greater; he was made or declared Lord and Christ, and his Gospel was spread everywhere: in the times of Constantine it was still more glorious, being further extended, and enjoying great peace, liberty, and prosperity: in the times of Popish darkness, a stop was put to the progress of it, and it was reduced into a narrow compass; at the Reformation there was a fresh breaking of it out again, and it got ground in the world: in the spiritual reign it will be restored, and much more increased, through the Gospel being preached, and churches set up everywhere; and Christ's kingdom will then be more extensive; it will be from sea to sea and from the river to the ends of the earth; it will be more peaceable and prosperous; there will be none to annoy and do hurt to the subjects of it; it will be no more subject to changes and revolutions, but will be in a firm and stable condition; it will be established upon the top of the mountains, and be more visible and glorious, which is here meant by its being "set up": especially this will be the case in the Millennium state, when Christ shall reign before his ancients gloriously and they shall reign with him; and this will never be destroyed, but shall issue in the ultimate glory; for now all enemies will be put under the feet of Christ and his church; the beast and false prophet will be no more; and Satan will be bound during this time, and after that cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, with all the wicked angels and men:

*and the kingdom shall not be left to another people*; as the Babylonian monarchy to the Medes and Persians; the Persian monarchy to the Greeks; and the Grecian monarchy to the Romans; but this shall not be left to a strange people, but shall be given to the saints of the most High; (see <sup><2072></sup>Daniel 7:27):

*but it shall break in pieces and subdue all these kingdoms*; the Babylonian, Persian, Grecian, and Roman; the three former in the latter, which has swallowed them up; besides, the rest of these monarchies, which are all signified by beasts in an after prophecy, are said still to live, though their dominion is taken away, (<sup><2072></sup>Daniel 7:12), the same nations are in being, though not as monarchies, and have not the same denomination, and are in other hands; now these, and whatsoever kingdoms shall exist, when this shall be set up, shall be either broke to pieces, and utterly destroyed, or become subject to it; (see <sup><4654></sup>1 Corinthians 15:24):

*and it shall stand for ever*: throughout time in this world, and to all eternity in another; it will be an everlasting kingdom; which is interpreted by Irenaeus<sup>f114</sup>, an ancient Christian writer in the second century, of the resurrection of the just; his words are,

“the great God hath signified by Daniel things to come, and he hath confirmed them by the Son; and Christ is the stone which is cut out without hands, who shall destroy temporal kingdoms, and bring in an everlasting one, which is the resurrection of the just; for he saith, the God of heaven shall raise up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed;”

this is the first resurrection, which brings on the personal reign, in which the righteous shall reign with him a thousand years; (see ~~6615~~ Revelation 20:5,6).

**Ver. 45.** *Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands*, etc.] (see Gill on “~~2124~~ Daniel 2:34”)

*and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold*; of which the image was made he had seen in his dream; and which represented the several monarchies of the world in succession, and described their nature, condition, and circumstances, and the ruin of them; (See Gill on “~~2125~~ Daniel 2:35”)

*the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter*; after his own death, and in his own monarchy; and what will be the fate of succeeding ones; what will come to pass in each of the ages of time, and what will be done in the last days; what an everlasting kingdom there will be, when the kingdoms of this world shall be no more; and this the “great” God, who is great in knowledge as well as power, made known to him, which none else could; and by which he appears to be great, and above all gods, as Nebuchadnezzar afterwards owns; and which Daniel here suggests to him; (see ~~2361~~ Isaiah 45:21 46:9,10):

*and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure*; this is certainly the dream the king had dreamed, for the truth of which he appeals to him; and the interpretation of it given would be most surely and faithfully accomplished, on which he might depend; for since the dream had been so distinctly related to him, he had no room to doubt of the true interpretation of it.

**Ver. 46.** *Then the king Nebuchadnezzar fell upon his face, and worshipped Daniel,* etc.] Imagining there was something of divinity in him, that he could so exactly tell him his dream, which was past and gone; and give him the interpretation of it, respecting things to come, which he concluded none but God could do; and therefore, after the manner of the eastern people, threw himself prostrate to the earth, with his face to it, and gave religious adoration to Daniel; for that this cannot be understood of mere civil respect appears by his following orders; and had he not thought that Daniel was something more than a man, he, a proud monarch, would never have behaved in this manner to him; but, being struck with amazement at the relation of the dream, and the interpretation of it, he forgot what both he and Daniel were; the one a mighty king, the other a mere man, a servant, yea, a captive: this shows that he was not exasperated at the account of the fall of his monarchy, as might have been expected, but was filled with wonder at the revelation made:

*and commanded that they should offer an oblation and sweet odours unto him;* rising from the ground, he gave orders to his servants about him, some of whom might be the priests of Bel, that they would bring a meat offering, and incense with it, and offer them to him as to a god; but, though this was ordered, we do not read it was done; for it cannot be thought that Daniel, who had scrupled eating the king's food, and drinking his wine, lest he should be defiled, and afterwards chose rather to be cast into a den of lions than to omit prayer to God, would ever suffer such a piece of idolatrous worship to be paid to him; and though he could not hinder the king's prostration and adoration, which were very sudden; yet it is highly probable he reasoned with the king upon it, and earnestly desired that no such undue honours should be paid to him; declaring that this knowledge was not of himself, but of God, to whom the glory ought to be given.

**Ver. 47.** *The king answered unto Daniel,* etc.] By which it appears that Daniel interposed and expostulated with the king, and prevented the oblation to him as a god, and instructed him in the knowledge of the true God he ought to worship; as the following confession of the king more clearly shows:

*and said, of a truth it is, that your God is a God of gods;* the God of Daniel and his companions, and of the people of the Jews, to whom they belonged, is above all gods that are named and worshipped by men: this appeared at this time for the present, though it did not last long, as the

following chapter shows, a most glaring truth; that the God of Israel was above all his gods, and whom his magicians and people worshipped, and above all others:

*and a Lord of kings*; that rules over them, and disposes of them; sets them up and pulls them down at his pleasure; and transfers their kingdoms from one to another, as he learned by the interpretation of his dream, to which he may in this refer:

*and a revealer of secrets, seeing thou couldst reveal this secret*; of the dream, and the interpretation of it; which he could never have done, had not his God been a revealer of secrets, and revealed it to him.

**Ver. 48.** *Then the king made Daniel a great man*, etc.] Advanced him to posts of great honour and dignity he was a great man before in spiritual things, in which he was made great by the Lord; and now he was made a great man in worldly things, through the providence of God; those that honour him he will honour:

*and gave him many great gifts*: gifts great in value, and many in number; rich garments, gold, silver, precious stones, and large estates to support his honour and grandeur; and which Daniel accepted of, not merely for his own use, but to do good with to his poor brethren the Jews in captivity:

*and made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon*; the whole monarchy was divided into several provinces, over each of which was a deputy governor; this of Babylon was the chief of them, Babylon being the metropolis of the empire; the whole government of which, and all belonging to it, was given to Daniel; a proof of the king's high esteem for him:

*and chief of the governors over all the wise men of Babylon*; here was an university consisting of several colleges, over each of which there was a governor, and Daniel was the president of them all; or the principal or chancellor of the university: this office he might accept of, that he might have an opportunity of inculcating true knowledge, and of checking and correcting what was impious and unlawful.

**Ver. 49.** *Then Daniel requested of the king*, etc.] Being in his favour, he improved it to the advantage of his friends, whom he did not forget in his elevated state; but made suit to the king for them to be put into places of trust and honour, which the king listened to:

*and he set Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, over the affairs of the province of Babylon;* that is, under Daniel, who was made ruler over it; these were deputies under him, appointed to take care of some affairs, which would have been too troublesome to him, and would have took up too much of his time from court; where he chose to be, to improve his interest on behalf of the church of God. Deuteronomy Dieu thinks, from the use of the word in Chaldee, and from what answers to it in the Arabic language, that it was agriculture, the fruits of the field, and the revenues arising from thence, which these men had the care of: this Daniel got for them; that as they had assisted him in their prayers to God, to obtain the dream, and the interpretation of it, so they might share with him in his honours and profits he had on the account thereof; and probably he might suggest this to Nebuchadnezzar, which the more easily engaged him to grant the request:

*but Daniel sat in the gate of the king;* either as judge there, or to introduce persons into the king's presence: or it may be rendered, "in the king's court"<sup>f115</sup>; he was chief man at court, and always resided there; he was prime minister and privy counsellor: it was usual with the eastern nations to call their court a "port", as the Turks do at this day; the Ottoman court is called "the Port".