



In Daniel 2:36–43, we have the interpretation. *“You, oh king, are a king of kings.”* Now we know that there's only one ultimate King of kings. But again, Nebuchadnezzar ruled, and the dream had him as the head of gold. Gold is, of course, the most priceless of the metals that are mentioned. And so, he's called a king— *“a king of kings. For the God of heaven has given you a kingdom, power, strength, and glory.”* Now, you would think that this would humble him a little bit. *“I didn't get this because I am super smart. I didn't get it because I'm a great military commander. I didn't get it because of all of my battlefield brilliance. I got it because God gave it to me.”* Instead, as we're going to find out in the next chapter, he gets a big head about it and he builds the image that he saw in his dream. Now he wants everyone to bow down to it. And God's going to have to deal with him for that arrogance.

Daniel 2:38, *“Wherever the children of men dwell, or the beasts of the field and the birds of the heaven, He has given them into your hand, and has made you ruler over them all—you are this head of gold.”* So, remember the image was in the form of a man. The head was gold and then the chest and arms were silver. The torso was bronze. And then the legs were iron. The feet were iron mixed with clay. We'll see all of this in just a moment.

Daniel 2:39, *“But after you, shall rise another kingdom inferior to yours.”* That's going to be the Medo-Persian Empire. The gold represents Babylon; the silver, the Medo-Persian empire. And after the kingdom that's inferior, *“then another, a third kingdom of bronze, which shall rule over all the earth.”* This is the kingdom of Alexander. You know, Alexander didn't last very long. He came on the scene or came to prominence at the age of 20. When Alexander conquered the Middle Persian Empire, he went into battle with 50,000 troops. The Persians had 250,000 people on the battlefield.

Thanks to Alexander, as we read our New Testament, we realize that our New Testament was written in one of the most clear and explicit languages that the world has ever known. It was called the *koine* Greek. *“Koine,”* coming from the word for “common,” became the common language throughout the world. The reason it developed was that Alexander had to pull his forces together. You remember that there were several different Greek states, and those different Greek states spoke different languages. In order to command these troops, he had to have a language so that

when he spoke, they would know exactly what he wanted to do. And when he went into his first battle—his greatest battle, really, against the Medo-Persian empire—he pulled off a military maneuver that is still studied to this day, and it required a precise understanding on the part of all of his troops as to exactly what was going to happen. This is the kingdom of Alexander.

Then, of course, verse 40, *“the fourth kingdom shall be as strong as iron, inasmuch as iron breaks in pieces and shatters everything.”* Iron being the strongest of these metals, *“... like iron that crushes, that kingdom will break in pieces and crush all the others.”* This, of course, we know to be the Roman Empire. The Roman Empire had phenomenal military might. They had, however, perpetual administrative problems. In this area, they were not as strong as the kingdom of Nebuchadnezzar and, to a lesser extent, the kingdom of Alexander.

Daniel 2:41, *“Whereas you saw the feet and toes, partly of potter's clay and partly of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; yet the strength of the iron shall be in it, just as you saw the iron mixed with ceramic clay.”* What we're talking about now is the revived Roman Empire. This is the empire that will be established by Antichrist. This empire, I believe, is already in the formation stages. We see it developing. It's impossible for us at this point to pick out the ten toes. The ten toes, as you'll remember from the Book of Revelation and even later in Daniel, represent ten kingdoms; three of those kingdoms are uprooted by another king. This king will be the Antichrist. He will take over the control of those kingdoms and he will reign over the world, with a fist of iron. And it will be a horrible, horrible time to be alive.

Notice the iron and the ceramic clay in verse 43, which says, *“They will mingle with the seed of men.”* I want you to think about that little phrase. Who are *“they”*? Whoever they are, they're not men. *“They will mingle with the seed of men.”* I believe what we're going to see in the coming of Antichrist is, and I truly think that we're seeing it already worldwide, we are seeing an influx of fallen-angel activity—demonic activity like we have never, ever seen before. So, *“the toes of iron mixed with clay,”* will mingle with the seed of man. And I think it's something on the equivalent of what we saw back prior to the flood. We're going to see the mingling—whatever form that takes, whether it's simply working together—a physical infiltration of the human race. He doesn't tell us here. He simply lets us know. But notice, *“they will not adhere to one another, just as iron does not mix with clay.”* Ultimately, this whole experiment is going to collapse and self-destruct.

Daniel 2:44, *“in the days of these kings.”* So here we are living in this history. How close we are to the Rapture of the Church, the Tribulation Period? We don't know. But it must be close. *“In the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.”* So here, we're talking about the kingdom of Jesus Christ.

Daniel 2:45, *“Inasmuch as you saw that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands ...”* How many passages do we have where Jesus is called the Stone? He is *“the Rock of our salvation”* in the Psalms. He is *“the Rock that followed”* the children of Israel through the wilderness in 1 Corinthians 10:4. He is *“the Rock”* that is *“a stumbling stone”* to the unbeliever, but it's *“the Stone”* on which anyone who falls will turn to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. He's referred to as *“the Stone”* in many, many ways and places. Verse 45 concludes, *“... it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold.”* He works his way up the image from the feet. *“The great*

*God is made known to the king what will come to pass after this. The dream is certain, and its interpretation is sure."*

What Daniel has just done is laid out a schematic, if you will, or a diagram of history from 500 B.C. until eternity future. Some epochs are not included. The Church Age is not included. There are things that have been revealed from the time of the Apostles that Daniel was not aware of, but even for Daniel, what he knows at this point is very little compared to what he's going to know at the end of chapters 11 and 12, because God is going to continue to give more and more information.

Daniel 2:46, *"Then King Nebuchadnezzar fell on his face, prostrate before Daniel, and commanded that they should present an offering and incense to him."* Daniel, you'll remember, always turned away any recognition again and again and again. He stated that these dreams "are not revealed to me because of anything in me, because I'm greater than any other person." But you know, you can't stop people from doing what they want to do. And so here they gave this offering to him. I'm sure he was not at all pleased with it.

Daniel 2:47, *"The King answered Daniel, and said, 'Truly your God is the God of gods, the Lord of kings.'"* Now that's a wonderful thing to say, but in the next chapter we'll see, he turns right around and continues with his inflated head and his puffed-up idea about who he is and what power he has. God is, of course, going to break that in chapter four. And as Nebuchadnezzar says here, *"Your God is the God of gods and the Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, since you could reveal this secret."* We need to bear in mind that God was doing this not just for the salvation of Nebuchadnezzar, He was doing it for the millions (and I believe millions) who, as a result of Nebuchadnezzar's salvation, came to the knowledge of the Redeemer of Israel. Many, many millions were saved during this time. These messages that Daniel gave would have passed into the Medo-Persian Empire, the Greek Empire, and the Roman Empire. So, they were passed down repeatedly. By the way, in Matthew two, why did the Magi, who came from the East, know that the Savior was coming? Well, we're going to find out right at the end here.

Daniel 2:48, *"Then the king promoted Daniel and gave him many great gifts; and he made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon."* The Empire of Babylon was divided into various provinces. The province immediately around Babylon was called Babylon; Daniel was put in charge of that province. He was second only to King Nebuchadnezzar, just as Joseph was to Pharaoh. It says he became *"the chief administrator over all the wise men of Babylon."* He began to teach them so that for 500 years there were always believers among these wise men. Even after the Medo-Persians took over, even after Greece took over, even after Rome took over, the message kept passing on until finally, in Matthew chapter two, they showed up and they ask a question, *"Where is He who is born the King of the Jews?"*

Daniel 2:49, *"Also, Daniel petitioned the king, and he set Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego over the affairs of the province of Babylon; But Daniel sat in the gate of the king."* The gate was the place where, basically, the rulers of the land would sit. People would bring their problems, people would bring their requests, their complaints—whatever. If they had law cases to solve, they would bring them to the gate. To be the chief sitting in the gate would be the equivalent of, probably, our Chief of the Supreme Court—our Chief Justice. That was the position that Daniel held. But isn't it interesting, he didn't forget his friends. Daniel petitioned the king for Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego that they who were in the background, but they who faithfully prayed, they played a very

big part in God revealing the message to Daniel. So, here's a little lesson: When God promotes you, don't forget those who helped you get promoted.

We end with a tale of two rulers. One is Daniel, now a ruler in Babylon, and the other is Nebuchadnezzar. What's the difference between the two? One is exalted by God and humbles himself. One has been exalted by God, and He tries to use it to promote himself. God doesn't take kindly when we take His gifts for ourselves. We need to remember this. Humility and arrogance are the ultimate issues of everyday life. Humility will always lead us to faith. Arrogance will always lead us off track. Stay small, stay humble. As the Psalmist says, "I would rather be a doorkeeper in the Temple of God than to be among the mansions of the great"—to be a doorkeeper, to be a servant, to just play a humble part.