

Notes for the Ones Called-Out to Meet

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A Stone That Will Crush All Kingdoms

by Dan Trygg

“In the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which will never be destroyed, and that kingdom will not be left for another people; it will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, but it will itself endure forever. ⁴⁵ Inasmuch as you saw that a stone was cut out of the mountain without hands and that it crushed the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver and the gold, the great God has made known to the king what will take place in the future; so the dream is true and its interpretation is trustworthy.”

Daniel 2:44-45

The first verse of the book of Daniel tells us how he and his friends, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, were taken as captives when Nebuchadnezzar laid siege to Jerusalem in 605 B.C. The Babylonian king commanded his chief official, Ashpenaz, to “bring in some of the sons of Israel, including some of the royal family and of the nobles, youths in whom was no defect, who were good-looking, showing intelligence in every branch of wisdom, endowed with understanding and discerning knowledge, and who had ability for serving in the king's court; and he ordered him to teach them the literature and language of the Chaldeans” (Dan 1:3-4). (The land was Chaldea, but the capitol was Babylon.)

In the second year of his reign, Nebuchadnezzar was troubled by dreams he had. He called together the magicians, conjurers, sorcerers, and the wise men to explain the meaning of his dreams. When they asked him to tell them his dreams, however, **he insisted that they tell him his dreams!** He reasoned that unless they had the ability to tell him *what* he dreamt, he could not trust their ability to interpret its *meaning*. When they told him that he was being unreasonable, ...that no one could be expected to know the thoughts and dreams of his mind, except maybe the gods..., he became even more angry and insistent. In fact, **he declared that if they could not tell him his dream, he would have them all put to death as charlatans! He was not about to be taken advantage of by them!**

Daniel and his friends were listed among the wise men who would be destined for a death sentence. **When Daniel heard about it, he inquired more about what the issues were, and he asked the king that some time be granted to them to be able to inquire of their God, Yahweh.** Having been granted that, **he informed his friends so that they could pray that God would show them compassion by revealing the king's dream to them. *God revealed the dream and its interpretation to Daniel through a vision in the night.*** Daniel blessed and worshiped God as the One who removes kings, and establishes kings, ...who gives wisdom to the wise, and knowledge to ones-knowing-with-insight, ...who reveals unfathomable and hidden things, ...who knows what is in the darkness, and the Light is with Him. And he praised and thanked God for making known to him what he had requested regarding the king's dream.

Then Daniel went to Arioch, the king's commander, who was appointed to kill the wise men of Babylon, and told him to not kill them, but to bring him before the king. He would be able to tell the meaning of the king's dream. So Arioch hurriedly brought Daniel before the king, with this announcement. The king asked if he could declare to him *the dream itself*, and also *its meaning*. **Daniel pointed out that none of the other wise men, conjurers, magicians and diviners were able to do this, BUT “...there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries, and He has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what will take place in the future”** (Dan. 2:27-29). He also said, “But as for me, this mystery has not been revealed to me for any wisdom residing in me more than in any other living man, but for the purpose of making the interpretation known to the king, and that you may understand the thoughts of your mind” (Dan. 2:30).

Then Daniel recounted the king's dream: “You, O king, were looking and behold, there was a single great statue; that statue, which was large and of extraordinary splendor, was standing in front of you, and its appearance was awesome. ³² The head of that statue was made of fine gold, its breast and its arms of silver, its belly and its thighs of bronze, ³³ its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay. ³⁴ You continued looking until a stone was cut out without hands, and it struck the statue on its feet of iron and clay, and crushed them. ³⁵ Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver and the gold were crushed all at the same time, and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away so that not a trace of them was found. But the stone that struck the statue became a great mountain and filled the whole earth. ³⁶ This was the dream” -- (Dan 2:31-36).

As **Daniel went on to the interpretation**, he said: “You, O king, are the king of kings, to whom the God of heaven has given the kingdom, the power, the strength, and the glory; ³⁸ and wherever the sons of men dwell, *or* the beasts of the field, or the birds of the sky, He has given them into your hand and has caused you to rule over them all. You are the head of gold. ³⁹ And after you there will arise another kingdom inferior to you, then another third kingdom of bronze, which will rule over all the earth. ⁴⁰ Then there will be a fourth kingdom as strong as iron; inasmuch as iron

crushes and shatters all things, so, like iron that breaks in pieces, it will crush and break all these in pieces.⁴¹ And in that you saw the feet and toes, partly of potter's clay and partly of iron, it will be a divided kingdom; but it will have in it the toughness of iron, inasmuch as you saw the iron mixed with common clay.⁴² And as the toes of the feet were partly of iron and partly of pottery, so some of the kingdom will be strong and part of it will be brittle.⁴³ And in that you saw the iron mixed with common clay, they will combine with one another in the seed of men; but they will not adhere to one another, even as iron does not combine with pottery.⁴⁴ And in the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which will never be destroyed, and that kingdom will not be left for another people; it will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, but it will itself endure forever.⁴⁵ Inasmuch as you saw that a stone was cut out of the mountain without hands and that it crushed the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold, the great God has made known to the king what will take place in the future; so the dream is true, and its interpretation is trustworthy" (Dan 2:37-45).

When King Nebuchadnezzar heard Daniel recount the dream, and give the interpretation, he fell on his face and did homage to Daniel. "The king answered Daniel and said, 'Surely your God is a God of gods and a Lord of kings and a revealer of mysteries, since you have been able to reveal this mystery.'⁴⁸ Then the king promoted Daniel and gave him many great gifts, and he made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon and chief prefect over all the wise men of Babylon.⁴⁹ And Daniel made request of the king, and he appointed Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego over the administration of the province of Babylon, while Daniel was at the king's court." (Dan 2:47-49).

What do we learn from Nebuchadnezzar's dream? God showed him that **there would be four kingdoms, beginning with Nebuchadnezzar.** The change in composition of the metals seems to shift from the most valuable to less valuable, but stronger. **Each would replace the kingdom that was before it.** Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom would eventually be conquered by the Medes and Persians. That kingdom would eventually be conquered by Alexander the Great, and ruled by his generals. Then the Romans would defeat the Greeks, and have an empire comprised of many sub-kingdoms. **The fourth kingdom would be as tough as iron but also as brittle as clay.** The mixture of clay and iron seems to be a reference to combining many peoples under one empire, but, in the end, factiousness remained, and localized peoples did not fully commit to the loyalty of Rome. There was much infighting, feuds between families and people-groups, and political intrigue and power struggles for leadership.

Here is the critical part for our study: "In the days of those kings (the kings of the fourth kingdom), the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which will never be destroyed, ...it will never be displaced by another kingdom. It will crush and put to an end all these other kingdoms, but it will endure forever." This is an amazing prophecy! It is about a kingdom that God Himself will initiate, ...a "stone cut from the mountain without hands"..., that would become a mountain that will fill the entire earth." "In the days of that fourth kingdom...", the kingdom of Rome, is the time revealed in this prophecy when God will set up a kingdom which will never be destroyed. **What other kingdom was initiated by God, without human effort, during the time of Roman dominion, that still exists today? What other kingdom has outlasted all of these kingdoms, ...and every other kingdom since then..., and is filling the earth?**

We saw how David, in Psalm 145:13, declared that God's Kingdom is an everlasting kingdom. That was about 1000 B.C. Then, Isaiah, in 732 B.C., prophesied that a child would be given who would be called Mighty God, Everlasting Father, and would sit on David's throne over a kingdom that would **endlessly increase**, without limit of time or geography, and God's zeal would bring this about (Isa. 9:6,7). **And now, here, in 604 B.C., God gives a dream to a pagan king, ...and independently makes known that same revelation to a Jewish captive in Babylon, to the amazement and wonder of that king, and tells of a kingdom initiated by God which will never end, will spread through all the world, and will not ever be supplanted by another kingdom.** This vision even indicates a time reference concerning when this Kingdom of God would be established, "...during the days of those kings (the kings of the fourth major world power from Nebuchadnezzar's vision).

No wonder that Nebuchadnezzar exclaimed, "Surely your God is a God of gods and a Lord of kings and a revealer of mysteries (Dan 2:47)!! Not only did He reveal this vision to King Nebuchadnezzar, but **through this very event, God also placed Daniel in a position of administrative authority and fame, to guarantee that this revelation would be recorded, preserved and disseminated to not only the Jewish people, but also to the nations around the world, and throughout history! Truly, God is a Revealer of Mysteries, ...the Mystery of the Kingdom of God!**

Through this experience, ...this dream God gave initially to Nebuchadnezzar, ...and the amazing and unusual way God revealed the same dream to Daniel in a night vision, along with the interpretation..., God propels this bold and radical message front and center before the entire world: In the days of "the fourth kingdom", He was going to initiate a Kingdom that will start small, but will eventually fill the earth. It will crush and displace all these other kingdoms, and will itself never end, or be displaced and replaced by any other kingdom. This Kingdom of God will be the Ultimate Kingdom, ...the last kingdom standing..., and it will endure forever.