

THE WONDER OF DIVINE REVELATION

Daniel 2:1-34

February 12, 2017

“Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.” II Peter 1:20, 21

Daniel 2 reports the dream of King Nebuchadnezzar II, which revealed the course of history that would follow his reign. The dream and its meaning, and all the attending circumstances, surpass amazing. All exclamations fall short of its wonder. It is, above all else, the wonder of divine revelation.

I. The Wonder of its Process: Revelation, Inspiration, Illumination

Nebuchadnezzar was an idolatrous, superstitious man. Superstition ascribed divine meaning to dreams, thus his dream troubled him greatly, and he sought its meaning. Convinced that he could not trust his advisors, he contrived a scheme to squelch their anticipated lies. Their ignorance gave entrance to Daniel, the one man in all the world who was able to inform the king. Daniel was still very young, probably having just completed his three-year training period (1:5). These events catapulted into enduring prominence.

Revelation: A pagan king’s dream was God’s means of revealing divine truth. Inspiration: An inerrant interpreter was provided to make its meaning known. Illumination: The king, his inferiors, and all humanity to follow was/is confronted by the Word of God. Its mystery, accuracy, power and glory shine forth. (Romans 10:13-15; Acts 8:31, 32; Numbers 22-24)

II. The Wonder of its Content

The image in Nebuchadnezzar’s dream had a golden head, silver arms and breast, brass mid-section and thighs, iron legs and feet of mixed iron and clay. Daniel revealed that it represented Nebuchadnezzar’s empire and three successive empires. Each would be inferior to its predecessor, although exhibiting greater strength, as indicated by the metals from which the image was made. Each would be a human achievement, just as each metal was crafted by man from natural resources of the planet. Yet all would fall, crushed to powder as fine as chaff and carried away as by the wind. Nothing would be left of their power and glory. (Psalm 1:4, 5; Isaiah 17:13)

The history of civilization is the fulfillment of this dream. Babylon fell to the Medo-Persian Empire, which was supplanted by the Greeks, whom the Roman Empire replaced. No replacement for Rome arose, but from its fragmented iron/clay feet, modern civilization has developed. The revelation made via Nebuchadnezzar’s dream has been borne out by human history.

III. The Wonder of its Finale

A rough mountain stone, uncut by man, crushed the statue’s feet, destroying it entirely. This is the King of Kings, unto whom every empire will submit, before whom all emperors will bow.

His coming established a kingdom that will stand forever, exhibiting the glory of its king and the emptiness of all human empires and rulers. (Psalm 118:22; Isaiah 8:14, 28:16; Matthew 21:42-44; Acts 4:11; I Peter 2:4-8)