

“The King of Kings”
Daniel 2:24-49
(Preached at Trinity, March 9, 2014)

I'm supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord's Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

Disclaimer: These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I'll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. **Chapter 2** opened with some unusual and troublesome dreams. God gave Nebuchadnezzar dreams prophesying important events to come, only Nebuchadnezzar did not understand the meaning of the dreams.
Daniel 2:1 NAU - "Nebuchadnezzar had dreams; and his spirit was troubled and his sleep left him."
2. The dreams were so troubling Nebuchadnezzar could not sleep so he called in his wise men. They answer,
Daniel 2:4 NAU - "O king, live forever! Tell the dream to your servants, and we will declare the interpretation."
3. But they could not interpret the dreams so the king ordered the deaths of them all!
Daniel 2:13 NAU - " So the decree went forth that the wise men should be slain; and they looked for Daniel and his friends to kill *them*."
4. Daniel found himself in a great crisis so he did what all righteous men do. He turned to God in prayer – **Verses 17-18**
And God gave him the meaning of the dreams.
Daniel 2:19-20 NAU - "Then the mystery was revealed to Daniel in a night vision. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven; ²⁰ Daniel said, "Let the name of God be blessed forever and ever, For wisdom and power belong to Him."
5. Daniel went boldly to the king to give the interpretation.
Daniel 2:28-29 NAU - "However, there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries, and He has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what will take place in the latter days. This was your dream and the visions in your mind *while* on your bed. ²⁹ "As for you, O king, *while* on your bed your thoughts turned to what would take place in the future; and He who reveals mysteries has made known to you what will take place."
6. Nebuchadnezzar dreamed of an enormous statue of extraordinary splendor. The head was of gold. The chest and arms were of silver. The middle portions of the statue were of bronze and the legs were of iron. The feet were of iron mixed with clay.
While the king was watching a great rock that was not cut by human hands rose up and struck the statue on its feet and the whole thing toppled over and broke in tiny pieces that the wind blew away. Then the rock that struck the statue grew into a huge mountain that filled the whole earth.
7. Then Daniel gave the interpretation:
 - A. The statue represented the various kingdoms of this world. The amazing thing is the accuracy of the prophecy.

1. This is why some scholars find it so difficult to place the date during the time of Nebuchadnezzar. Even with late dating it precedes some of the events by hundreds of years.
The truth is God is able to foretell the events of history because He has determined the events of history.
 2. In this statue we can see a progressive decline in the splendor of earthly kingdoms—from gold to silver to bronze to iron. And yet, we see an increase in strength. It is as if strength is traded for majesty.
- B. The head of gold represented Babylon ruled by Nebuchadnezzar – a mighty kingdom. Babylon was the first and prototype of all the earth's kingdoms. It was first mentioned in **Genesis 11** – the word for Babel is the word for Babylon.
Genesis 11:9 NAU - "Therefore its name was called Babel, because there the LORD confused the language of the whole earth; and from there the LORD scattered them abroad over the face of the whole earth."
1. Notice that Babylon's power rested in the hands of God
Daniel 2:37-38 NAU - "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."
 2. Nebuchadnezzar did not believe this which is the primary subject of **Chapters 3-4**
 3. God would bring down Babylon
Isaiah 14:12-19 NAU - "How you have fallen from heaven, O star of the morning, son of the dawn! You have been cut down to the earth, You who have weakened the nations! ¹³ "But you said in your heart, 'I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God, And I will sit on the mount of assembly In the recesses of the north. ¹⁴ 'I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.' ¹⁵ "Nevertheless you will be thrust down to Sheol, To the recesses of the pit. ¹⁶ "Those who see you will gaze at you, They will ponder over you, *saying*, 'Is this the man who made the earth tremble, Who shook kingdoms, ¹⁷ Who made the world like a wilderness And overthrew its cities, Who did not allow his prisoners to go home?' ¹⁸ "All the kings of the nations lie in glory, Each in his own tomb. ¹⁹ "But you have been cast out of your tomb Like a rejected branch, Clothed with the slain who are pierced with a sword, Who go down to the stones of the pit Like a trampled corpse."
 4. Babylon represents the spirit of Godlessness upon the earth on Revelation. God will destroy it.
Revelation 14:8 NAU - "And another angel, a second one, followed, saying, "Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, she who has made all the nations drink of the wine of the passion of her immorality."
Revelation 18:21 NAU - "Then a strong angel took up a stone like a great millstone and threw it into the sea, saying, "So will Babylon, the great city, be thrown down with violence, and will not be found any longer."

- C. The chest and arms of silver represented the Medo-Persian Empire which came to its zenith under King Darius who is introduced to us at the end of **Chapter 5**.
- D. The middle bronze portion represented Greece that would come to power under Alexander the Great who conquered the known world.
- E. The iron portion of the statue represented the Roman Empire. Although it didn't rise to power for several hundred years Daniel described it accurately – the divided eastern and western empire. We should note that Daniels here doesn't say 10 toes as some Dispensationalists suppose since there are 10 horns in **Chapter 7**
8. There are some things all of these kingdoms have in common.
- A. First, they all owe their power and glory to God. Nations rise and fall at the sovereign command of God.
Romans 13:1 NAU - "Every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God."
Daniel 2:37-38 NAU - "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."
Daniel 4:17 NAU - "the Most High is ruler over the realm of mankind, And bestows it on whom He wishes And sets over it the lowliest of men."
Daniel 4:32 NAU - "seven periods of time will pass over you until you recognize that the Most High is ruler over the realm of mankind and bestows it on whomever He wishes."
- B. Second, all earthly kingdoms are temporary. The greatest kingdoms will come to an end. Even the most powerful have feet of clay.
 During the 16th and 17th centuries under King Charles and then his son King Philip II Spain occupied much of the world including the Americas.
 During the 19th century the center of power had changed and world maps showed the British imperial power spanning the globe.
 World power changes hands often and quickly.
- C. Because of the sinfulness of man all are in a patten of regress – gold to silver, bronze, iron. In the U.S., no matter how lofty our original plan, we have fallen into the typical corruption of lost humanity. It is interesting that the statue of earthly kingdoms is in the form of a man—mankind characterized by a lust for power and ambition.
- D. The ultimate hope is not in the formation of a new and improved statue but in bringing it to a crushing end.
9. The solution is something entirely new, a Rock formed without human hands. This Rock of course is Jesus Christ—the King of kings.
Matthew 21:42-44 NAS - "Jesus said to them, "Did you never read in the Scriptures, 'The stone which the builders rejected, This became the chief corner *stone*'; This came about from the Lord, And it is marvelous in our eyes ' ? ⁴³ "Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you, and be given to a nation producing the fruit of it. ⁴⁴ "And he who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; but on whomever it falls, it will scatter him like dust."
- A. Jesus was making reference to this passage in Daniel 2

- B. Jesus came to establish an entirely new Kingdom, a Kingdom untouched by human hands, a perfect and mighty Kingdom that will never end. It is something that starts small until it has filled the earth, dominating every earthly kingdom. **Matthew 13:31-33 NAU** - "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field; ³² and this is smaller than all *other* seeds, but when it is full grown, it is larger than the garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and nest in its branches." ³³ He spoke another parable to them, "The kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three pecks of flour until it was all leavened."
10. Tonight, after this lengthy introduction, I want to set this Kingdom before you.
- I. First of all, how do we describe this Kingdom?
- A. When we talk about the Kingdom of God we are talking about God's dominion – His rule.
1. The first advent of Christ was the great fulfillment of the Old Testament expectation – **Daniel 2:44** – "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."
 2. The Jews misunderstood the fulfillment of this promise. They had the expectation of an earthly, physical reign in which Israel would be delivered from all her enemies.
Jesus taught that His Kingdom was distinctly different from this present world.
John 18:36 – "Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would be fighting, that I might not be delivered up to the Jews; but as it is, My kingdom is not of this realm."
 3. With Christ came the great inauguration and the fulfillment of the Kingdom
Matthew 3:2 - "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."
Matthew 12:28 – "But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you."
Luke 10:9 – "and heal those in it who are sick, and say to them, 'The kingdom of God has come near to you.'"
- B. The Kingdom of God is not of this world, yet is manifested in this world through God's people—the church.
Luke 17:20-21 – "Now having been questioned by the Pharisees as to when the kingdom of God was coming, He answered them and said, "The kingdom of God is not coming with signs to be observed; ²¹ nor will they say, 'Look, here *it is!*' or, 'There *it is!*' For behold, the kingdom of God is in your midst."
1. While the Kingdom of God is manifested upon the earth it is not an earthly kingdom. It is of an entirely different realm.

2. The Bible consistently describes this great separation
It is the contrast between the earthly and the heavenly
John 3:12 – “If I told you earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things?”
Philippians 3:18-20 – “For many walk, of whom I often told you, and now tell you even weeping, *that they are* enemies of the cross of Christ, ¹⁹ whose end is destruction, whose god is *their* appetite, and *whose* glory is in their shame, who set their minds on earthly things. ²⁰ For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ;”

C. It is of Divine Origin and of Eternal duration

1. It was cut out of the mountain – not by human hands
It is often referred to as the Kingdom of God
Romans 14:17 NAU - "for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit."
2. It is a Kingdom that will never end. This is contrary to the Dispensational position that it is referring to the Millennium which lasts but 1000 years.
3. It will never be conquered.

II. This Kingdom is ruled by the Rock, the King of kings

A. All of this world is being brought under His sovereign power

Psalms 110:1 NAU - "The LORD says to my Lord: "Sit at My right hand Until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet."

1. Our Lord's Kingdom doesn't appear to be all powerful today, but the enemies of Christ are being crushed.
2. Every knee shall bow before Him
Philippians 2:9-11 NAS - "God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, ¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those who are in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, ¹¹ and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."
3. The warning goes forth to all the kingdoms of the world to bow before the King
Psalms 2:9-12 NAU - "You shall break them with a rod of iron, You shall shatter them like earthenware." ¹⁰ Now therefore, O kings, show discernment; Take warning, O judges of the earth. ¹¹ Worship the LORD with reverence And rejoice with trembling. ¹² Do homage to the Son, that He not become angry, and you perish *in* the way, For His wrath may soon be kindled. How blessed are all who take refuge in Him!"

B. Our Lord's Kingdom shall fill the earth and shall extend into eternity.

1. It is here now and yet it is yet to come. It is the already, not yet.
It will not come to completion until Christ returns. And yet it is ever growing now.
Revelation 11:15 NAU - "The kingdom of the world has become *the kingdom* of our Lord and of His Christ; and He will reign forever and ever."

2. This was the promise to David
2 Sam. 7:16 – “And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever.”
Psalm 145:13 – “Thy kingdom *is* an everlasting kingdom, and thy dominion *endureth* throughout all generations.”
3. Jesus is the fulfillment of this promise
Luke 1:32-33 – “He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: 33 And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.”

Conclusion:

1. How shall we respond to Nebuchadnezzar’s dream?
 - A. It should help us to look at life from a proper prospective. Our ultimate allegiance is not to the kingdoms of this world.
Matthew 6:33 NAS - "But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added to you."
 - B. We often spend all of our energy building our own kingdom. It will come crashing down.
 - C. We must maintain a heavenly prospective
Colossians 3:1-2 NAU - "Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. ² Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth."
2. One more thing: How does one enter into this Kingdom.
 - A. By laying down your weapons of opposition. This Kingdom is not of this world. You cannot enter into while holding on to this world—by insisting on holding to your sin and worldliness. By holding on to this world you will be crushed with the kingdoms of this world.
 - B. By trusting in the work of the King who provided the way of entrance. Entering this Kingdom sometimes demands a diligent pursuit, especially when one has become greatly entangled in this world and has waged a great conflict with the King.
 - C. Jesus as our gracious King bids all to come and enter.
Revelation 22:17 NAU - "The Spirit and the bride say, "Come." And let the one who hears say, "Come." And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who wishes take the water of life without cost."