

Daniel Chapter 2 and the Hope of Israel

The second chapter of Daniel's prophecy is one which is well known to many Bible Students. Visualising the kingdoms of men in the form of a metal man, Nebuchadnezzar was shown a depiction of world history in advance. Beginning with himself (i.e. "thou art this head of Gold" (Dan. 2:38), the prophecy proceeds to describe the world kingdoms that would supersede his: "after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee" &c. This succession of kingdoms would come to an end with the crushing of the entire Image by a Stone-Power:

"in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in piece and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever. Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure" (Dan. 2:44-45)

The point which has often been noticed, is that the various kingdoms of men represented by the individual components of the Image are all present to be destroyed by the Stone-Power. That this is so is confirmed by the parallel passage of Daniel chapter 7. This chapter closely parallels Daniel chapter 2 in a number of specifics. Whereas Nebuchadnezzar saw 4 empires depicted in his dream, Daniel 7 describes those same empires in terms of 4 beasts. And of these beasts, it is testified that they exist at the coming of one styled "the Ancient of Days," the time of the judgment:

"I beheld then because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake: I behold, even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame. As concerning the rest of the beasts, *they had their dominion taken away*; yet their lives were *prolonged for a season and a time*" (Dan. 7:11-12).

But notice, though the parallel between the two passages is clear, there are also differences. Daniel 7, as cited above, tells us that with the exception of the fourth beast, all of the other beast-nations will have their lives "prolonged for a season and time". This is clearly different than Daniel 2, which states that the stone power will destroy those same nations: "it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms ..." (Dan. 2:44)

It is evident therefore that Daniel 2 is looking beyond the prolonging of life during the Millennium, to the final end, when those nations shall be consumed by the fiery wrath of God (see Rev. 20:9). There are several other indications that this is so: Revelation chapter 20, speaking of things at the end of the Millennium describes: "I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them" (verse 11). As the Margin indicates, this language is lifted right out from Daniel chapter 2, and verse 35: "the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them". The similarity of language between the two prophecies speaking of the same time is striking.

This exposition helps us to understand a repetition in the judgements described in Daniel chapter 2. Verses 34-35 reads:

"thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the Image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and break them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold broken to pieces together ..."

Notice here, the “iron and clay” are judged twice: once when the Image is stuck on it’s feet, secondly, with all of the other constituent parts. In the light of the forgoing, we can perhaps in these things see the judgment upon the “Iron and Clay” feet when Messiah comes, but again later at the end of the Millennium. Again, there is a parallel: Ezekiel 38 describes the confederacy of nations which are vanquished by Messiah and his warrior-brethren as “Gog” and “Magog”, and the same terms are used in Revelation 20:8 of the force assembled by man against Yahweh’s Anointed after the Millennium. The point being, that there is comparison between the two epochs of judgment, before and after the Millennial rule of Messiah.

GOD MANIFESTATION

Of the Stone-power that is to crush Nebuchadnezzar’s metal man, it is said:

“forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver and the gold, the Great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure” (Dan. 2:45).

We find then, that the stone had an origin. It’s derivation was “out of the mountain,” and verse 35 tells us that it “became a great mountain”. In other words, the stone power will become a replica of that from whence it came.

The idea of a rock being hewn from a greater mass is not unique to Daniel. Isaiah also speak thus:

“hearken unto me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek Yahweh: look unto the Rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit from whence ye are digged” (Isa. 51:1).

Again, “the Rock” is often used in Scripture as a title of the Father. Take the following examples from Deuteronomy chapter 32:

“... He is the Rock, his works are perfect ...” (verse 4)

“... then he forsook God which made him, and lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation” (verse 15)

“of the Rock that begat thee, thou art unmindful ...” (verse 18)

See also verses 30, 31, and 37. From these verses, we learn that the Children of God are those who are begotten by “the Rock” – or as we have already implied, they are stones hewn out of the Greater Mountain. And in this, we can pre-eminently see Christ, the exact likeness of His Father, “the express image of his person” (Heb. 1:3). In his prayer recorded in John 17, he says: “I came ***out from thee***” (vs 8), like the stone hewn out of the mountain of Daniel chapter 2.

This hewn stone which smites the image of man’s dominion, is said to become a “great mountain, and filled the whole earth” (Dan. 2:35). That is, as we have said, it became a replica of that from whence it was formed. Yahweh Himself is the Mountain from which the Stone is derived, and the fact of the Stone itself becoming a mountain, is for the earth to be filled with a likeness of Yahweh. Even so it is written: “the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Glory of Yahweh, as the waters cover the sea” (Hab. 2:14). Again, we can see an explanatory parallel—Daniel 2 tells us the earth shall be filled with the

likeness of a mountain; Habbakuk tells us it will be filled with the Glory of Yahweh. We surmise then, that the two are the same, one being explanatory of the other.

MAN OF SIN DESTROYED

The entire humanoid image is to be destroyed by the destructive impact of the Stone-Power upon the Iron / 4th Beast system. The rule of those kingdoms shall all be taken away from them, as the nations are subjugated under the rule of Messiah. But the Fourth Beast system itself shall not be continued, it shall be utterly removed from the face of the earth. We read of the destruction of this system in the New Testament, 2 Thessalonians 2, where this same power is interestingly described as a “man of sin”. Verses 3 & 4 describes the development of the apostasy:

“let no man deceive you by any means, for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that *man of sin* be revealed, the son of perdition, who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped ...” (2 Thes. 2:3-4).

Verse 8 then proceeds to inform us how that system of wickedness shall be destroyed by the Lord Jesus, who “shall consume with the breath of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming” (2 Thes. 2:8).

The Stone-power then, shall ultimately destroy all the kingdoms of men, and shall “stand for ever” (Dan. 2:44), or “have no end” (Lu. 1:34). In it’s duration.

This is a major theme in the prophets. Jeremiah describes this same feature: the kingdoms of men shall all cease, with Israel only surviving beyond the Millennium:

“... for I am with thee, saith Yahweh, to save thee: though I will make *a full end* of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee: but I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished” (Jer. 30:11).

Messiah’s kingdom, it is said shall “stand for ever”, and of the kingdom of Israel, it is said that it will have an everlasting salvation:

“Israel shall be saved in Yahweh with *an everlasting salvation*: ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded *world without end*” (Isa. 45:17).

It logically follows therefore, that if we also wish to be saved with an everlasting kingdom, and inherit the coming world without end, that we must separate ourselves from the kingdoms of men, and join ourselves to the nation that Yahweh will save. Indeed, that is why the true hope of the Gospel is styled “the hope of Israel” – it is the only means by which we can be saved.

THE MYSTERY REVEALED

There is another striking parallel between the circumstances of Daniel 2, and those pertaining to the Apostolic preaching of the Gospel. The whole scenario depicted in Daniel 2 is to do with a secret, or mystery being revealed:

“then Daniel went to his house, and made the thing known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions that they would desire mercies of the God of Heaven concerning

this secret ... then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a night vision. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven” (Dan. 2:17-18).

The chapter speaks of the wisest men of Nebuchadnezzar’s court:

“the secret which the king hath demanded cannot the wise men, the astrologers, the magicians, the soothsayers, shew unto the king; but there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets...” (Dan. 2:27).

Notice the pattern outlined here: there was a “secret” that the wisest men of Babylon could not make known, let alone correctly interpret. It had to be revealed through one of Yahweh’s choosing, one of the captives from Israel. This is the pattern which we have presented concerning the preaching of the Gospel by the Apostles:

“we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even *the hidden* wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: which none of the princes of this world knew ...” (1 Cor. 2:8).

If there be any doubt that there is a deliberate allusion being made, consider the following two passages, and see how the case of Daniel being cited:

“... God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God” (1 Cor. 2:10)

“... He revealeth the deep and secret things: he knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him” (Dan. 2:22).

There is also a parallel in the reason for the vision being made known: it was to avoid certain death “that Daniel and his fellows *should not perish* with the rest of the wise men of Babylon” (Dan. 2:18). In addition to making known human history in advance for the benefit of those who sought after spiritual things, another reason of a more immediate consequence was to release the brethren from a death decree. Even so with the Gospel: whilst it provides us with wisdom and knowledge, it’s real power is it’s intrinsic ability to save those who pay heed to it.

It is written in Hebrews 11:3, that “through faith we understand that the worlds (ages) were framed by the Word of God”, and in Daniel chapter 2 we have an example of this. But more than this, we have many factors involved in the establishment of Yahweh’s coming kingdom, including what we call “God Manifestation,” or the replication of Yahweh’s glorious attributes throughout the earth: a Holy Mountain concerning which it is written: “they shall not hurt, nor destroy in all my holy mountain, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of Yahweh, as the waters cover the sea” (Isa. 11:9). We must therefore give attendance to the reading and study of the Word, to prepare us for that great day.

“it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this world? For after that in the Wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe” (1 Cor. 1:19-21)

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