

Ministry on Daniel 2-11 in several ministries

Part 1

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| Speaker | W. Missen |
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[00:00:00] This is a very long chapter and we won't read all the chapter. Daniel, chapter 2. And in the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuchadnezzar dreamed dreams, wherewith his spirit was troubled, and his sleep break from him. Then the king commanded to call the magicians, and the astrologers, and the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans, for to show the king his dreams. So they came and stood before the king. And the king said unto them, I have dreamed a dream, and my spirit was troubled to know the dream. Then spake the Chaldeans to the king in Syriac, O king, live forever. Tell thy servants the dream, and we will show the interpretation. The king answered and said to the Chaldeans, The thing is gone from me.

If ye will not make known unto me the dream, with the interpretation thereof, ye shall be cut in pieces, and your houses shall be made a dunghill. But if ye show the dream, and the interpretation thereof, [00:01:03] ye shall receive of me gifts, and rewards, and great honor. Therefore show me the dream, and the interpretation thereof. They answered again and said, Let the king tell his servants the dream, and we will show the interpretation of it. The king answered and said, I know of certainty that ye would gain the time, because ye see the thing is gone from me. But if ye will not make known unto me the dream, there is but one decree for you. For ye have prepared lying and corrupt words to speak before me, till the time be changed. Therefore tell me the dream, and I shall know that ye can show me the interpretation thereof. And of course it goes on to state how that they weren't able to, of course, to tell the king the dream. And the king gives the decree.

And verse 13, The decree went forth that the wise men should be slain, [00:02:04] and they sought Daniel and his fellows to be slain. Then Daniel answered with counsel and wisdom to Ariok, the captain of the king's guard, which was gone forth to slay the wise men of Babylon. He answered and said to Ariok, the king's captain, Why is the decree so hasty from the king? Then Ariok made the thing known to Daniel. Then Daniel went in and desired of the king that he would give him time, and that he would show the king the interpretation. Then Daniel went to his house and made the thing known to Hananiah, Mishiel, and Azariah, his companions, that they would desire mercies of the God of heaven according to this secret, that Daniel and his fellows should not perish with the rest of the wise men of Babylon. Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a might vision. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven. Daniel answered and said, Blessed be the name of God forever and ever for wisdom and might of his. [00:03:02] And he changed the times and the seasons. He removed kings and set up kings.

He giveth wisdom unto the wise and knowledge to them that know understanding. He reveals the

deep and secret things. He knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him. I thank thee and praise thee, O thou God of my fathers, who hast given me wisdom and might, and hast made known unto me now what we desired of thee, for thou hast now made known unto us the king's matter. And then Daniel is taken into the king's. And he says there in verse 30, As for me, this secret is not revealed to me for any wisdom that I have more than any living, but for the intent that the interpretation may be made known to the king, as the margin says, and that thou mightest know the thoughts of thy heart. Thou, O king, sourced and behold a great image. [00:04:01] This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee, and the form thereof was terrible. This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, his legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay. Thou sourced till the stone was cut with our 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, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors, and the wind carried them away, but no place was found for them. And the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth. This is the dream, and we will tell the anticipation thereof before the king. Now we'll read that part when we come to it.

[00:05:01] Now I want to go back just a little and refer to what we had on Slaw's Day evening, the first chapter.

The first chapter is introductory, and as our chapter says, it gives us the moral condition suited to enlightenment in the ways and counsels of God.

Separation maintained.

And we notice that that gives us a key to the understanding of the book of Daniel, really a key to the understanding of all prophecy, and we might also extend that and say it's really a key to the understanding of the whole word of God. That is that we must be in a right spiritual state. And there we have the test that Daniel and his companions were put to. They refused to defile themselves with the portion of the king's meat and with the wine which he drank. [00:06:01] They stood for God in an evil day, and God honored them for it. And as a result of standing for God, God gave to them enlightenment in his secret.

We have the same principle in the first psalm where we have the contrast between the godly and the ungodly. Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. We also have it in the beginning of Psalm 119 where it says, Blessed are the undefiled in the way that walk in the law of the Lord. When we turn to the first chapter of Revelation, we have the same principle. John was in the isle of Patmos for the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ. He was bearing reproach for Christ.

He was in the path of faithfulness and he was in the spirit on the Lord's day. And the Lord revealed to him [00:07:01] the future, the prophetic history of the church and what is going to take place after the Lord takes the church away. Now, the book of Daniel doesn't take up the church.

It takes up largely the Gentile nations because Daniel really deals with the times of the Gentiles that began with Nebuchadnezzar.

And of course, it also deals, though, with Israel in connection with this.

That is, the Gentile nations in scripture are only mentioned as they play some part in connection with God's people, Israel. No notice is taken in scripture of the Gentile nations that have nothing to do with the nation of Israel. But the Gentile nations are mentioned as having either been favorable or unfavorable to God's people, Israel.

And of course, the times of the Gentiles [00:08:03] began with Nebuchadnezzar and they end with the coming of the Lord Jesus to establish his reign.

So that's why the book of Daniel, for us, is really very important as taking up these things. And as the chart tells us, we see that everything that we have in these various chapters is a picture, we might say, of something that will take place in the time of the end.

And in the meantime, we have, since the death of Christ, until the Lord's coming to take the church away, this parenthetic period called the present age or church period from the cross to the rapture. And this is a dateless period.

We cannot set a date for it.

We know that many things show us that we're drawing near to the close of this period. But no one can say when the Lord will come.

No one can say what year he'll come, [00:09:02] what day he'll come.

Many people have tried to set dates, and they've failed because you cannot bring dates in in connection with the church. Dates have to do with Israel. And these dates are suspended, we might say, during this period.

We'll see that very plainly when we come to the prophecy of the 70 weeks when we get down there to the ninth chapter. Now, in connection with this first chapter, with this second chapter, rather, I want us to turn to two verses in Jeremiah.

Go back to Jeremiah, and the first is in the 25th chapter. In the 25th chapter of Jeremiah, in verse 1, it says, The word that came to Jeremiah concerning all the people of Judah, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah, king of Judah, that was the first year of Nebuchadnezzar, [00:10:02] king of Babylon. Now, we're told there that the fourth year of Jehoiakim was the first year of Nebuchadnezzar. Now let's turn over to the 36th chapter of Jeremiah. In the 36th of Jeremiah, it tells us in verse 9, And it came to pass in the fifth year of Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah, king of Judah, in the ninth month, that they proclaimed the fast before the Lord to all the people in Jerusalem, and to all the people that came out of the cities of Judah unto Jerusalem.

And while they were there at that fast, we find that Barak, who is Jeremiah's servant, he's called in before the king, and they ask him, it says in verse 17, Tell us now, how didst thou write all these words at his mouth? [00:11:02] Because he'd written what Jeremiah said. Then Barak answered them. He pronounced all these words unto me with his mouth, and I wrote them with ink in a book. Then when we get down to the 22nd verse, it says, The king sat in the winter house in the ninth month, and there was a fire on the house burning before him. And it came to pass that when Jehudi had read three or four leaves, he cut it with the penknife and cast it into the fire that was on the house, until all the roll was consumed in the fire that was upon the house. That's what the king did. Now here we

have something that took place in the fifth year of Jehoiakim. And the fifth year of Jehoiakim, of course, was the second year of Nebuchadnezzar.

Now let's turn to our chapter in Daniel now. [00:12:02] And it says, the first verse says, In the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuchadnezzar dreamed dreams wherewith his spirit was troubled, and his sleep break from him. Now you see the connection. The second year of Nebuchadnezzar is the fifth year of Jehoiakim.

The very year that the king of Judah shows how he despises the word of God by slashing it with a knife and throwing it into the fire. That's the year that God, we might say, officially sets aside his throne on earth.

The kingdom of Judah is officially set aside that year. And the times of the Gentiles begin.

Nebuchadnezzar comes to the front. This is the very year that Nebuchadnezzar dreams these dreams. And he's told that he is the head of God. Now the times of the Gentiles have begun. [00:13:03] It's a very significant thing, is it not, that the times of the Gentiles begin with God setting aside Israel because in the person of their leader, in the person of their king, they are cutting and burning the word of God.

You know, that is what was characterized the times of the Gentiles right down. And even today we find those who would cut the word of God.

Modelism would cut pieces out of the word of God. Romanism in many countries, as we know, in South America and these places, burns the word of God.

That is what was characterized the times of the Gentiles. It was true of Israel, but are the Gentiles any better? No. And God's word is still despised by those who do not want it. So Nebuchadnezzar now is coming to the front. The times of the Gentiles are beginning. And the Lord causes this man, Nebuchadnezzar, [00:14:02] to dream a dream.

And then the Lord causes him to forget the dream. Of course, this is all part of God's plan to bring Daniel to the front and that Daniel might be the instrument to make known the interpretation of the dream. We don't find in the New Testament God using dreams so much as he did in the Old.

He used them a great deal in the Old Testament times. That is, and even in the New Testament before the Holy Spirit came. But we don't find dreams so much in the epistles, although God does sometimes speak through dreams. But back in these days it was a very usual way for God to speak when he had to make known something very important. And the king cannot think of what this dream is.

He's conscious that he dreams some very, very important dream. Some very strange dream.

And he calls in all of the Chaldeans and these sorcerers and all these wise men. [00:15:02] They're supposed to be able to interpret dreams and all these kind of things. So the king says, well now, you've got to tell me not only the interpretation of the dream, you've got to tell me what the dream is. Why they say king?

It's never been known that any king has ever asked his wise men to tell the dream that he dreams.

We can always tell what the interpretation is if you'll tell us what the dream is. The king says, well you're just a lot of frauds. That's what you are. That's practically what he says. Of course you can tell me what the, you can make up something to tell me if I tell you what it is. But if you're really what you claim to be, you tell me what the dream was and I'll believe that you really understand what you're doing. And of course they couldn't do it. And the king was so incensed that the word went forth that all of the wise men in Babylon would be killed. And of course this included Daniel and his companions because they had been prepared to be brought in [00:16:03] to be counted as the wise men.

As we saw last evening, they had, after they refused to eat the king's meat and drink his wine, they'd asked to have pulse and water given to them and it had been proved that they looked better than the others and so they were allowed to have this food.

And then when, at the end of the time when they went into the king, the king found that they really had wisdom. They had God-given wisdom because they lived in fellowship with the Lord. And that's a wonderful lesson for us. A Christian, even though he may lack certain advantages that a worldly might have, if he's living in communion with the Lord, that more than makes up for what he lacks because he has a God-given wisdom and an understanding as to matters.

And we should always remember that. God gives us wisdom even in our daily occupation and God uses Christians sometimes in that [00:17:03] to have right judgment on matters because they're walking in fellowship with the Lord that even becomes a benefit to their employers and the employers will recognize that. Well, Daniel says, when this Arioch comes to take them away, to execute them, he says, well, why is the matter so hasty? And he explains to Daniel and Daniel says, well, give me time.

He went into the king and he pleaded. He says, you give me time and we'll make known to the king the interpretation. And then what did Daniel do?

He called a prayer meeting. Daniel called his three companions.

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, that Daniel and his fellows should not perish with the wise men of Babylon.

[00:18:02] You notice in this book of Daniel, it speaks of the God of heaven.

Whenever we have the God of heaven mentioned, that is specially connected with the times of the Gentiles. When God's throne was on earth and when the Lord recognized the throne of David as it was set up there in Jerusalem, he was the God of earth. You remember when, and even before that, you remember when the children of Israel crossed the river Jordan? It said that that was the ark of the Lord of all the earth. And they had recognized that the God of the children of Israel was the God of all the earth. God made himself known as the God of the earth. But when he removed the throne, in the times of the Gentiles, he's known as the God of heaven. This shows that Daniel had intelligence as to God's dispensational plan.

He speaks of God now as the God of heaven [00:19:03] because God is not recognizing his throne on earth anymore. He's allowed Jerusalem to be taken captive and he's allowed men like Daniel and the others who were of the seat of the royal seat, he's allowed them to be carried away, captured into Babylon. But he still rules in the affairs of men. God has not abandoned the earth even though he's the God of heaven. He's over all.

And so Daniel goes into the Lord and asks the Lord to make known this thing. And the Lord answers their prayer.

What a fervent prayer meeting that must have been. There's the sword hanging over their heads, as it were. And there they are, fervently praying that God's purposes will be worked out. And Daniel, no doubt, in perfect peace of mind, having prayed about the matter, he's in perfect peace. He doesn't lie awake on his bed worrying about it. He goes off to sleep.

And in his sleep, the Lord reveals the dream to him. [00:20:04] The Lord causes Daniel to dream the same dream that Nebuchadnezzar dreamed. And the Lord also gives Daniel an understanding as to what the dream means.

Then what does Daniel do?

Does he wake up next morning and say hallelujah and immediately rush off into the king to tell the king about it? No. Daniel takes time to have, now, a praise meeting. They'd had a prayer meeting and now they have a praise meeting. You know, there are lovely lessons in these things, beloved brethren, for us.

Even though we don't, in our problems that we have, the destinies of empires are not at stake like they were in this thing and our lives are not at stake like they were with Daniel, yet there are lessons for us to learn. When difficulties come, let's get before the Lord and pray. [00:21:02] And when the Lord answers our prayer, before we do anything else, let's praise and thank him. And that's what Daniel did. It says there in verse 19, then it was the secret revealed unto Daniel in the night vision. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven. Daniel answered and said, Blessed be the name of God forever and ever for wisdom and might are his.

And he changes the signs and the seasons. He reproves kings.

He removes kings and sets up kings. He gives wisdom unto the wise and knowledge to them that know understanding. He reveals the deep and secret things. He knows what is in the darkness and the light dwelleth with him. I thank thee and praise thee, O thou God of my fathers, who has given me wisdom and might and has made known unto me now what we desired of thee, that thou hast now made known unto us the king's matter.

What a wonderful time of praise [00:22:02] Daniel and his companions had. The Lord has answered their prayer and they thanked the Lord. Then we find that Daniel went to Ariok, the executioner, and made known to him. He went and he says, Now don't destroy the wise men. The Lord has made known unto me.

Or rather, Daniel doesn't tell him that the Lord has made known, but he says, Bring me in before the king and I will show the king the interpretation. And you notice that it says there that Ariok brought

him in in haste before the king. Doesn't that remind us of Joseph?

You remember when Joseph was in Egypt and the king dreamed the dream about the seven fat cows and the seven lean cows and he couldn't know what it meant.

And finally the chief butler tells him about Joseph who's in jail who interpreted his dream [00:23:02] and it says that they made, I just forget the exact words, but anyhow it says that they caused Joseph to go running.

They made him to get out of jail in haste and they shaved him and cleaned him up and everything and they hurried him into the king. And so it is here.

You see, Daniel doesn't hurry.

He takes time to pray and he takes time to praise. But the executioner, he hurries him because he realized that the lives of all these wise men were at stake. You know these same wise men really owed their lives to Daniel under God and yet they didn't show a praiseful spirit after it as we'll see as we go along. And he comes in before the king in haste it says and says thus unto him, I found a man of the captives of Judah that will make known to the king the interpretation. You see, Daniel is identified [00:24:01] as one of the captives of Judah.

His nationality isn't hidden.

And it was known that Judah, the people of Judah, the Jews were the people who worshipped the Lord. They were the ones that worshipped Jehovah. They were those who were known as having the true God.

And so Daniel's whole testimony is connected with the knowledge of the true God. So the testimony of God as originally established in Jerusalem is now being made known to Nebuchadnezzar. And Daniel himself testifies for the Lord.

He doesn't take credit.

Daniel answers in the presence of the king the secret which the king has demanded cannot the wise men and astrologers the magicians and soothsayers show unto the king but there is a God in heaven that reveals the secrets. Daniel doesn't take credit to himself. He gives the credit to the Lord. The God in heaven, Daniel said. And he says a very important thing in verse 30.

[00:25:02] I think verse 30 is a very important verse. This secret is not revealed to me for any wisdom that I have more than any living.

But, the marginal reading says but for the intent that the interpretation may be made known to the king and that thou mightest know the thoughts of thy heart. God revealed this for two reasons.

That the interpretation might be made known to the king and that the king's own thoughts might be revealed.

And you know that's always true when God makes something known to us. If God makes something

known to us from his precious word it is because he wants us to understand what his word says.

But it's also that he wants our own thoughts to be revealed.

That is, he wants us to be exercised [00:26:05] as to what our attitude is towards the thing that's been revealed. This thing's made known to Nebuchadnezzar. That's a wonderful thing. Not only to Nebuchadnezzar, but we might say for the blessing of the whole human race it's recorded in scripture and it's been here right now that we might know this truth throughout the times of the Gentiles. But also, what is Nebuchadnezzar's attitude to this revelation?

It seems that it puffed him up as we go on in his history. And instead of humbling him it made him proud.

He took a wrong attitude to the revelation of God. He wanted to use this fact that God had given him an important place as the head of the Babylonian Empire for his own self-aggrandizement instead of taking a humble place before God. And beloved, what a lesson there is for us there. [00:27:01] We can use the word of God to make ourselves important or we can use the word of God to allow it to search us and to take a humble place ourselves that God's word might be used for blessing to others.

So you see, our own thoughts are manifested by the attitude that we show to the truth of God as he reveals it to us.

Then Daniel goes on and explains about the image.

And of course, here we have on our chart we have a picture of this great image here.

As it says, Thou, O King, source and behold a great image. This great image whose brightness was excellent stood before me.

The form thereof was terrible. This, of course, is the artist's idea which I think is a very poor one. It must have been a very amazing thing, [00:28:01] this image.

The image's head was a fine gold and that represents the gold, of course.

His breast and arms of silver, his belly and thighs of brass, his legs of iron, this is the parenthetic period comes in here, the legs, of course, come right down to here, and his feet, part of iron and part of clay.

Till thou saw'st that the stone was cut without hands, that represents the stone, 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 and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors and the wind carried them away and no place was found for them. [00:29:01] And the stone that smote the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth. Really it was a marvelous dream. Then Daniel goes on and tells the king the interpretation. And the interpretation of this dream is that this image is that it represents the whole period of the times of the Gentiles from Nebuchadnezzar's day down to when the stone smites the feet of the image. And the stone, of course, as we know from other scriptures, is the Lord Jesus Christ.

And isn't it a remarkable thing, it says, that when this whole image comes down, that is, the whole of Gentile rule comes to an end, all the dust of this whole thing is carried away like the chaff on the summer threshing floor. There's none of it left.

Man's rule will completely disappear from the earth. And the stone that smites the image becomes a great mountain [00:30:01] and fills the whole earth. That is, that the Lord Jesus Christ, His reign is what occupies this whole scene.

Now, as Daniel interprets it, we can see the meaning of these different kingdoms.

He says, Thou, O king, art a king of kings.

For the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power and strength and glory.

And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hands and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of God.

We notice a very important thing in connection with these kingdoms, that the idea is just the opposite to what we are taught as to politics today.

We've been schooled, especially in America and in our modern so-called democratic countries, [00:31:02] we have been taught from our childhood that the democratic form of government is the highest form of government. Now, that's not what Scripture says.

Scripture lets us see that the autocratic form of government is the highest form of government.

That to have one man to rule and to be an absolute ruler, that that is the highest form of government. And the reason is that that's the divine form of government. But why is it that we don't like that form of government? And why is it that that form of government hasn't been proved to be a successful form of government on earth? Because man has not been able to produce the right man.

Any man who gets into that position seems to get drunk with power, image, and is not able, many of these men have not been able to govern themselves, [00:32:02] much less govern others.

So we might say that God's form, the highest form of government, is a one-man rule.

But the riddle is, find the man.

And Adam's race hasn't been able to produce him. God will produce him in his own time. And he's none other than the one that we were referring to on the Lord's Day, the lion of the tribe of Judah, who became the lion because first of all he was the lamb, the one who went down into death, suffered weakness and defeat, and is the one who has the right to reign. So Nebuchadnezzar's reign represents the highest form of government. That's why we get gold there.

You see, we find that these metals, while they may increase in strength to a certain extent, but they decrease in value.

Gold is not a strong metal, [00:33:01] but it's a very valuable metal. And this is letting us see the value

of the thing, as it were, before God.

It's how man sees these things, but it's also letting us see how God sees them, what the rule means.

The gold is the highest form of government, this autocratic rule. And that's what Nebuchadnezzar was. He was an absolute monarch. Whom he would exclude, and whom he would have kept alive. If the wise men displeased him, off with their heads. No one had anything to say about it. The king's word was absolute.

What he said had to be done.

Nebuchadnezzar had a wonderful opportunity.

Seeing that God had put him in that position, he had a wonderful opportunity to honor God. But he didn't honor God.

And we have known that men in history, even in our own day, who have the privilege, if we might call it that, [00:34:01] of being heads of nations and have a wonderful opportunity, and they have used their power. And where are they today? Where's a man like Hitler? He was practically absolute in his rule in a certain sense, and he could have used it for good, but he didn't. He got drunk with his power, and he used it for evil. And, of course, God's judgment came upon him. Then, it says in verse 39, After thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee.

That's the silver.

The arms and the breast and the arms of silver.

And that represents the kingdom of the Medes and Persians that followed the Babylonian kingdom. We have the two arms because it was a dual kingdom. The Medes came, the Medes first, [00:35:01] then the Persians came in afterwards and they really became greater than the Medes. We have, further on in Daniel, some more reference to the kingdom of the Medes and Persians. We have, of course, these four kingdoms referred to here in the eighth chapter as four beasts.

That really gives us their true character in the sight of God.

And then we have the Medo-Persian kingdom referred to in this ram with two horns.

And the one horn longer than the other and the longer horn came up last. The first horn representing the kingdom of the Medes and the second horn representing the kingdom of the Persians. It was the kingdom of Medo-Persia. It was an inferior kingdom to the Babylonian kingdom because the laws of the Medes and Persians were that once a law was made it couldn't be changed so that the king didn't have absolute power. And that was tested out, you see, [00:36:01] when Daniel was cast into the lion's den. The king made a law that anyone who worshipped any other god save the king would be cast into the den of lions. And these wise men that wanted to get rid of Daniel had got the king to sign this law and the king was bound by the law that he'd signed and he couldn't alter it. He was not the absolute monarch that Nebuchadnezzar was. It was an inferior form of government in that sense although maybe they thought it was a progress. It was giving more people the opportunity of having part in the government. God looked upon it as an inferior form of government. Well, that passes

away.

The kingdom of the Medes and Persians also came to an end.

And then there comes the Grecian kingdom. That's the third.

Verse 39 it says, And another third kingdom of brass which shall bear rule over all the earth. This is the Greek kingdom. [00:37:02] And of course the great Greek conqueror was Alexander the Great.

And Alexander the Great is represented here in the 8th chapter by the he-goat with this one horse and he comes along and he kills this ram and tramples on it.

It represents Alexander the Great coming from the west because Alexander the Great represents the first time that the reign of the times of the Gentiles passes from the east to the west. The Babylonian Empire and the Medo-Persian Empire are empires that are in what we call now the Middle East.

But Alexander came from the west, from Europe.

These others were from Asia. Alexander is the Greek conqueror. And the Gentile kingdom now comes, Gentile rule now passes to Greece. And the Greek Empire of course was a great empire. [00:38:02] And that's represented in this image by the leopard with the four wings because when Alexander dies, his four generals, the kingdom is divided up among his four generals. We'll see that as we get along to it. And then we find, following that, it says in the 40th verse, And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron for as much as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things and as iron that breaketh all things shall it break in pieces and bruise.

And there you have the Roman Empire. The Roman Empire that was in existence when the Lord was born.

And of course the Roman Empire was a very, very strong empire as far as conquering was concerned.

It was an empire of iron.

And a much inferior metal as to value, yet a much stronger metal than the gold. But we see there's been a deterioration [00:39:02] in the value of these metals showing that man's government has deteriorated in God's sight, although no doubt man thinks he's made a great deal of progress in his own sight.

But then that's not all.

We notice in connection with this, with this Roman Empire that it divides into two legs.

And of course that fits in with the history of the Roman Empire that it divided up into the eastern and the western section.

Rome became the capital of the western section and Constantinople or Istanbul is where our brother John comes from became the capital of the eastern section of the Roman Empire.

But then as we get right down to the time of the end here we realize that the feet were the pure iron, the feet are a part of iron [00:40:02] and a part of mirey clay.

And this of course is something very unusual to have the iron mixed with the clay. It tells us that.

It says, verse 41, Whereas thou saw'st the feet and toes part of potter's clay and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided, but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou saw'st the iron mixed with mirey clay.

And as the toes of the feet were part of iron and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly broken or brittle. And whereas thou saw'st iron mixed with mirey clay, they shall mingle themselves with the feet of men, but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay.

And 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, [00:41:01] but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever. In a certain sense, the Roman Empire passed away, but in another sense, the Roman Empire has not ceased to exist.

That is, it hasn't existed exactly as an empire, but the institutions of Rome have existed among the European peoples, that is, among the people who once formed part of the Roman Empire right down through time.

And from other scriptures, from this scripture, and from what it tells us about this beast here in the last days, that it's going to have ten horns on it, and from what we read in the book of Revelation, we believe that after the church, after the Lord takes the church away, that there will be seen [00:42:03] a revival of the Roman Empire in a ten-kingdom form.

That is, ten nations will form again the Roman Empire, but with this great difference to what the Roman Empire was before.

There'll be a great weakness in it.

It won't just be an autocratic rule, or we might say, even where there is a republican rule as there was in Rome, there'll be a weakness there.

And the weakness, I think we can see where the weakness comes in. That is, in the clash of the two forms of government that people have in mind. We have it perhaps to a certain extent even in the United States. We have republicanism, the Republican Party and the Democratic Party. And it's well known [00:43:01] that the Republican Party is more favorable to all the government as we would expect to see it in scriptures, whereas the Democratic Party is more favorable to trade unionism and socialism.

And it kind of leans a little bit more, as they say today, to the left. The Republican Party leans to the right. The Democratic Party leans to the left. I'm not entering into politics. Of course, I'm just stating what's the truth. And we can notice these things. Even though we Christians should keep out of politics, yet we can form a right appraisal of these things that go on around us. And so, there's a weakness. And there'll be a great weakness in this revived Roman Empire for that very reason. The

iron and the clay won't mix with each other. And it says there, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men.

And I believe that means that it means that the ruling peoples, [00:44:01] the ruling classes, will mingle themselves with the what are known as the common people, the people that haven't been the ruling people. And that's where you get weakness. We have people elected to the governments that really have no right to be in government because they don't know how to act. They're not really suitable. But because they're elected and because the majority rules, they have to be there. And yet, they're not fitted to be there sometimes. And that's where the weakness comes in in a democratic form of government. It's the rule of the people.

Well, someone might say, why is it that our so-called democratic forms of government have been successful in a large measure in our, at least in our English-speaking countries? I believe the reason is that we've never had, in England or America, we've never had pure democracy.

We've never had just the rule of the people by the people and for the people.

[00:45:01] We've had men, even though they were elected, who held their office under God, who realized that even though they were elected by the people, they realized that they just weren't there to please the people.

But they were there to carry out right moral principles.

And some of them exercised even to carry out scriptural principles. So I believe that we can say that where so-called democracy has been successful, it has been because it has in a measure been a theocracy.

Where those who rule have sought to rule under God. And we know that that's been true in a large measure in the early days of this country. Those who rule realize that God put them there. And that's why there was success and blessing. But in a country like France, where they really had a pure form of democracy, that the people are just there because the people put them there, [00:46:01] they never can keep a stable government. It's well known that if a government can stay in for 12 months in France, well that's a very, very long time for the government to stay in power. You see?

There's not the fear of God there like there has been in the countries that felt the benefit of the Reformation. But sad to say, we see our countries departing from that today. And so many are just in office to please those that put them there. And that brings, of course, a degeneracy. Well, these 10 toes then, they represent the last stage of the Roman Empire.

After the Lord takes the church away, we'll see a revival of the Roman Empire. And I believe, brethren, it seems that today we are seeing the beginning of that. Perhaps this European, this economic market, known as the Rome Treaty, by the way. [00:47:03] It was a treaty made in Rome. Perhaps this is the beginning of what will eventually become the revived Roman Empire that will develop after the Lord takes us away. But these things cannot develop in their fullness as long as the church is here.

And after the Lord takes us away, there will come a period, a certain period, then the Lord will be the great stone that will come without hands and the whole of man's rule from the head of gold right down

to the toes will be completely and swept away with the judgments of God. And the Lord Jesus will take unto himself his great power of reign.