

Message Three

**The Vision of the Great Image—  
the Controlling Vision in the Book of Daniel**

Scripture Reading: Dan. 2

- I. The vision of the great image and its destiny in Daniel 2 is a vision of “what will happen in the last days”—v. 28.**
- II. The vision of the great image in Daniel 2 is the controlling vision in the book of Daniel:**
  - A. This great image signifies the aggregate of human government throughout human history, from the beginning of human government at Babel (Babylon) in the land of Shinar (Gen. 10:8-10; 11:1-9), as signified by the head of the image, to the termination of human government in human history in the Roman Empire with the ten kings, as signified by the ten toes (Dan. 2:40-44a; 7:24; Rev. 13:1; 17:12):
    1. The head of gold (Dan. 2:36-38), corresponding to the first beast in 7:3-4, signifies Nebuchadnezzar, the founder and the king of Babylon.
    2. The breast and the arms of silver (2:39a), corresponding to the second beast in 7:5, signify Medo-Persia.
    3. The abdomen and thighs of bronze (2:39b), corresponding to the third beast in 7:6, signify Greece, including Macedonia.
    4. The legs of iron and the feet partly of iron and partly of clay (2:33), corresponding to the fourth beast in 7:7-8, signify the Roman Empire with its last ten kings (2:40-44a; 7:7-11, 19-26; Rev. 17:7-13).
  - B. From its beginning to its termination, human government has always done three things: rebel against God, exalt man, and worship idols—Gen. 11:4, footnote 2, Recovery Version.
- III. According to the human image in Daniel 2, in the sight of God all human government is composed of four empires: the Babylonian Empire, the Medo-Persian Empire, the Macedonian-Grecian Empire, and the Roman Empire:**
  - A. The beginning of human government was at Babel (Babylon), which was built by Nimrod (Gen. 10:8-10), and the ending of human government will be the revived Roman Empire under Antichrist.

CRYSTALLIZATION-STUDY OUTLINES

Message Three (continuation)

- B. Although the form and appearance of the Roman Empire have vanished, the culture, spirit, and essence of the Roman Empire continue to exist today—Dan. 7:12.
- C. At the beginning of the great tribulation (Matt. 24:21) the form and appearance of the Roman Empire will be restored under Antichrist.
- D. According to the books of Daniel and Revelation, the last Caesar of the Roman Empire will be Antichrist, who will be supported by ten kings—Rev. 17:10-12.
- E. Thus, the aggregate of human empires that began with Nimrod at Babel will consummate with Antichrist and the ten kings.
- F. If the head of the great human image is Babylon, the entire image must also be Babylon; in the eyes of God, the entire human government from Nimrod to Antichrist is Babylon:
  - 1. Under Antichrist, the last Caesar, the Roman Empire will be both political and religious Babylon—chs. 17—18.
  - 2. The empire of Antichrist will be the political and physical Babylon, that is, “Babylon the Great” (18:2), whereas the Roman Catholic Church, called “MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT” (17:5), will be the religious Babylon—footnote on Jer. 50:1, Recovery Version.
- G. The two legs of iron signify the eastern Roman Empire and the western Roman Empire, and the feet and the toes, partly of iron and partly of clay (Dan. 2:41-43), signify the nations in the period after the fall of Rome and before Christ’s second coming:
  - 1. These nations are partly autocratic and partly democratic; the ten toes of the image signify the ten kings of the revived and restored Roman Empire under Antichrist—v. 44a; 7:7, 24; Rev. 17:12.
  - 2. The periods of history signified by the first three parts of the great human image and the two legs have been fulfilled, but the period signified by the ten toes has not yet been fulfilled; it will be fulfilled at the end of the present age.

**IV. The destiny of the great human image is to be crushed by a stone cut out without hands—Dan. 2:34-35a, 44b-45:**

DANIEL

Message Three (continuation)

- A. This stone is Christ; through His crucifixion Christ was cut by God by being put to death (Zech. 3:9; Acts 2:23), and in His resurrection (v. 24) He was cut out to be a stone in three aspects: the foundation stone and the cornerstone for the building up of the church (Isa. 28:16; Matt. 21:42), the stumbling stone to the unbelieving Jews (Isa. 8:14; Matt. 21:44a; Rom. 9:33), and the crushing stone to destroy the totality of human government (Matt. 21:44b).
  - B. When Christ comes as the crushing stone, He will not come alone; rather, He will come with His overcomers, His bride, His increase, as His army—John 3:29-30; Rev. 17:14; 19:7-8, 11, 14.
  - C. During the church age, the age of mystery, Christ is building up the church to be His bride (Eph. 5:25-29); before He descends to earth, Christ will have a wedding, in which He will marry the overcomers (Rev. 19:7-9), those who have been fighting the battle against God's enemy for years and who have already overcome the evil one (cf. 12:11).
  - D. After His wedding, Christ as the Husband will come with His newlywed bride to destroy Antichrist, who with his army will fight against God directly—17:14; 19:19.
  - E. At His appearing as the God-cut stone, Christ with His overcomers—the corporate Christ—will strike the ten kings with Antichrist (vv. 11-21), thereby crushing the great image from the toes to the head (Dan. 2:35).
  - F. This will be Christ's universal judgment on the aggregate of human government from Antichrist back to Nimrod, thus ending the age of man's government on earth in the old creation and initiating the age of God's dominion over the entire earth in the millennium and in the new heaven and new earth for eternity.
- V. **“Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold were crushed all at once, and they became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away so that no trace of them was found. And the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth”—v. 35:**
- A. The great mountain here signifies the eternal kingdom of God, which will fill the whole earth forever—v. 44; 7:13-14.

Message Three (continuation)

- B. After coming to crush the aggregate of human government, the corporate Christ—Christ with His overcoming bride—will become a great mountain to fill the whole earth, making the whole earth God’s kingdom; thus the great human image will be replaced with the eternal kingdom of God on earth—Rev. 11:15-17.
  - C. The increase of the stone into a great mountain signifies the increase of Christ (cf. John 3:29-30); the church is Christ’s increase in life, but the eternal kingdom of God is Christ’s increase in administration (Mark 4:26-29); hence, Christ is not only the church but also the kingdom of God (1 Cor. 12:12; Luke 17:21).
  - D. As the stone, Christ is the centrality of God’s move, and as the mountain, He is the universality; hence, He is the all-inclusive One, the One who fills all in all—Eph. 1:23.
- VI. We need to see what our attitude should be in the light of the vision of Christ and His overcoming bride coming as a corporate smiting stone to smash the totality of human government and becoming a great mountain, the kingdom of God, to fill the whole earth:**
- A. If, as God’s people, we see this controlling vision in Daniel 2, we will be kept from the world and prepared for Christ’s coming.
  - B. Since we know that the Lord’s coming is so precious, we should have a living that loves the Lord’s appearing; this will cause us not to be discouraged, not to backslide, not to become weak, but to remain faithful to the end—2 Tim. 4:8; cf. John 14:21.
  - C. The last prayer in the Bible is “Come, Lord Jesus!” (Rev. 22:20); we should all pray such a prayer and have such a desire; the entire Bible concludes with the desire for the Lord’s coming expressed as a prayer.
  - D. Every “today” that we have is truly the Lord’s grace; therefore, as long as we have today, as long as we still have breath, we should love the Lord and His appearing, await the Lord’s coming (Phil. 3:20), and always take His coming as an encouragement.
  - E. When the Lord comes, He will come secretly as a thief to those who love Him and will steal them away as His treasures and

DANIEL

Message Three (continuation)

bring them into His presence in the heavens (Matt. 24:42-43); hence, we need to watch and be ready (25:13; 24:44).

- F. To attain maturity is not an overnight matter; therefore, for His coming to set up His kingdom we must prepare ourselves, love Him, and grow in Him, that at His appearing we may be mature to be raptured and receive the reward—Heb. 6:1a; Luke 21:34-36; cf. Rev. 12:5-6, 14.