

The Book of Daniel & God's Kingdom


ANCIENT EMPIRES OF MESOPOTAMIA
AND THE MEDITERRANEAN

DANIEL'S PROPHECY & INTERPRETATION

(The Church)

| GOLD | Babylonian (625 B.C. - 539 B.C.) | "This image's head was of fine gold... The God of heaven has given you a kingdom...you [Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon] are this head of gold" (Daniel 2:32, 37, 38; cf. 1:1). |
|-------------|---------------------------------------|---|
| SILVER | Medo-Persian (539 B.C. - 331 B.C.) | "Its chest and arms of silver... after you [Nebuchadnezzar] shall arise another kingdom inferior to yours" (Daniel 2:32, 39; cf. 8:20). |
| BRONZE | Greek (331 B.C. - 63 B.C.) | "Its belly and thighs of bronze... then another, a third kingdom of bronze, which shall rule over all the earth" (Daniel 2:32, 39; cf. 8:21). |
| IRON & CLAY | Roman (146 B.C. - A.D. 476) | "Its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay...and the fourth kingdom shall be as strong as iron, ...that kingdom will break in pieces and crush all the others" (Daniel 2:33, 40, 42, 43). |

Kingdom of God Established (approx. A.D. 33)
"And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever"
(Daniel 2:44).



The New Testament reveals that Jesus and John the Baptist preached the establishment of God's kingdom by saying it was "at hand" (Matthew 3:2; 4:17, 23). Since the church and the kingdom are one and the same (Matthew 16:18-19; Mark 9:1; Acts 1:3; 2:38, 47; 8:12; Colossians 1:13), and the church was established in the first century during the days of the Roman empire, it follows that the kingdom of God was established in the first century following the earthly ministry of Jesus. The church/kingdom is comprised of people from all nations (Isaiah 2:1-2) and thus consumes "all these kingdoms" (Daniel 2:44) and is spoken of in the New Testament as having been in existence during the first century A.D. (Colossians 1:13; 2 Thessalonians 1:5; Revelation 1:9). This kingdom still exists today, and all penitent sinners can choose to become a part of it by being immersed into Christ. Jesus, as the head of His church and the King of all kings (Colossians 1:18; 1 Timothy 6:15), is now reigning over His kingdom—His people (Acts 2:36; Luke 17:21).

Future-Kingdom Advocates

No doubt you have heard the majority of those claiming Christianity, to believe in a doctrine so perverted, that it dares to call God a liar. Yes, the doctrine of Premillennialism in its many forms asserts various claims and perverts various prophecies in order to make its teachings palatable. Those such as Lindsay, Rice and Pink reject the fact that the gospel or even Christianity was foretold in the Old Testament. They advocate a future kingdom that is material in nature, where Jesus Christ will sit upon the literal throne of David for 1,000 years and the gentiles will be subservient to Israel.

These claims find no Scriptural support, unless of course, one takes passages out of context, turns figures of speech into literal events, and adds conjecture to certain individuals, concerning their involvement in the fulfillment of their invented doctrine. While Premillennialists agree that the kingdom spoken of by Daniel is the same kingdom that John the Immerser and Jesus said was “at hand” (Matthew 3:2; 4:17, 23), they propose that it is a future kingdom, yet to come – a literal kingdom to be established in Jerusalem for 1,000 years. Let us look at what the Word of God really teaches concerning the kingdom.

The Kingdom & The Church

Are “The Kingdom of God,” and “The Kingdom of Heaven,” synonymous for the church of Christ? Dispensationalists would argue they are not. Let’s allow the Word of God to give us the answer. In Matthew 16:18-19, Jesus told His disciples that He would build His church, and that He would give to them (the 12), the keys to the “Kingdom of Heaven.” In the context, Jesus refers to the church as the “Kingdom of Heaven.” Then in verse 28 of that same chapter Jesus tells them that there will still be some alive when they see Him coming in His “kingdom.”

In Mark chapter one, Jesus was preaching the gospel, and telling people that “*The kingdom of God is at hand*” (vs. 15). In other words, it is near.

Christ also declared that during the lifetime of His hearers, they would see the kingdom of God come with power (Luke 9:27; Matthew 16:28). That power of which Jesus spoke would be the baptism of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles (Acts 1:8; 2:1-4). Harmonizing all these passages together, we must conclude that “The Kingdom of God,” AND “The Kingdom of Heaven” are one and the same kingdom. We must also conclude that this kingdom would appear in the first century, since Jesus said it was “near,” and that this kingdom would come in the lifetime of those who heard His teaching.

Remember, Daniels dream spoke of four earthly kingdoms (Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece & Rome). Even though the Roman Kingdom (Empire) is not specifically mentioned, everyone agrees that the legs, feet and toes of the image represent the Roman Kingdom. It was strong, yet even with its armies was unable to maintain unity among all the nations it colonized, therefore being iron and clay that would not mix.

Daniel foretold that during the days of the Fourth kingdom (Roman Empire), God would set up a kingdom that would not be destroyed (Daniel 2:44-45). Jesus said that the time had been fulfilled for God to establish a kingdom in the first century (Mark 1:14-15). Taking into account the book of Daniel, and the dream of the kingdoms, the prophecy was never intended to be an outline of entire history of the world. The dream and prophecy dealt only with kingdoms that existed in Daniel’s day until the time that God established His kingdom. God’s kingdom, we are told by Daniel, would come into existence during the days of kings of the fourth kingdom (Roman Empire). These kings would refer to Caesar, who ruled during the days of Jesus’ ministry (Luke 3:1-2).

The Jews of the first century understood the prophecies of the Old Testament foretelling of a coming king and kingdom of their own. They looked for it, though in a material form, rather than spiritual. So when John the Immerser and Jesus preached that the kingdom of God was at hand, the people were ready. Daniel’s prophecy fits perfectly with the historical record found in the Word of God. Daniel said that the kingdom of God would

be established in the days of the Roman Empire; it was. Jesus said that Daniel’s prophecy was fulfilled; and it was (Matthew 3:2; Mark 1:14-15). The kingdom of God was established at the right time in accordance to Daniel’s interpretation of the dream. It was founded in the first century (Mark 9:1; Acts 2:34-36). The kingdom of God was small at first, with 3,000 souls being added to it by God (Acts 2:41-47). The kingdom of God grew rapidly as Daniel had foretold it would become a world-filling mountain (Daniel 2:44-45).

The Kingdom of God, as established in the first century, foretold by Daniel was and is the church of Christ. It is the church of Christ because it is agreed that the church began in the first century, during the existence of the Roman Empire. It is the church of Christ because Christ said He would build it (Matthew 16:18). The Kingdom of God, which is also the Kingdom of Heaven is the church of Christ because Paul told the Colossians that due to their obedience to the gospel message, they had been translated into it (Colossians 1:13).

The dream of Daniel harmonizes perfectly with its fulfillment as found in the New Testament. There is no future kingdom yet come – other than the heavenly. The kingdom of God/heaven is the one and only kingdom over which Christ now reigns at the right hand of God (Ephesians 5:5; Colossians 3:1; Hebrews 1:3; 1 Peter 3:22).

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