"Are We Close to the End?!" - Daniel 2:26-45

Dan 2:26-45 NLT - *"The king said to Daniel (also known as Belteshazzar), "Is this true? Can you tell me what my dream was and what it means?" 27 Daniel replied, "There are no wise men, enchanters, magicians, or fortune-tellers who can reveal the king's secret. 28 But there is a God in heaven who reveals secrets, and he has shown King Nebuchadnezzar what will happen in the future. Now I will tell you your dream and the visions you saw as you lay on your bed.*

29 "While Your Majesty was sleeping, you dreamed about coming events. He who reveals secrets has shown you what is going to happen. 30 And it is not because I am wiser than anyone else that I know the secret of your dream, but because God wants you to understand what was in your heart. 31 "In your vision, Your Majesty, you saw standing before you a huge, shining statue of a man. It was a frightening sight. 32 The head of the statue was made of fine gold. Its chest and arms were silver, its belly and thighs were bronze, 33 its legs were iron, and its feet were a combination of iron and baked clay. 34 As you watched, a rock was cut from a mountain, but not by human hands. It struck the feet of iron and clay, smashing them to bits. 35 The whole statue was crushed into small pieces of iron, clay, bronze, silver, and gold. Then the wind blew them away without a trace, like chaff on a threshing floor. But the rock that knocked the statue down became a great mountain that covered the whole earth.

36 "That was the dream. Now we will tell the king what it means. 37 Your Majesty, you are the greatest of kings. The God of heaven has given you sovereignty, power, strength, and honor. 38 He has made you the ruler over all the inhabited world and has put even the wild animals and birds under your control. You are the head of gold.

39 "But after your kingdom comes to an end, another kingdom, inferior to yours, will rise to take your place. After that kingdom has fallen, yet a third kingdom, represented by bronze, will rise to rule the world. 40 Following that kingdom, there will be a fourth one, as strong as iron. That kingdom will smash and crush all previous empires, just as iron smashes and crushes everything it strikes. 41 The feet and toes you saw were a combination of iron and baked clay, showing that this kingdom will be divided. Like iron mixed with clay, it will have some of the strength of iron. 42 But while some parts of it will be as strong as iron, other parts will be as weak as clay. 43 This mixture of iron and clay also shows that these kingdoms will try to strengthen themselves by forming alliances with each

other through intermarriage. But they will not hold together, just as iron and clay do not mix.

44 "During the reigns of those kings, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed or conquered. It will crush all these kingdoms into nothingness, and it will stand forever. 45 That is the meaning of the rock cut from the mountain, though not by human hands, that crushed to pieces the statue of iron, bronze, clay, silver, and gold. The great God was showing the king what will happen in the future. The dream is true, and its meaning is certain."

*ON FAMILY ROAD TRIPS, KIDS OFTEN ASK **"ARE WE THERE YET??"***

5 World Empires of Mankind:
I. The Kingdom of GOLD: *BABYLON*
II. The Kingdom of SILVER: *MEDO-PERSIA*
III. The Kingdom of BRONZE: *GREECE*
IV. The Kingdom of IRON: *ROME*
v. The Kingdom of IRON/CLAY: *NEW ROME*

I. The Kingdom of GOLD: *BABYLON**(v.31-32, 37-38) - *"In your vision, Your Majesty, you saw standing before you a huge, shining statue of a man. It was a frightening sight. The head of the statue was made of fine gold... 37 Your Majesty, you are the greatest of kings. The God of heaven has given you sovereignty, power, strength, and honor. He has made you the ruler over all the inhabited world and has put even the wild animals and birds under your control. You are the head of gold."***

- *This was the **head** of the statue*
  - **Jer 51:7** - *"Babylon was a golden cup in the LORD's hand."*
  - **Isa 14:4** - *"How the oppressor has ceased, how the golden city has ceased."*
  - *"The City of **Gold**" (Herodotus)*
  - *Absolute **monarchy***
    - *Historically, Babylon began to rule in **605BC***

II. The Kingdom of SILVER: *MEDO-PERSIA**(v.32, 39) - *"Its chest and arms were silver... 39 But after your kingdom comes to an end, another kingdom" inferior to yours, will rise to take your place."***

- *This was the **chest** of the statue*
  - *Tribute system - paid in **silver***
  - *Historically, Medo-Persia began to rule in **539BC***

- *Constitutional **monarchy** (deterioration?)*

- There seems to be a ***DETERIORATION OF HUMANITY*** predicted:
  - *Deterioration of **STABILITY?** - The metals decrease in **weight** (19-11-8.5-7.8-1.6)*
  - *Deterioration of **MORALITY?** The metals decrease in **value***
  - *Deterioration of **UNITY?** The materials decrease in **density**/cohesion*
  - *Increase in **POTENCY?**The kingdoms increase in **power**/military might*

III. The Kingdom of BRONZE: *GREECE*(v.32, 39) - *"..its belly and thighs were bronze... 39 After that kingdom has fallen, yet a third kingdom, represented by bronze, will rise to rule the world."*

- *This was the **stomach** of the statue*
  - *Alexander equipped his soldiers with bronze helmets, shields, armor, and swords all made of bronze. - "Shining **Bronze** Phalanx"*
  - *Royal **Oligarchy***
    - *Historically, Greece began to rule in **334BC***

IV. The Kingdom of IRON: *ROME*(v.33, 40) - *"...its legs were iron... 40 Following that kingdom, there will be a fourth one, as strong as iron. That kingdom will smash and crush all previous empires, just as iron smashes and crushes everything it strikes."*

- *These were the **legs** of the statue*
  - *"**Iron** Legions of Rome"*
  - *Democracy - **Senate***
    - *Historically, Rome began to rule in **168BC** lasting until **476AD***

V. The Kingdom of IRON/CLAY: *NEW ROME* (v.33, 41-43) - *"... its feet were a combination of iron and baked clay... 41 The feet and toes you saw were a combination of iron and baked clay, showing that this kingdom will be divided. Like iron mixed with clay, it will have some of the strength of iron. But while some parts of it will be as strong as iron, other parts will be as weak as clay. This mixture of iron and clay also shows that these kingdoms will try to strengthen themselves by forming alliances with each other through intermarriage. But they will not hold together, just as iron and clay do not mix."*

- *This was the **feet** of the statue*
  - ***Iron** mixed with **clay**?!*

- ***10** Toes **= 10** Kings/Rulers as the final form of human world government...*
    - *Historically, the foundation for the Revived Roman Empire seems to have begun in **1948?!***
        - **1948** - *"The Club of Rome" 5 nations - The Treaty of Brussels*
        - **1957** - *"European Common Market" - 6 nations ('Big Ten') - The Treaty of Rome*
        - **1979** - *"European Monetary System" created*
        - **1983** - *3 more nations admitted (12 total - EU flag)*
        - **1993** - *"European Union" - The Maastricht Treaty (Tower of Babel logo - Gen 11)*
        - **1995** - *Border controls dropped between EU nations*
        - **1999** - *A common currency launched - the "Euro" (Woman Riding a Beast - Rev 13)*
        - **2021** - *There are currently 27 nations in the EU*

VI. The Eternal Kingdom: *The Kingdom of JESUS*(v.34-35, 44-45) - *"As you watched, a rock was cut from a mountain, but not by human hands. It struck the feet of iron and clay, smashing them to bits. The whole statue was crushed into small pieces of iron, clay, bronze, silver, and gold. Then the wind blew them away without a trace, like chaff on a threshing floor. But the rock that knocked the statue down became a great mountain that covered the whole earth... 44 "During the reigns of those kings, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed or conquered. It will crush all these kingdoms into nothingness, and it will stand forever. That is the meaning of the rock cut from the mountain, though not by human hands, that crushed to pieces the statue of iron, bronze, clay, silver, and gold. The great God was showing the king what will happen in the future. The dream is true, and its meaning is certain."*

*This was the **Rock** striking the feet, destroying the statue*

- *Jesus is the **ROCK** sent by the Lord, to re-establish God's Kingdom upon the earth:*
    - Jesus is called the ***"ROCK/STONE/CORNERSTONE"*** in 7 times, in the OT/NT.
        - **Isaiah 28:16** - *"The Sovereign Lord says: "Look! I am placing a **foundation stone** in Jerusalem, a firm and tested **stone**. It is a **precious cornerstone** that is safe to build on. Whoever believes need never be shaken."*

- **Eph 2:20** - *"Together, we are his house, built on the foundation of the apostles and the prophets. And **the cornerstone** is Christ Jesus himself."*
- **1 Pet 2:7-8** - *"Yes, you who trust him recognize the honor God has given him. But for those who reject him,"The **stone** that the builders rejected has now become the **cornerstone**." And,"He is the **stone** that makes people stumble, the **rock** that makes them fall."*

- **MAIN IMPORTANT VERSE:** **(v.44)** ***"During the reigns of those kings, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed or conquered. It will crush all these kingdoms into nothingness, and it will stand forever.***

  - **The Coming Kingdom of Christ is characterized by numerous qualities according to Dan 2:**
    - *It will be a **SUPERNATURAL** Kingdom! The Stone is **God made flesh**.*
    - *It will be a **SUDDEN** Kingdom! It will happen **in a moment, suddenly**.*
    - *It will be a **SEVERE** Kingdom! Christ will **decimate His enemies**.*
    - *It will be a **SOVEREIGN** Kingdom! Jesus will rule as **King over the earth**.*
    - *It will be a **SUCCESSFUL** Kingdom! Christ's Kingdom **will last forever**.*

How should *Bible Prophecy* and the nearness of *Jesus' Return* impact us?

- **You may not know *what* the future holds, but you know *Who* holds the future!** *Almighty God knows what you cannot know. He knows what's in the darkness. He knows what's in the future. He knows you and cares for you and watches over you day and night. He alone can solve your problems, guide your paths, shape your future -*
  - *SO TAKE YOUR **EYES OFF OF PEOPLE**; TAKE YOUR **EYES OFF OF THAT PROBLEM**; PUT YOUR **FOCUS ON THE LORD**; **TRUST HIM COMPLETELY** WITH THAT SITUATION!! HE'S IN **COMPLETE CONTROL** OF HISTORY; HE'S IN **COMPLETE CONTROL** OF THE PRESENT!! (**Prov 3:5-6**)*

- **Since the *world* is in Gods hands, *your world* is also in Gods hands!**
  - *Since Almighty God holds the entire world in His hands, and controls everything going on in the governments of the world... Doesn't it make sense then, to trust the LORD with your personal world? When **you** feel overwhelmed with **your** problems and **your** daily pressures, remember that **GOD** can easily handle it!! Choose to leave them in His gracious and mighty hands.*

- **Since the Hand of God is *guiding human history*; since the *final human government* is being assembled in our time; since *JESUS COULD RETURN* FOR US AT ANY MOMENT... *LIVE FOR THE KINGDOM OF GOD!!!***
  - **Phil 1:21** - ***Living is all about Christ!***
  - **Matt 6:33** - ***Make the Kingdom of God your #1 PRIORITY!***
    - ***My Time??***
    - ***My Talents??***
    - ***My Treasure??***
    - ***My Tools??***