

Kingdoms and the Kingdom of God

Daniel 2:24-49

October 25th, 2026

1. _____ – Giving glory to God (2:24-30)

2. _____ – The statue and the stone (2:31-35)

3. _____ – Four kingdoms and the kingdom of God (2:36-45)

4. _____ – Giving glory to God (2:46-49)

5. Applying the Word

a. No _____ kingdom will ultimately compete with _____ kingdom.

b. Pray for His kingdom to _____ and will to be _____.

Body part(s):	Made of:	Kingdom:
Head	Gold	_____ (605 B.C.)
Chest and arms	Silver	_____ (539 B.C.)
Belly and thighs	Bronze	_____ (331 B.C.)
Legs	Iron	_____ (146 B.C.)
Feet and toes	Iron and clay	Final stage of _____

The kingdom of God refers to God's _____, in God's _____, under God's _____.

The kingdom is a _____, spiritual reality with an _____, literal fulfillment.

Questions for Discussion/Reflection on Daniel 2:24-49

1. In what ways does Daniel ensure that God alone gets the credit for being the revealer of mysteries?
2. Looking at the elements of the dream itself, what do you notice about the statue? How does the composition of the statue change as it moves down from the head to the feet? What details are we given about the stone in vv. 34-35?
3. What can we observe about the nature of God's kingdom in vv. 44-45?
4. How does Daniel 7:13-14 describe the coming of Jesus and His kingdom? What similarities do you notice with the description of God's kingdom in 2:44-45?
5. What effect should it have on us as we see God's past fulfillment of prophecy?
6. How do the following passages inform our interpretation of the stone that represents the kingdom of God?
 - a. Psalm 2:1-9
 - b. Isaiah 2:2-4
 - c. Luke 20:17-18
 - d. Rev. 19:11-16
7. Nebuchadnezzar is amazed at what Daniel was able to reveal to him. He falls down prostrate and pays homage. But to whom? And yet how does that relate to what Nebuchadnezzar says in verse 47?

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Big idea: Successive, temporary human kingdoms will be conquered by the eternal kingdom of God.

Intro

When Jesus taught His disciples to pray, He gave them what we call The Lord's Prayer in Matthew 6.

The prayer begins this way:

Matthew 6:9-10 "Pray, then, in this way: 'Our Father who is in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. ¹⁰ 'Your kingdom come. Your will be done, On earth as it is in heaven.

What are we praying for when we say, "Your kingdom come"?

It's GOD'S kingdom – "your kingdom..."

It's still future in some sense, or at least "in the works" because we are praying for it to come

It's related to His will being done on earth in a way that parallels the way it is already done in heaven.

These ideas didn't just drop in out of nowhere.

The kingdom was a prominent theme in the OT and Daniel 2 includes one of the most significant passages about the kingdom.

1. **Preparation** – Giving glory to God (2:24-30)

- a. In the first half of the chapter, the Babylonian King, Nebuchadnezzar had a disturbing dream.
 - i. He wanted his wise men to explain it to him, but in order to know that they were really able to interpret it and weren't just making stuff up, he wanted them to tell him the dream and its interpretation.
 - ii. They told him it was impossible. He didn't like that. Kings don't like being told that what they want is impossible. So Nebuchadnezzar ordered them all to be killed.
 - iii. Daniel learned about this order, asked for time, prayed, and God gave him both the dream and its interpretation.
 - iv. We left off with Daniel praising God for that.
- b. We pick up with the action as Daniel tells Arioch, the executioner, not to destroy the wise men (including Daniel and his friends). (v. 24)
 - i. See compassion from Daniel even towards the other wise men.
- c. Arioch snuck in a little credit for himself – "I found someone!" (v. 25)
- d. When asked if Daniel could make it known, Daniel turns the glory to God (vv. 26-30)
 - i. Agrees with the wise men – no man on earth can do this, only God
 1. Interesting that he defends them from the king while affirming their lack of power and insight.
 - ii. God has made known what will take place – and He has made it known to Nebuchadnezzar.
 1. Daniel will interpret and explain it, but God chose to reveal this to this gentile king.
 2. "The latter days" – it stretches from his day and rule in 600 BC, through three more kingdoms and then all the way to the kingdom of God that will be a lasting kingdom.

- e. What are you asking God to do, that only He can do, so that when He does it, only He can get the glory for it?
 - i. Talking with someone last week after the message who passed on how they had heard it from a pastor that we both know many years ago.
 - ii. What is it that seems impossible?
- f. Daniel directs the glory to God – it's not for any wisdom residing in me more than any other living man.

2. **Dream** – The statue and the stone (2:31-35)

- a. You were looking and there was a statue
 - i. You can imagine that immediately the king knew that Daniel was on to something.
 - ii. Up until this point, he may have remained skeptical that Daniel can actually come through or whether this is just more buying time and bluffing.
 - iii. But as soon as Daniel mentioned the statue, his interest would have peaked.
- b. The statue
 - i. Single
 - ii. Great
 - iii. Large
 - iv. Extraordinary splendor – brightness, brilliance
- c. Head of gold, breast and arms of silver, belly and thighs of bronze, legs of iron, feet of iron and clay.
 - i. Descending from more valuable to less valuable metals as it moves down the statue
 - ii. Increasing in hardness and strength as it moves down the statue
 - 1. Until we reach the feet of iron and clay.
- d. A stone, cut without hands struck the statue on its feet
 - i. Crushed the feet, then crushed the other layers of the statue all at the same time
 - ii. Unlike what would normally happen to metal that is crushed by stone, the statue became like chaff (dust) that blew away and no trace was found.
 - iii. Then the stone became a great mountain and filled the earth.
 - 1. Started smaller (but still enough to crush the feet) and became great.

3. **Interpretation** – Four kingdoms and the kingdom of God (2:36-45)

Body part(s)	Made of:	Kingdom
Head	Gold	Babylon (605 B.C.)
Chest and arms	Silver	Medo-Persia (539 B.C.)
Belly and thighs	Bronze	Greece (331 B.C.)
Legs	Iron	Rome (146 B.C.)
Feet and toes	Iron and clay	Final stage of Rome

- a. Nebuchadnezzar – you are the head of gold

- i. The king was associated with the kingdom, so to say the head is Nebuchadnezzar is to say the head is Babylon, the kingdom he rules over and his successors will rule over.
 - ii. You have great strength – God has given you great strength.
- b. After you – Medo-Persia conquered Babylon in 539 BC.
 - i. Neb. ruled for 43 years and died in 562 BC, so this would be more than 20 years after his death.
 - ii. Inferior, just as silver is inferior to gold, even though they had more territory, perhaps because it was an uneasy partnership between the Medes and the Persians and lacked the unity of Babylon.
- c. Then another third kingdom
 - i. This kingdom will also rule the earth
 - ii. Alexander the Great conquered Medo-Persia in 331 B.C.
 - iii. The accuracy and detail of Daniel's prophecies have led some to conclude that these were actually written much later, around 167-164 BC. I plan to give a more detailed response to that in later chapter because they contain more detailed prophecies than Daniel 2.
 - 1. If the argument is based on it being too accurate to be prophetic, then that is simply assuming the point.
 - 2. A strong argument in favor of the early date of Daniel is that the book of Daniel was accepted by the Qumran community (dead sea scrolls) that emerged as a separate group in Judaism by 171 BC, which makes it unlikely that Daniel could have been written at that time.
- d. Fourth kingdom of iron
 - i. Strong, crushes and shatters
 - 1. Rome would be known for its military might used to crush all resistance.
 - 2. But it will become divided and brittle, like iron mixed with clay.
 - ii. Gives more attention to this fourth kingdom than the other three put together.
 - 1. More variety of interpretations at this point among Christian scholars.
 - 2. All basically agree on the Babylon – Medo-Persia – Greece
 - 3. Most agree that the fourth kingdom is Rome.
 - 4. Disagreement comes with whether it is only describing Rome in the past or if there is an aspect of fulfillment that is still future from our perspective.
 - a. The difference relates to how we expect the “stone” that represents the Kingdom of God to be fulfilled.
 - b. Is it fulfilled already or is the fulfillment yet future.
- e. The stone
 - i. Description of the stone/kingdom
 - 1. “In the days of those kings” – the brittle and strong feet/toes of the Roman kingdom
 - 2. God will set up – His doing

3. His kingdom will never be destroyed (unlike each of the other kingdoms)
4. His kingdom will crush and put an end to all the other kingdoms
- ii. Jesus and His kingdom are the stone
 1. Just like Nebuchadnezzar was the head – representing Babylon
 2. **Luke 1:31-33** "And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name Him Jesus. ³² "He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; ³³ and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and His kingdom will have no end."
 3. **Matthew 4:17** From that time Jesus began to preach and say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."
 4. Psalm 2 predicted this
 - a. **Psalm 2:6-9** "But as for Me, I have installed My King Upon Zion, My holy mountain." ⁷ "I will surely tell of the decree of the LORD: He said to Me, 'You are My Son, Today I have begotten You. ⁸ 'Ask of Me, and I will surely give the nations as Your inheritance, And the very ends of the earth as Your possession. ⁹ 'You shall break them with a rod of iron, You shall shatter them like earthenware."
 5. Jesus seems to allude to the prophecy in Daniel in Luke 20:17-18
 - a. **Luke 20:17-18** But Jesus looked at them and said, "What then is this that is written: 'THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED, THIS BECAME THE CHIEF CORNER stone'? ¹⁸ "Everyone who falls on that stone will be broken to pieces; but on whomever it falls, it will scatter him like dust."
 6. Is this fulfilled in Jesus' first or second coming?
 - a. If first coming, then it is entirely spiritual in nature – rules in the church and in the hearts of his people.
 - i. The final stage of Rome occurred during the 1st century
 - b. If second coming, then there is a literal fulfillment that we are still waiting for.
 - i. The final stage of Rome will occur in the future with the remnants of the Roman empire, essentially the nations of Europe that are even now formed as a loose union.
 - ii. View known as premillennialism – Jesus comes back and then sets up a kingdom for a thousand years that then rolls into the eternal kingdom.
 1. He comes back first (pre)
 2. Then the kingdom for a thousand years (millennial)
 - iii. That's how I take it, partly because I think it makes the best sense of this passage, but I think it becomes even more clear with the other prophecies in Daniel that we'll get to in coming weeks.
- iii. The kingdom of God refers to God's **people**, in God's **place**, under God's **rule**.
 1. What does a king have? People, place, rule

2. Nebuchadnezzar had a people, place, rule – as did each of the successive kingdoms.
- iv. The kingdom is a ***present***, spiritual reality with an ***eventual***, literal fulfillment.
1. In one sense, God rules over all the universe as King.
 - a. **Psalm 47:2** For the LORD Most High is to be feared, A great King over all the earth.
 2. But people have rebelled against His rule.
 - a. Sin is basically trying to get out from underneath God's rule and placing that crown on our own heads.
 - b. The result is not a Disney movie where the lead character follows his or her heart and it turns out well in the end with lots of singing and musical numbers in the middle.
 - c. The result is the world we find ourselves in, a world of abuse, corruption of power, broken homes, and messed up relationships.
 3. Jesus came to obey God's rule perfectly and die on behalf of rebels against the King.
 - a. **1 Peter 3:18a** For Christ also died for sins once for all, *the* just for *the* unjust, so that He might bring us to God,
 4. When people recognize their rebellion, turn from it, and accept God's forgiveness, they are placed into this kingdom in a spiritual sense.
 - a. **Colossians 1:13-14** For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, ¹⁴ in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.
 5. One day King Jesus will set up a literal reign on earth in the millennial kingdom
 - a. **Luke 21:31** "So you also, when you see these things happening, recognize that the kingdom of God is near.
 - b. **Acts 1:6b-7** "Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?" ⁷ He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority;
 6. Revelation 19 describes the second coming of Jesus
 - a. **Revelation 19:11** And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He who sat on it *is* called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and wages war.
 - b. **Revelation 19:15-16** From His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may strike down the nations, and He will rule them with a rod of iron; and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty. ¹⁶ And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, "KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS."
 7. Revelation 20 describes the millennial (thousand year) reign of Jesus
 - a. **Revelation 20:4-6** Then I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was given to them. And I *saw* the souls of those who had been beheaded because of

their testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received the mark on their forehead and on their hand; and they came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. ⁵ The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were completed. This is the first resurrection. ⁶ Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years.

8. When Jesus returns and establishes His kingdom, He will bring an end to all earthly kingdoms.

4. **Response** – Giving glory to God (2:46-49)

- a. Nebuchadnezzar – the all powerful king who can kill with a word – fell on his face before Daniel, the teenage wise man ripped from his family and home against his will and taken 600 miles away just three years earlier.
- b. Surely your God is a God of gods
 - i. Still a polytheist, but he elevates Daniel's God to the top tier.
 - ii. David Helm, "For the first time in Nebuchadnezzar's life, Marduk had competition in his interior world—all because one godly man remained poised, prayerful and willing to speak truth to power."
- c. The king had promised to honor any wise man who could tell him the dream and its interpretation (v. 6), and he came through with his promise.

5. Applying the Word

- a. No **earthly** kingdom will ultimately compete with **God's** kingdom.
- b. Pray for His kingdom to **come** and will to be **done**.
 - i. **Matthew 6:9-10** "Pray, then, in this way: 'Our Father who is in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. ¹⁰ 'Your kingdom come. Your will be done, On earth as it is in heaven.



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Luke 1:31-33 "And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name Him Jesus. ³² "He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; ³³ and **He will reign** over the house of Jacob forever, and **His kingdom will have no end.**"

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