

The Golden Man Meets the Rock

Chapters 2 and 3

Gary DeMar

Introduction

I. The Interpretation

- A. The dream (2:32–35) and its interpretation (2:36–45) are revealed to Daniel by God (2:19–23).
- B. The four parts of the statue represent four earthly (feet) human (man) kingdoms and as competitors to God’s kingdom (God as the real “Metal Man” [Dan. 10:6 and Rev. 1:15–16] and temple [Ex. 25:3 with iron added to Solomon’s temple: 1 Chron. 22:**14**, **16**; 29:2, 7; 2 Chron. 2:7, 14]).
 1. Gold = Babylon
 2. Silver = Medeo-Persia (see Dan. 5:28; 6:8, 12, 15; 8:20)
 3. Bronze = Greece
 4. Iron and Clay (people of the land)¹ = Rome with apostate Israel/Herodians (clay) attempting to “mix” (spiritual adultery) with Rome.
 - a. “Now it was the day of preparation for the Passover; it was about the sixth hour. And he said to the Jews, ‘Behold, your King!’ So they cried out, ‘Away with Him, away with Him, crucify Him!’ Pilate said to them, ‘Shall I crucify

¹The clay, terra cotta, was placed over the iron feet.

your King?’ The chief priests answered, ‘We have no king but Caesar’” (John 19:14–15).

b. The sea and land beasts of Revelation 13.

C. The four metals represent both utility (iron) and value (gold).

1. Each successive kingdom is “inferior” (“**earthward from you**”) (2:39)² in that each moves away from acknowledging the true God, as Nebuchadnezzar did (see Dan. 4:37). There is still a remnant of belief among the Medeo-Persian kingdom (Ezra 1:1–4), but this is diminished by the time of the Greeks and Romans.
2. Each successive kingdom is superior in that it gains more power. In terms of utility, while gold is good for ornamentation, iron is an implement of war (chariots: Josh. 17:16, 18; Judges 4:3, 13 and spears: 1 Sam. 17:7; rod of iron: Rev. 19:15).

D. The stone.

1. It’s common, accessible to everyone, as is the kingdom.
2. “Cut without hands” is a reference to the altar stone that is identified with Christ:
 - a. “If you make an altar of stone for Me, you shall not build it of cut stones, for if you wield your tool on it, you will profane it” (Ex. 20:25).
 - b. “Moreover, you shall build there an altar to the Lord your God, an altar of stones; you shall not wield an iron tool on them” (Deut. 27:5).
 - c. “Just as Moses the servant of the Lord had commanded the sons of Israel, as it is written in the book of the law of Moses, an altar of uncut stones on which no man had wielded an iron tool; and they offered burnt offerings on it to the Lord, and sacrificed peace offerings” (Josh. 8:31).

²See James B. Jordan, *The Handwriting on the Wall: A Commentary on the Book of Daniel* (Powder Springs, GA: American Vision, 2007), 161, note 22.

- d. “Jesus answered, ‘My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would be fighting so that I would not be handed over to the Jews; but as it is, My kingdom is not of this realm’” (cf. John 18:36).
3. The rock-kingdom is a reference to Jesus Christ.
- a. “I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it” (Matt. 16:18).
 - b. “Jesus said to them, ‘Did you never read in the Scriptures, “The stone which the builders rejected, This became the chief corner stone; This came about from the Lord , and it is marvelous in our eyes”’?” (Matt. 21:42).
 - c. “Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people, producing the fruit of it. And he who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; but on whomever it falls, it will scatter him like dust” (Matt. 21:43–44).
 - d. “Why? Because they did not pursue it by faith, but as though it were by works. They stumbled over the stumbling stone, just as it is written, ‘Behold , I lay in Zion a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense, and he who believes in Him will not be disappointed’” (Rom. 9:32–33).

II. Eschatological Issues

- A. There is a debate over when the final phase of the prophecy will be fulfilled.
 - 1. The first coming of Christ and the passing away of the Old Covenant order.
 - 2. A post-rapture period including a seven-year tribulation period that includes a revived Roman Empire (the “ten toes”) and the thousand years of Revelation 20 (“the stone cut without hands”).
- B. A Revived Roman Empire

1. One of the most talked-about prophetic scenarios based on Daniel 2 is the establishment of a ten-nation European Common Market. This “United States of Europe,” or European Economic Community (EEC), is said to be ruled by a coming “antichrist” who is “alive somewhere in the world today.”³
2. The idea of a revived confederated group of nations is based on the “ten toes” of Daniel 2:41–42, the “ten horns” and “ten kings” of Daniel 7:7, 20, 24, and the “ten horns” and “ten kings” of Revelation 13:1; 17:3, 7, 12, 16 (see Rev. 1:1, 3 and 22:10). **These passages are futurized well beyond their historical time frame and catapulted into the distant future where they still await fulfillment.**
3. “In that you saw the feet and toes, partly of potter’s clay and partly of iron, it will be a divided kingdom; but it will have in it the toughness of iron, inasmuch as you saw the iron mixed with common clay. As the toes of the feet were partly of iron and partly of pottery, so some of the kingdom will be strong and part of it will be brittle. And in that you saw the iron mixed with common clay, they will combine with one another in the **seed of men**; but they will not adhere to one another, even as iron does not combine with pottery” (Dan. 2:41–43).
 - a. They both get destroyed by the Stone (see Matt. 21:43–45; 24:1–34).
 - b. The use of “seed of men” may be a reference to Israel (Gen. 3:15; 22:17–18; Matt. 13:18–38: the “wheat seeds and the tare seeds”).
4. Separating the feet and toes from the legs is done by inserting a gap or parenthesis between the feet and toes of Daniel 2.

³See John Ankerberg, et al., *One World: Bible Prophecy and the New World Order* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1991), 25

5. “At some point in this symbolism [of Nebuchadnezzar’s statue] an extended gap in time *must be fixed*, because by verse 44 the interpretation describes the future day of Christ’s millennial reign, as will be seen.”⁴
6. Clarence Larkin’s description in *Dispensational Truth* (140–141).
7. First-century Rome actually had ten imperial provinces: Italy, Achaia, Asia, Syria, Egypt, Africa, Spain, Gaul, Britain, and Germany.⁵

C. Failed Predictions

1. In 1927, Oswald J. Smith wrote *Is the Antichrist at Hand?*
 - a. Smith believed that the fascist dictator Benito Mussolini (1883–1945), who had ruled Italy since 1922, was the predicted antichrist.
 - b. Ample biblical evidence was put forth to establish his claim.
 - c. Smith also believed that the Bible’s prediction about a revived ten-nation Roman confederacy was on the horizon. All the prophetic pieces were in place. Smith was so sure of his views that in subsequent printings of his book, he included the following on the front cover: **“The fact that this book has run swiftly into a number of large editions bears convincing testimony to its intrinsic worth. There are here portrayed startling indications of the approaching end of the present age from the spheres of demonology, politics and religion. No one can read this book without being impressed with the importance of the momentous days in which we are living.”**

⁴Leon J. Wood, *Daniel: A Study Guide Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1975), 39–40

⁵F.W. Farrar, *The Early Days of Christianity* (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1882), 464 note 1.

- d. In April 1945, Mussolini attempted to escape to Switzerland, but was captured and executed, along with his mistress and 15 others, near Lake Como by Italian communist partisans on April 28th. His body was brought to Milan where it was hung upside down at an Esso gas station for public viewing and confirmation of his death.⁶
 - e. “Ten nations, no more, no less, are to become allied and known as the Roman empire because Rome will be the centre, the capital, and it will be in Rome that the Emperor will reign.”⁷
2. In his *Late Great Planet Earth*, published in 1970, Hal Lindsey wrote about a “ten nation [European] confederacy” that would be in place by 1980.
 - a. For support, he quoted Dr. William Hallstein, the former president of the European Economic Community, who described how a “Common Market could someday expand into a ten-nation economic entity whose industrial might would far surpass that of the Soviet Union.”
 - b. Lindsey remarks, “Imagine that. A ‘ten-nation economic entity.’”⁸
 3. Today, there are at least 27 member states in the European Union which does not include Israel and the nations of northern Africa which were originally part of the Roman Empire.
 4. Other prophecy writers understand the problem of maintaining that a modern-day ten-nation European confederacy is the fulfillment of Daniel 2:41–43; 7:23–25; and Revelation 13:1–4 since the European Union has surpassed ten in membership. Prophecy

⁶“Execution of Mussolini”: <http://members.aol.com/Custermen85/ILDUCE/Mussolini.htm>

⁷Oswald J. Smith, *Is the Antichrist at Hand?* (Harrisburg, PA: The Christian Alliance Publishing Co., 1927), 18.

⁸Hal Lindsey, *The Late Great Planet Earth* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1970), 96–97.

pundits are now using the phrase “[ten regions of global governance](#).” Here’s what [Brannon Howse](#) of “Christian Worldview Network” writes about this supposed fulfillment of Bible prophecy in our day:

- a. Is the world on the verge of being divided into 10 regions? Rev 17:12 says that 10 world leaders will give their power and authority to the anti-christ. Iraq has unveiled plans for the creation of a regional economic and security union for the Middle East explicitly modeled on the European Union. Have you heard about the African Union, The Union of South American [*sic*], The North American Union and Asia and Pacific Union? Has President Bush turned our U.S. Economy over to the European Union? Financial Times writer [[Gideon Rachman](#)] admits that a world government is “now plausible.”⁹
- b. For defending the faith against skeptics, prophetic certainty of the dispensational kind has proved to be a disaster. John Warwick Montgomery’s warning needs to be heeded: “We are not saying that such efforts at end-time prophecy reach the level of the false prophets condemned in the Old Testament: those who ‘speak a vision out of their own heart, and not out of the mouth of the Lord’ (Jer. 23:16). But *we are* saying that end-time prophecy lacks the necessary factual grounding to make it an effective apologetic to the unbeliever—and that it can be and

⁹Rachman quotes Geoffrey Blainey, an eminent Australian historian, on the possibility: “For the first time in human history, world government of some sort is now possible.” He went on to question whether a world government could last. Rome had its Empire. So did the Holy Roman Empire. We shouldn’t forget the British Empire that led to the United States. Hitler and the Communists had their try at world domination. Do we actually believe that the United Nations could run a global government? The blue helmets can’t even deal with third-world skirmishes. Centralization leads to an inordinate amount of pressure on the center and the inability to police the perimeter. The result is a return to decentralization as people throw off the ineffective leadership. It’s the process of trying to impose centralization that’s so painful. As Blainey went on to conclude, “In human history, almost nothing is preordained.”

often is in reality *counterproductive*, lowering rather than raising the credibility of Christianity in the eyes of the outsider.”¹⁰

III. Power Religion of Nebuchadnezzar

A. Nebuchadnezzar believes he can override the inevitability of the dream’s interpretation (Dan. 3:1).

1. The king’s action is very much like what was attempted at Babel—the centralization of religious, national, and political power (Dan. 3:2–7)—with similar results (see Dan. 5).

a. Notice the reference to “nations and *men of every* language [tongue or lip]” (Dan. 3:4; compare with Genesis 11:4, 6–7, 9).

b. “Therefore its name was called Babel, because there the Lord confused the language of the whole earth; and from there the Lord **scattered them abroad over the face of the whole earth**” (Gen. 11:9).

2. The New Covenant “kingdom of God/heaven” reverses the curse of Babel: It’s a kingdom not made with human hands.

a. “Now there were Jews living in Jerusalem, devout men from **every nation under heaven**. And when this sound occurred, the crowd came together, and were bewildered because each one of them was hearing them speak in **his own language**” (Acts 2:4–5).

b. The church was “scattered abroad” but with a good result: “Saul was in hearty agreement with putting [Stephen] to death. And on that day a great persecution

¹⁰John Warwick Montgomery, “Eschatology, and Apologetics,” *Looking Into the Future: Evangelical Studies in Eschatology*, ed. David W. Baker (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2001), 366.

began against the church in Jerusalem, and they were **all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria**, except the apostles” (Acts 8:1, 4).

- c. In time, the gospel had been “proclaimed throughout the **whole world**” (Rom. 1:8; cf. Col. 1:6), “in all creation under heaven” (Col. 1:23), and to “all the nations” (Rom. 16:26; see 1 Tim. 3:16).
 - d. Neither Jew nor Gentile (Rom. 2; Gal. 2–3).
- B. There is nothing new in Nebuchadnezzar’s attempts at centralization of political power and persecuting those who fail to acknowledge the divine State.
1. Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770–1831), the philosophical patron saint of communism, wrote, “It must be understood that the State is the realization of Freedom, i.e. of the absolute final aim, and that it exists for its own sake. It must further be understood that **all the worth which the human being possesses—all spiritual reality, he possesses only through the State.** ... The Universal is to be found in the State, in its laws, its universal and rational arrangements. **The State is the Divine Idea as it exists on earth.**”¹¹
 2. “The true State is the ethical whole and the realization of freedom. It is the absolute purpose of reason that freedom should be realized. ... **The State is the march of God through the World**, its ground is the power of reason realizing itself as will. . . . **“We must ... worship the State as the manifestation of the Divine on Earth.”**”¹²

¹¹The quotations from Hegel were compiled by Karl R. Popper, *The Open Society and Its Enemies*, 4th ed., 2 vols. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1963), 2:31. Quoted in Herbert Schlossberg, *Idols for Destruction: Christian Faith and Its Confrontation with American Society* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, [1983] 1993), 178. Also see G.W.F. Hegel, *Philosophy of History*, ed. Jacob Loewenberg, *Hegel: Selections* (New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1929), 388–389: www.worldfuturefund.org/wffmaster/Reading/Quotes/hegelnew.htm

¹²From G.W.F. Hegel, *Philosophy of Law*, ed. Jacob Loewenberg, *Hegel: Selections* (New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1929), 443–444, 447: www.worldfuturefund.org/wffmaster/Reading/Quotes/hegelnew.htm

3. The French Revolution (Guillotine): Godless reason.
4. Communism (100 million dead according to the *Black Book of Communism*)
5. National Socialism (gas chambers and ovens).
6. Fascism
7. Islamic Fascism