

Sermon to the Saints of God assembled at Topeka, KS: Sunday, March 12, 2017

The Devolution of Human Government

In the months since Donald Trump was elected President of the United States, we have been witness to an amazing work of God. This nation is in a continual uproar! The 24 hour news cycle is consumed with childish drama, and “alternative facts”; government actors, news media, and citizens all running their mouths with abandon – with no filter between their dark, deceitful hearts, and their lips. Lying, hypocrisy, speaking evil of everyone (particularly those in authority) have become the order of the day in this wicked generation – it is absolutely ingrained in the culture. They do these things, while violently, oppressively celebrating wickedness! There’s nothing surprising about this turn of events, and it was surely appointed at the hand of our sovereign King. Contrary to the satanic lie called “evolution”, this human society has been in the process of devolution - degeneration – ever since the fall of Adam in the Garden of Eden, and it will continue to devolve until the God of creation deems it fully worthless, overthrows it, and replaces it with the Kingdom of Jesus Christ.

The Lord plainly showed this devolution of human government and society to Nebuchadnezzar, the King of ancient Babylon - he had a dream on a night nearly 2600 years ago. The Lord gave Daniel the Prophet the specific wisdom to interpret that dream, and subsequently recorded it for our learning and admonition. Today, we will consider that event, which is found at Daniel chapter 2. First we will set the stage with some context regarding Babylon and Nebuchadnezzar:

- 600 BC (approximately)
- Samaria (the Northern Kingdom of Israel) had been utterly destroyed by the Assyrians 100 years prior.
- Centuries of struggle between Egypt, Assyria, and Babylon culminated with Babylon conquering Egypt and Assyria, making Babylon the dominant empire in the world. This conquest largely took place during the reign of King Nabopolassar, who then left vast wealth and power to his son Nebuchadnezzar.
- When Nebuchadnezzar took the throne, his inaugural address included the following prayer to his false god Marduk (also known as “Bel”), who is the head of the Babylonian pantheon. “O merciful Marduk, may the house that I have built endure forever, may I be satiated with its splendor, attain old age therein, with abundant offspring, and receive therein tribute of the kings of all regions, from all mankind.”
- By the hand of the Almighty God, Babylon quickly became the greatest empire in the known world at that time, and Nebuchadnezzar the greatest King.

- *“Nebuchadnezzar II defeated the Egyptians and their allies the Assyrians at Carchemish, subdued Palestine and the region of Syria and, consolidating his power, controlled all the trade routes across Mesopotamia from the Persian Gulf to the Mediterranean Sea. Remaining true to the vision of his inaugural address, the great king spent the tolls he collected and the taxes he gathered in creating a city which, he hoped, would be recognized as a wonder of the world. He employed a vast army of slave labor to surround his city with walls so thick that chariot races were conducted around the tops and which stretched fifty-six miles in length, encircling an area of two hundred square miles. The bricks of the walls were faced with a bright blue and bore the inscription, “I am Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon.” Surviving an apparent seven-year bout with insanity (the cause of which is still not known today) Nebuchadnezzar II created a city which was not only wondrous to behold but also a center for the arts and intellectual pursuits. Schools and temples were plentiful and literacy, mathematics and craftsmanship flourished.”* (Ancient History Encyclopedia)
- He is said to have ordered the building of the Hanging Gardens of Babylon, one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World, as a gift for his wife.
- In the midst of Babylon’s rise to dominance, God Almighty used Nebuchadnezzar as a rod to punish Israel (**Jeremiah 25:9**) - they besieged and conquered Judah (the Southern Kingdom of Israel). Babylon took great spoils of war from Judah; including some of their best and brightest young men – of the **“King’s seed and the Princes ... children in whom was no blemish, but well favoured, and skilful in all wisdom, and cunning in knowledge, and understanding science”** (**Daniel 1:3,4**). He made them eunuchs, and sent them for three years to be schooled in the Chaldean language, such that they would be useful stewards and counselors in the King’s palace.
 - **Daniel 1:“6 Now among these were of the children of Judah, Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah: 7 Unto whom the prince of the eunuchs gave names: for he gave unto Daniel the name of Belteshazzar; and to Hananiah, of Shadrach; and to Mishael, of Meshach; and to Azariah, of Abednego.”**
 - The Babylonians changed the names of these young men from those that honored God, to those that honored their false “gods”, thereby profaning the name of Jehovah, and eliminating it from the landscape.
 - **Daniel:** “God is my Judge” → **Belteshazzar:** “The treasure of Bel”
 - **Hananiah:** “Jehovah has been gracious to me” → **Shadrach:** “Inspired by the Sun-god”
 - **Mishael:** “Asked of God” → **Meshach:** “He who belongs to the goddess Sheshach”

- **Azariah:** “The Lord is my helper” → **Abednego:** “Servant of the god Nego”
- After their three years of schooling, these four children of Judah were brought in to serve King Nebuchadnezzar: **Daniel 1:19-20** “**19 And the king communed with them; and among them all was found none like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah: therefore stood they before the king. 20 And in all matters of wisdom and understanding, that the king enquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers that were in all his realm.**”

Daniel 2:

“1 And in the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar Nebuchadnezzar dreamed dreams, wherewith his spirit was troubled, and his sleep brake from him. 2 Then the king commanded to call the magicians, and the astrologers, and the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans, for to shew the king his dreams. So they came and stood before the king. 3 And the king said unto them, I have dreamed a dream, and my spirit was troubled to know the dream.”

- This dream terrified him; he was desperate to have peace and comfort in his spirit. He couldn’t remember the substance of the dream, but it had left him in terror, knowing that it had major implications on this eternal Golden City that he was trying to establish. In this moment of extremity, he looks to a bunch of Hollywood con artists to try to explain this dream, even though he knew that the four Hebrew children were full of wisdom from God.

“4 Then spake the Chaldeans to the king in Syriack, O king, live for ever: tell thy servants the dream, and we will shew the interpretation.”

- If you’ll just tell us the dream, then we’ll work our unparalleled magic, and give you the interpretation. These side show magicians thought to bring their bag of little league tricks into this big league discussion, and were shown for the liars that they were, much like those magicians in the court of Pharaoh who thought to overcome God in the contests with Moses and Aaron.
- Trapp: *“Impostors are great braggers; but as the peacock in setting up his tail showeth his posteriors, so do these get to themselves shame.”*

“5 The king answered and said to the Chaldeans, The thing is gone from me: if ye will not make known unto me the dream, with the interpretation thereof, ye shall be cut in pieces, and your houses shall be made a dunghill. 6 But if ye shew the dream, and the interpretation thereof, ye shall receive of me gifts and rewards and great honour: therefore shew me the dream, and the interpretation thereof. 7 They answered again and said, Let the king tell his servants the dream, and we will shew the interpretation of it. 8 The king answered and said, I know of certainty that ye would gain the time, because ye see the thing is gone from me. 9 But if ye will not make known unto me the

dream, there is but one decree for you: for ye have prepared lying and corrupt words to speak before me, till the time be changed: therefore tell me the dream, and I shall know that ye can shew me the interpretation thereof. 10 The Chaldeans answered before the king, and said, There is not a man upon the earth that can shew the king's matter: therefore there is no king, lord, nor ruler, that asked such things at any magician, or astrologer, or Chaldean. 11 And it is a rare thing that the king requireth, and there is none other that can shew it before the king, except the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh. 12 For this cause the king was angry and very furious, and commanded to destroy all the wise men of Babylon. 13 And the decree went forth that the wise men should be slain; and they sought Daniel and his fellows to be slain."

- In great wisdom, the Lord appointed this series of events to start with the astrologers, in order to show the wisdom of this world as worthless. That sets the stage for the work of God to be unmistakable, when Daniel tells the dream and the interpretation.

"14 ¶ Then Daniel answered with counsel and wisdom to Arioch the captain of the king's guard, which was gone forth to slay the wise men of Babylon: 15 He answered and said to Arioch the king's captain, Why is the decree so hasty from the king? Then Arioch made the thing known to Daniel. 16 Then Daniel went in, and desired of the king that he would give him time, and that he would shew the king the interpretation. 17 Then Daniel went to his house, and made the thing known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions: 18 That they would desire mercies of the God of heaven concerning this secret; that Daniel and his fellows should not perish with the rest of the wise men of Babylon."

- We see the beautiful example of these faithful souls – in the face of great, deadly peril, they are first and foremost **instant in prayer**. Daniel looks for counsel from his brethren – men of faith – that they would join him in seeking wisdom from God, rather than looking to earthly wisdom.

"19 Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a night vision. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven."

- See how quickly and fully Daniel gives glory and thanks to God when he has received the object of his prayer. We also must be as quick to return thanks to God as we were to seek help when we perceived a need.

"20 Daniel answered and said, Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever: for wisdom and might are his: 21 And he changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings: he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding:"

- Nothing is left to chance; nothing happens by accident. He establishes every King – every ruler – every governmental actor. His purposes are his, and they will absolutely be accomplished. If you don't like the authority that God has put over

you, then you better seek God about it – with a heart of submission to HIS WILL in the matter. We don't always know his purposes, and ought not presume to!

- If you desire wisdom – seek it from God! If ANYONE has ANY authority, wisdom, or knowledge, it's because God gave it!

“22 He revealeth the deep and secret things: he knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him. 23 I thank thee, and praise thee, O thou God of my fathers, who hast given me wisdom and might, and hast made known unto me now what we desired of thee: for thou hast now made known unto us the king's matter. 24 ¶ Therefore Daniel went in unto Arioch, whom the king had ordained to destroy the wise men of Babylon: he went and said thus unto him; Destroy not the wise men of Babylon: bring me in before the king, and I will shew unto the king the interpretation. 25 Then Arioch brought in Daniel before the king in haste, and said thus unto him, I have found a man of the captives of Judah, that will make known unto the king the interpretation. 26 The king answered and said to Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, Art thou able to make known unto me the dream which I have seen, and the interpretation thereof? 27 Daniel answered in the presence of the king, and said, The secret which the king hath demanded cannot the wise men, the astrologers, the magicians, the soothsayers, shew unto the king;”

- Daniel here shows great kindness to those wicked, proud astrologers; he could have waited for them to be slaughtered, and then showed the dream.
- When he opens his mouth to answer this heathen king, it is a life or death moment; he makes sure that the first thing he does is glorify God in the matter. He doesn't so much as acknowledge Nebuchadnezzar's worthless gods, but glorifies the Jehovah whose name had been eradicated from the palace.

“28 But there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days. Thy dream, and the visions of thy head upon thy bed, are these;”

- These “latter days” are none other than “the day of the Lord” prophesied from Job, the first writer in the scriptures (Job 19:25) to John, the last writer (Revelation 1:10).
- This is no small matter - the Lord God showed Nebuchadnezzar (and Daniel) a glimpse of the latter days - the days leading up to, and including the kingdom and reign of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

“29 As for thee, O king, thy thoughts came into thy mind upon thy bed, what should come to pass hereafter: and he that revealeth secrets maketh known to thee what shall come to pass. 30 But as for me, this secret is not revealed to me for any wisdom that I have more than any living, but for their sakes that shall make known the interpretation to the king, and that thou mightest know the thoughts of thy heart. 31 Thou, O king, sawest, and behold a great image.

This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible.”

- This was a statue of a man – clearly a mighty, fierce man. God uses this imagery to excite the mind of this great king:
 - The Egyptians, Assyrians, and Babylonians all created great, costly statues of their rulers and “gods”, as a symbol of their greatness and eternal power; these images were set up as objects of worship.
 - Given his goal to establish a magnificent and eternal kingdom, this image would have immediately appealed to him. Great, bright, excellent, terrible – a mighty king and warrior!



“32 This image’s head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, 33 His legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay.”

- At first glance, he might well have seen this progression of metals as a testimony to the greatness of his kingdom – as though prior kingdoms and kings were building up to Babylon and her mighty king – the golden head that rules them all.

“34 Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. 35 Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshingfloors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.”

- The Lord carried Nebuchadnezzar to a pinnacle of joy and pride – alluring him with the pomp and strength of this earthly image, made up of earthly elements, which he attributed to earthly power, and then suddenly, utterly dashes his hope to pieces. No wonder he woke up in confusion and terror! No wonder he was so desperate to find the matter out!

“36 This is the dream; and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king. 37 Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. 38 And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this

head of gold. 39 And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth. 40 And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things: and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise. 41 And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potters' clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay. 42 And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken. 43 And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay. 44 And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever. 45 Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure."

- As with many prophecies, I believe that there are two applications of this dream:
 - 1) The specific succession of kingdoms that would subjugate and oppress the Jews, until the first advent of Christ, which ushered in his spiritual Kingdom. Those were the Babylonian, Medo-Persian, Greek, and Roman empires. I have read many Bible commentaries that make this the only meaning of the dream – while there may be some useful elements of that application, I think it stops short of the whole picture. Even though the Kingdom of Christ spiritually, eternally exists within the saints (Luke 17:21), Satan continues his attempt to usurp Christ's rule in the earth. Daniel's interpretation of the dream describes a circumstance where all earthly kingdoms have been fully and finally put down; the fact that kingdoms have continued to rise and fall in the 2000 years since Christ walked the earth suggest that this prophesy has not been ultimately fulfilled.
 - 2) The succession, and decline of earthly kingdoms leading to the second coming of Christ, and the establishing of his Millennial Kingdom. When Christ rides with his Saints into the battle of Armageddon, he will literally destroy that final earthly kingdom, and Antichrist, that final expression of the satanic power of human government being wielded against Christ, his word, and his people. This completed and perfected Kingdom will be delivered up to the Father. Consider how the **future events** in the following passages, align with the language in Nebuchadnezzar's dream (verse 44):

- **1Corinthians 15:24-25, 28** “24 Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. 25 For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. ... 28 And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.”
 - **Revelation 11:15-19** “15 And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever. 16 And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God, 17 Saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned.”
 - This application agrees with other prophetic passages such as Daniel 7, and Revelation 17. (See the sermon that our brother Tim preached on June 28, 2015)
- With this framework in view, let us proceed to consider the progression from the golden head to the feet of clay mingled with iron.
 - There is one statue, rather than 5 separate statues, to represent these various kingdoms, because they are all human governments, of the same imperfect, depraved nature. They are all under the influence of Satan, the great deceiver. They will culminate in one world-wide empire beneath the authority of the Antichrist – which will arise from the final kingdom represented by the clay feet. Babylon is clearly said to be the golden head of this statue. That Golden City was established by God, as emblematic of the very best of human strength and government. He gave Nebuchadnezzar this unique role. Clearly then, all governments and societies that come later will be declining from the form of that golden head.
 - To understand this decline, first we must consider the nature of human authority, beginning with the fact that authority - and submission to that authority - is at the very core of the human creation. Adam was created in subjection to God. Eve was created in subjection to Adam. They both rebelled against authority, to the great shame and distress of our entire race. Despite their rebellion, that authority persists to this day - consider the curse that God delivered to Eve:
 - **Genesis 3:16** “**Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou**

shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.”

- From the beginning, Eve was created specifically to reside under Adam’s authority – that did not begin with the curse. However, because of the curse of sin, what had once been an altogether beautiful, and comfortable relationship between a husband (exercising authority in perfect harmony with God), and a wife (joyfully submitting to that authority), has become painfully encumbered by our depraved flesh. This corruption of our flesh is manifest in every ruler-to-ruled relationship that exists: husbands and wives, parents and children, government and citizens, etc. The ruler is not always in perfect harmony with the rule of God, and the ruled are often puffed up in pride against the ruler.
- Despite our flesh, we are required to submit ourselves to authority, including government: **Romans 3:1-2 “1 Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. 2 Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.”**
- I don’t feel equipped with sufficient light to identify the specific kingdoms represented by the various layers of this statue, so we will proceed to look at the general nature of this decline, rather than a kingdom by kingdom breakdown.
- The **hardness** of the metal **increases** as you move down the image, indicating an increase in at least the following areas: military might & violence (Daniel 2:40); breadth & wealth of the kingdoms (Daniel 2:39); hardness toward God and his people.
- The **value** of the metal **decreases** as you move down the image, indicating a devolution in at least the following areas: form of government, character of rulers, and respect for authority.
 - Since the days of Babylon, government has gradually declined from the strength of a pure sovereign king all the way to the brittle weakness of democracy - experimenting with various hybrids along the way.
 - The “gold standard” is a sovereign king who submits himself to the law of God. He can insist upon righteous laws, and execute righteous judgment; no one can stop his agenda. (**Proverbs 14:34**) This form of government is emblematic of God’s

authority, and bows to the fact that God alone sets up kings and removes them, and God alone controls their hearts. When a righteous sovereign is in power, the people are blessed. This is what we saw in Ninevah, when the sovereign king repented, and ordered mourning, fasting, and sackcloth throughout the kingdom – none other than a king with absolute power is able to shift the behavior of the kingdom with his decree.

- Consider that the very next kingdom to rise to power after Babylon was the Medo-Persian empire; while they did have kings, they were not fully sovereign. Famously, the law of the Medes and the Persians could not be altered. (**Daniel 6:8**) Once the law was signed and sealed, not even the king could change it.
- You might be wondering – if the gold standard is a sovereign monarch ruling righteously, then why are the churches of God democratic? The answer is simple: they aren't democratic; indeed we are under the authority of a sovereign monarch. The church is not a legislative body – we live and judge by the unchanging law of God. When a church begins to legislate strange doctrines, that church is liable to lose her candlestick, and be crushed to powder by the same stone – Jesus Christ – that brings down the rest of rebellious mankind.
- Now consider democracy – the weakest form of government, represented in these miry feet. It is a notion that is very attractive to the selfish, arrogant flesh, but ultimately, it's a deadly mirage.
 - Alexis de Tocqueville, a French historian wrote a book *Democracy in America* in the early 1800s. In it he says that “Liberty cannot be established without morality, nor morality without faith ... When the taste for physical gratifications among them has grown more rapidly than their education . . . the time will come when men are carried away and lose all self-restraint.” De Tocqueville also discusses the idea that Democracy will incline to Pantheism - the idea that God is everywhere, and in everything. In other words - you are a part of God, and you can dictate the standards of morality with your vote.
 - A democratic society might start with righteous laws, but it will absolutely, inevitably devolve as the populace becomes convinced that they can change morality to their liking with their vote. Furthermore, there is no turning it around – electing a new President won't get the job done, because any elected official that goes against the will of the people will be removed

and replaced. Consider what we're watching at this very hour in America: Donald Trump is trying to make some modest changes to policies in America, and he is being roadblocked at every turn. If he were to implement a policy that is actually aligned with God's law, he would be immediately impeached!

- From her inception, the whole American narrative has been to rebel against authority; turn on a television - the majority of what's out there is dramatizing and justifying the need to rebel against authority - God, government, parents, teachers, etc. The more strident the rebellion becomes, the weaker and less desirable the authority becomes, which in turn makes the people even more prone to rebel - it's a death spiral!
 - **2Peter 2:10-12** "10 But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government. Presumptuous are they, selfwilled, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities. 11 Whereas angels, which are greater in power and might, bring not railing accusation against them before the Lord. 12 But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption;"
- The clay feet mingled with iron are said to be:
 - Soft clay: Weak in form; effeminate and childish in spirit. Selfish in the extreme.
 - Containing the strength of the iron: unparalleled military might and violence. Think - the world's only super power. This is hardness and strength WITHOUT A RUDDER - employed to protect and propagate everything that is wrong with self-serving lust of the clay. Consider how this nation exerts her will across the globe - breaking in pieces all those that resist - spreading her godless agenda like a virus.
 - Divided: Everyone has an opinion on EVERY topic. Think - red states vs. blue states. These endless divisions will pave the way for the rise of Antichrist. He will bring with him the secular doctrine of Nimrod's Babel: Human unity is to be cherished above all things, and through that unity, humans can overcome God! (Genesis 11:4)

- Mingled with the seed of men, but they won't cleave to one another: Consider the never ending “diversity” and “tolerance” mantra in this nation, as well as the immigration debate. Think - the great melting pot. Yet, for all of the lip service to diversity, this nation (and world) are filled with uniquely hateful and violent people.
 - Make America Great Again? SHE WAS NEVER GREAT! At her best she might have been in the ankle of this statue – far from the golden head; at this hour, she is a bunion on these awful feet! Ultimately, these miry clay feet are the end of human government. The kingdom that they represent is utterly worthless, and fit for nothing but destruction.
- Now we come to the stone that will crush to powder, and replace this entire statue.
 - A stone that was made without hands.
 - In stark juxtaposition to the statue, the material is not attractive to the prideful human, and it was not crafted by the work of human hands.
 - Such is Jesus Christ:
 - **Psalm 118:22 “22 The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner.”**
 - **Isaiah 53:2 “he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.”**
 - He was physically born into this world outside of the appointed processes of nature – born of a virgin.
 - He is spirit, and his eternal kingdom is spiritual.
 - The stone breaks to pieces the kingdom and authority of men; making them disappear like chaff in the wind; replacing them with a kingdom / great mountain that fills the whole earth.
 - Such is the spiritual Kingdom of God:
 - **Luke 17:21 “Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you.”**
 - Such will be the Millennial Kingdom of Christ:
 - **Isaiah 9:6,7 “6 For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. 7 Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and**

with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.”

- **1Corinthians 15:24b “ ... when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. 25 For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet**
- This kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, that will never be destroyed / will stand forever.
 - Such is the perfected spiritual kingdom of Christ that is delivered up to the father:
 - **1Corinthians 15:24 “Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father”**
 - **Revelation 22:3-5 “And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him: 4 And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads. 5 And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.”**

“46 Then the king Nebuchadnezzar fell upon his face, and worshipped Daniel, and commanded that they should offer an oblation and sweet odours unto him. 47 The king answered unto Daniel, and said, Of a truth it is, that your God is a God of gods, and a Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, seeing thou couldest reveal this secret. 48 Then the king made Daniel a great man, and gave him many great gifts, and made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon, and chief of the governors over all the wise men of Babylon. 49 Then Daniel requested of the king, and he set Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, over the affairs of the province of Babylon: but Daniel sat in the gate of the king.”

Amazingly, the very next thing that we read about Nebuchadnezzar (Daniel 3), is that he commanded the creation of a 90 foot tall image, that was gold from head to toe. After receiving this dream and interpretation from God, he immediately rebelled, and caused his entire kingdom to bow down and worship this golden image, as if to directly declare to God: my kingdom will not be limited to the golden head – it will be eternal! It was this statue that the Hebrew children refused to worship, for which cause Nebuchadnezzar had them thrown into the fiery furnace. Nebuchadnezzar’s rebellion appears to be the thing that caused God to turn him into a mindless beast for 7 years (Daniel 4), in order to humble him. God’s chastisement brought about this amazing profession: **“And at the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the most High, and I praised**

and honoured him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation.” (Daniel 4:34)

I love you all. Amen.