

KEYS TO THE APOCALYPSE (Readers script)

A PANORAMA OF PROPHECY

In the annals of human history, the growth of nations, the rise and fall of empires, appear as dependent on the will and prowess of man. The shaping of events seems, to a great degree, to be determined by his power, ambition, or caprice. But in the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation, the curtain is drawn aside, and we behold, through all the play and counterplay of human interests and power and passions, the agencies of the all-merciful One, patiently working out the counsels of His will.

Before we delve into the prophecies of the Apocalypse, we need to take a pre-school course provided in the book of Daniel. Chapters two and seven of Daniel are an entry level to prepare for the more challenging prophecies of Revelation. We will begin the prophetic panorama in the second chapter of Daniel. It depicts a dream which king Nebuchadnezzar had one night, but which he could not recall next morning. It was God's way of bringing the king in contact with Daneil through whom He would reveal His wisdom and power. Daniel let it be known to the king that he could tell the king his dream and also the interpretation. When he was called in before the king, he told the king his dream. He dreamed that he saw a great image whose head was made of gold, his arms and breasts of silver, his belly and thighs of brass and his legs of iron. The feet were a mixture of iron and clay. Daniel then began to explain to the king that he and his kingdom were represented by the head of gold. But Babylon wouldn't last forever. The arms and breasts of silver represented the Medo-Persian kingdom which would succeed Babylon as a world empire in 538 B.C. The belly and thighs of brass pointed to the Grecian empire that followed in 331 B.C., and the legs of iron represented the Roman empire which came into world dominance around 168 B.C. when they defeated the Grecians at the battle of Pydna.

What occupies the greater part of the narrative is what happened with the feet and 10 toes which were made of iron mixed with clay. The prophet told King nebuchadnezzar " 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. 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 " Daniel 2:34-35.

We may wonder what is represented by the stone which smites the image? Some would say that it represents Christ. However, Christ could hardly be represented as being cut out of a mountain. He has existed from the days of eternity. But the explanation is given in verses 44-45 where the king was told " 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. 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. "

The stone represents a spiritual kingdom which God will set up in the last days. Christ's people are often represented as a stone or stones in the Scriptures. In 1 Peter 2:5 we read, " Ye also, as **lively stones, are built up a spiritual house**, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. " Also in the book of Zechariah we have references to stones as symbols of God's people. " And the LORD their God shall save them in that day as the flock of his people: for **they shall be as the stones of a**

crown, lifted up as an ensign upon his land. “ It also tells us, “ And in that day will **I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone** for all people: all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it “ Zechariah 9:16, 12:3.

When we come to Daniel 7, we can see the close parallel between Daniel 7 and Daniel 2. They are describing the same thing but employing different symbols. Instead of different metals used to represent the great world empires, it uses different animals in Daniel 7. The great focus of attention in both of these chapters is on the last power which succeeded the Roman Empire. In Daniel 2, it is the feet and 10 toes made of iron and clay. In Daniel 7, it is the little horn which became very great and which had eyes like a man and a mouth speaking great things. It also made war with the saints. This horn continued its existence right up to the time of the end. In Daniel 2, the king saw a stone cut out of a mountain which struck the image on its feet and 10 toes. But what is the mountain out of which the great stone was cut? The Scriptures gives us the answer. In Micah 4:1 it tells us “ And it shall come to pass in the last days, that **the mountain of the LORD’S house** shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. “ Also in Isaiah 30:29 we read, “Ye shall have a song, as in the night when a holy solemnity is kept; and gladness of heart, as when one goeth ... **to come into the mountain of the Lord**, to the Mighty One of Israel.” The mountain is symbolic of God’s church and the stone being cut out of the mountain describes what happens when the wheat is separated from the tares, as described by Christ in Matthew 13:24-30. That takes place when “ judgment begins at the house of God “ 1 Peter 4:17.

In Daniel 7:9-14, the prophet was shown how Christ’s kingdom is made up at the time of the judgment. After seeing Christ coming to the judgment where the books were opened and the judgment was set, he wrote, “ And there was **given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom**, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed “ Daniel 7:14. Christ’s kingdom is made up at the time of the judgment described in Daniel 7:9-14. Those who are represented by the stone which is cut out of the mountain are the 144,000 who have come through the judgment and day of atonement and received its special benefits.

The stone striking the image on its feet and demolishing it represents the work of the 144,000 which we saw in a previous video. They are likened to a formidable army in Joel 2:1-11. And Micah 7:16 tells us that “ The nations shall see and be confounded at all their might: they shall lay their hand upon their mouth, their ears shall be deaf. “ In Daniel 7 the work of the 144,000 after they have been judged and sealed is stated in verse 26: “ But the judgment shall sit, and they (the 144,000) shall take away his (the horn’s) dominion. . . “ The great spiritual triumph of the 144,000 is also described in Isaiah 41:15-16. “ Behold, I will make thee a new sharp threshing instrument having teeth: thou shalt thresh the mountains, and beat them small, and shalt make the hills as chaff. Thou shalt fan them, and the wind shall carry them away, and the whirlwind shall scatter them: and thou shalt rejoice in the LORD, and shalt glory in the Holy One of Israel. “ Isaiah uses a description very similar to what Daneil wrote in Daniel 2:35, after the stone struck the image. “ 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. “

We have traced in this video the parallels between Daniel 2 and Daniel 7. But there are more parallels to these prophecies with much more details added when we study the book of Revelation. In our next videos, we will look at these parallels in the Apocalypse and see how the cosmic conflict will come to a triumphant close.