

# Two Kingdoms and a Miracle

by Ed Miller

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*The sermon discusses the transition from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of Christ, illustrated through biblical stories and teachings.*

**Duration:** 1:05:23

**Scripture:** Proverbs 29:25, Daniel 3:11, Daniel 3:27, Matthew 6:33, John 6:45, 2 Corinthians 3:18, Colossians 1:13

**Topics:** "Nebuchadnezzar"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the story of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the book of Daniel. He emphasizes that every trial in our lives is a missionary trial, meant to showcase God's redemption. The preacher highlights the importance of Christians walking in liberty with the Son of God, as it attracts others who are looking in. He also mentions Nebuchadnezzar's dream of two kingdoms, with the second part of the dream symbolizing the destruction of the worldly kingdom and the establishment of God's kingdom. The sermon encourages young Christians to resist the allure of the world and not bow down to its pressures.

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## Transcript

Good afternoon, brothers and sisters in the Lord. Once again, as we come to the study of God's Word, I want to remind myself and remind you of a principle of Bible study that is absolutely indispensable. Whatever other aids and helps God gives you in understanding His Word, and there are many helps, and praise God for those helps.

There is one principle that is indispensable, and that is total reliance upon God's Holy Spirit. At the end of the day, when all the academics are completed, we must come as little children before the Lord, and we must ask the Lord to dawn Christ upon our hearts. There is no possibility apart from His Holy Spirit that we can ever behold the Lord.

If you study the Bible to know the Bible, you're going to become prouder and prouder as the days go by, because knowledge puffs up. If you study the Bible to know the Lord, God's going to show you His Son, and you're going to be transformed from one degree of glory to another. We need to be taught of God.

Before we go to prayer together, let me just share a Bible verse from John chapter 6. How do you know, absolutely know, when you're taught of God? John chapter 6 and verse 45, They shall all be taught of God. Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me, said the Lord Jesus. How do

you know if you've been taught of God? And the answer is, it leads to Jesus.

Everyone who has learned and heard from the Father comes to me. If you're taught of God, you're going to go to Jesus. You're going to go to Christ.

Let's bow together, please, and ask the Lord to do something in our heart this afternoon that will be eternal. Something that will last forever. Let's pray.

Our Heavenly Father, we come to You this afternoon, and we thank You so much that You have given us the Bible and have given us the Holy Spirit. We know it is the Holy Spirit's delight to unveil the Lord Jesus Christ to us. To take the veil away from our hearts and minds that we might behold Him in a living way.

And so this afternoon, we pray that everyone here might be taught of God. That they might be learning from the Father, hearing from the Father. We pray that we all might come to Christ.

Work it in us, we pray, because our Lord Jesus well deserves it. And we pray it in His matchless name. Amen.

I'd like to state my burden this afternoon in the inspired words of the New Testament. There's a verse that will give my burden. And then I'd like to share it in a story form from the Old Testament.

The passage is in Colossians 1.13. It's been read several times already this week. I'll ask you to turn to Colossians 1.13. By the way, are these nerdy? My wife said, don't bring those glasses up there. They look nerdy.

Well, I'm sorry, I need to. Colossians 1.13, please. For He rescued us from the domain of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of His beloved Son.

There is a domain of darkness, and there is a kingdom of His beloved Son. Darby translates it, the kingdom of the Son of His law. Or the King James, His dear Son, into the kingdom of His dear Son.

And there is a miracle that transfers us from one kingdom to the other kingdom. That translates us. That delivers us.

I like the way Kenneth Wiest translates it. Transfers us from the tyrannical rule of darkness into the kingdom of the Son of His law. And so Colossians 1.13, there are two kingdoms, and there's a miracle.

There's a kingdom over here, and a kingdom over here, and a miracle that takes us out of this kingdom and puts us into this kingdom. There's a kingdom of darkness. There's a kingdom of His beloved Son.

Now, of course, we all desire the miracle that would transfer us from the one to the other, so that we might live in the kingdom of His dear Son. In the Old Testament, there is a picture of Colossians 1.13. A story that speaks about two kingdoms. And that speaks about a miracle that takes us from one of those kingdoms into the other kingdom.

I like pictures. I like stories. I love redemptive history.

I think it's important to get the truth in fully developed form. But it's also helpful to get it in seed form and in bud form. And so I just love the Old Testament and redemptive history.

It's so much to me like the incarnation. It seems to put flesh on God's heart when you see a story. Once upon a time, and they lived happily ever after.

You can lay hold of a story like that. The story I'm referring to is in Daniel chapter 2 and 3. Looks like two stories, but it's actually one. Daniel chapter 2 talks about that dream of Nebuchadnezzar.

Daniel chapter 3 is the story of the three men in the furnace. Often chapter 3 is taken apart from its context. It's lifted out and we talk about the three men in the furnace.

Even out of its context, it's beautiful. Even out of its context, it's very, very instructive. But perhaps this afternoon, the Lord can show us that wonderful chapter in its setting, in its context, in connection with the dream of Nebuchadnezzar.

God has given us analytical minds, and so some people like in advance logical connection. So for those people that are here, let me tell you where I'd like to go and how I'd like to get there. I'd like us to look at Daniel chapter 2 and 3 as God's illustration of Colossians 1.13. It's the same picture.

Two kingdoms and a miracle that take us from one kingdom to the other kingdom. So here's the outline. First, I want to show you the two kingdoms illustrated by the dream of Nebuchadnezzar.

And then after we've looked at that, I would like to show you three men that have been transferred from one kingdom to another, Sadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. They had been translated into the kingdom of God's dear son. And then I would like to show you their secret.

I'd like to show you the miracle that brought them to the place where they were. So that's what we're going to look at. Nebuchadnezzar's dream, the two kingdoms, Sadrach, Meshach, and Abednego as God's picture of those who had been translated.

And then I'd like to show you, illustrated by the last part of the dream, the interpretation, their secret. How did God do that for them? How can God do that for me? The way He translated them is the way He translates us. He's everlastingly the same.

And so this illustrates in a marvelous way Colossians 1.13. Now, rather than reading chapters 2 and 3 together, all 79 verses, you know how long that would take, as we go through, I'll select enough of the story to hold it together and to communicate as I trust the heart of God. I want to begin with this observation. If you'll turn to Daniel chapter 2, please, as we attempt to understand God's heart concerning this great dream of Nebuchadnezzar, we need to trust the Lord together to give us light on Daniel's life.

Let me tell you what I mean by that. You see, in one way we say, Daniel chapter 2, that's Nebuchadnezzar's dream. And that's true.

But another way to look at it is, Daniel chapter 2, that's the Word of God. And that's true, too. It's the Bible.

And so I need God's light to understand the Bible, to understand Nebuchadnezzar's dream. We don't say, turn to Nebuchadnezzar's dream. We say, turn to the Word of God.

Now, here's the situation. Nebuchadnezzar had this dream from God. The Word of God came to him in the form of a dream.

Daniel couldn't know that dream or know what that dream meant on his own. He needed light from God. He needed illumination from the Lord.

He needed God to tell him what the dream was. You remember, Nebuchadnezzar required not only that you interpret the dream, but that you declare the dream as well. Daniel was wise.

Look, please, at verse 17. "Daniel went to his house and informed his friends Hananiah, Meshach, and Azariah, 'you're familiar with the fact, that's Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, about the matter, "so that they might request compassion from the God of heaven concerning the mystery, so that Daniel and his friends would not be destroyed with the rest of the wise men of Babylon. Then the mystery was revealed to Daniel in a night vision, and Daniel blessed the God of heaven.' Daniel understood how to unlock the secrets of the Lord.

Look, please, at verse 22. Chapter 2, verse 22, "It is he who reveals the profound and hidden things. He knows what's in the darkness.

Light dwells with him. To you, O God of my fathers, I give thanks and praise.' And so God not only showed Daniel the dream, He told him what it meant. Daniel prayed to the Lord.

Daniel asked his friends to pray to the Lord. They called out for compassion from God, that He would give light. He sought the Lord who reveals the hidden things, the secret things.

And God gave him light." Now, here's the point. God gave Daniel light. But we can't depend on Daniel's light.

We need light on Daniel's light. You follow what I'm saying? Now, wouldn't you think God showed Daniel what it meant, and Daniel wrote it down? Now we know. And so all we have to do is read what Daniel wrote down.

No, I don't have what Daniel gives me. I have what God gives me. You don't have what Daniel gives you.

You have what the Lord gives you. God gave Daniel light, and now we must humbly trust the Lord for light on Daniel's light. I have many, many commentaries on the book of Daniel and on this dream of Nebuchadnezzar.

And I think some of them have just taken Daniel's light and run wild with it. They've gotten lost in Daniel's explanation. Let me get that before your heart.

If you'll glance at verse 31, please. We'll read to verse 36. You, O king, were looking, and behold, there was a single great statue.

That statue, which was large and of extraordinary splendor, was standing in front of you. Its appearance was awesome. The head of that statue was made of fine gold, its breast and its arms of silver, its belly and its thighs of bronze, its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay.

You continued looking until a stone was caught without hands. And it struck the statue on the feet of iron and clay and crushed them. Then the iron and the clay and the bronze, the silver and the gold were crushed all at the same time and became like chaff from the summer threshing floor.

And the wind carried them away so that not a trace of them was found, but the stone that struck the statue became a great mountain, and it filled the whole earth. This was the dream. Now we'll tell you the interpretation.

And so you have the picture of the dream. It was a dream of a giant man with a head of gold and his shoulders and arms of silver and his waist and thighs of brass and legs of iron and feet of iron and clay and so on. And many have taken Daniel's light on that and say, well, now we understand the dream.

Each part represents a kingdom. And so the head is Babylon, and the arms of silver are the Medes and the Persians, and the brass is Greece, the Macedonian Empire, and the legs are Rome, and then the ten toes are in the future a ten confederation of nations and so on. And on they go.

And they say, God was telling Daniel through the dream about a great panorama of empires to the end of the age. Now, we can be very accurate by tracing all of these succession of world powers and anticipating the political stage at the end of the age. But is that Nebuchadnezzar's dream? Is that really his dream? Is that the mystery of it? Was he just predicting coming kings and kingdoms? Is that what that was all about? Where's God's heart in that? Was he just telling us about the future? Just so that we'd know what's coming and what would happen? What's the heavenly meaning of that dream? What's the revelation of the Son of God in that dream? The unveiling of Him? That's what it's all about.

Praise God for Daniel's light. But let's trust the Lord for light on Daniel's life. Daniel needed that light.

For him, it was a matter of life and death. You know, if he didn't have it, he would have died. And for Daniel, it was a revelation of the Lord Jesus Christ.

And that became redemptive for the whole world. Oh, that God's revelation for us would become a matter of life and death. That we, too, might see the Lord Jesus Christ and have a revelation that's redemptive that touches the entire world.

Let me share with you what I think is the chief message of this marvelous dream. Once again, get the facts before your heart. Glance, if you would, at chapter 2, verse 31.

It's called a great statue, large, of extraordinary splendor. Its appearance was awesome. I wonder how large in Nebuchadnezzar's mind that image was when he dreamt it.

Bible doesn't tell us. He just said it was great. We get a little clue, I think, because in chapter 4, he had another dream.

And in that dream, he saw a great tree. Well, in chapter 4, 10, he tells us how great the tree was. So we know how he's using the word great.

Its height reached to the sky and its branches to the ends of the earth. That's a big tree. I wonder if the image in his dream was as great as the tree was great.

We don't know, but we know in chapter 3, he was so enamored that he was connected with the head of gold. That the gold was Babylon, and it was him, that he made another image just representing the head. Not the whole thing, just the head.

And chapter 3, verse 1, tells us that image was 60 cubits high. In other words, just the head. What represented the head? There was a golden image 90 feet high.

I wonder how big the whole dream image was. We can only guess. We know it was awesome.

See, the dream had two parts. The first part had to do with that massive man, that huge monster of a person with a golden head and silver arms and a brass waist and iron legs and iron and clay feet. But the second part of the dream had to do with the destruction of that great image.

It had to do with a stone that came and struck the feet of the image and knocked the whole thing down. And then the stone grew and became a great mountain and filled the whole earth. Glance, if you would, at verse 34, please.

You continued looking until a stone was cut without hands. It struck the statue on its feet of iron and clay and crushed them. And then at the end of 35, the stone that struck the statue became a great mountain.

And filled the whole earth. Nebuchadnezzar had a dream of two kingdoms. Glance at verse 44, please.

Chapter 2. In the interpretation, Daniel tells us, in the days of those kings, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which will never be destroyed. That kingdom will not be left for another people. It will crash and put an end to all these kingdoms.

But it itself, it will endure forever. I suggest that Nebuchadnezzar had a dream of two kingdoms. You say, two kingdoms? I see at least four.

There's the head and then there's the arms and then there's the middle and there's the legs. Maybe five. If you count the toes, maybe 14 or 15.

Many kingdoms. No, not many kingdoms. Many parts.

But it was only one image. Like our brother Stephen has been sharing with us on the body of Christ. Many members.

One body. Nebuchadnezzar had this big dream about a huge man. An image.

A massive person. One body. And that's the, my understanding of that is the key, I think, to God's heart.

He had a dream of the kingdom of man. It was in the form of a man. It was in the shape of a man.

It was a person. And it's a picture of the kingdom of man. Awesome picture of the kingdom of man.

Kingdom of Satan. Kingdom of darkness. Kingdom of man.

The flesh. This world. The world system.

Many different expressions of it. It's all the same thing. He saw the old man.

He saw the old nature. He saw the old sin nature. He saw self.

He saw ego. He saw flesh. He saw the carnal man.

He saw Cain. He saw Esau. He saw Ishmael.

He saw Amalek. He saw Agag. He saw Saul.

It's the old Adam. No matter how you look at it, it's the kingdom of man. That's what he saw on the one side.

And then chapter 2, 34 and 35, he continues looking until he sees this stone. Strike at the feet of the kingdom of man and grow and grow until it fills the whole earth. I suggest to you, Nebuchadnezzar saw two kingdoms.

He saw the kingdom of man. He saw the kingdom of the Son of His love. The kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now when he saw the kingdom of man, when you see it, what does it look like? Well, I'll tell you, to these eyes, according to the record, it's awesome. To these eyes, extraordinary splendor. Awesome in appearance.

I don't know how big it was. I have an idea it was like the tree. All the way to the sky, it was just a giant man in his dream.

Very, very impressive. And whether it's the whole world system, the kingdom of the devil, so big. Or whether in your own heart, that old man that keeps rising up so big, so awesome, so fearful to these eyes.

Scary, overpowering. But when you look closely at the image, you see that's what it really is. It's just an image.

It's not real. It's not living. Looks awesome, but it's dead.

There's no life in this thing at all. Gold glitters, but it's still as dead as a doornail. And silver sparkles, but it's still dead.

And you can polish brass, but it's still dead. And iron is strong, but it's still dead. There's no life in this whatsoever.

It's a kingdom of death. Nothing organic in it. Nothing alive in it.

And the more you look at this kingdom of man as it is revealed in Daniel's or Nebuchadnezzar's dream, you see that it loses value the closer you get to the foundation. The more you look at it, it has a fading glory. Gold is more valuable than silver.

But as you get to the foundation, silver is more valuable than brass. And brass is more valuable than iron. And iron is more valuable than clay.

And by the time you get to the foundation, it's worth nothing. That's the kingdom of man. It looks awesome maybe to these eyes, but it's got a fading glory.

It's passing away. And it's established on a very brittle foundation. It cannot stand.

It's top heavy. Scholars tell us that as you go from the top to the bottom, the specific gravity gets smaller and smaller. The whole thing's top heavy.

There's an inherent weakness in the foundation. It's built on nothing, and it's doomed to fall. There was another kingdom God showed him.

Look at verse 34. You continued looking until a stone was cut without hand. You say, well, that's the same thing.

That's a stone, too. You say, that's all dead. That's just a stone.

This is a different kind of stone. Verse 45, this stone was quarried out of a mountain made without hands. This was the stone prepared by an invisible hand, born of Mary without the agency of man.

Look at the end of verse 35. The stone that struck the statue became a mountain and filled the earth. It grew, got bigger, bigger.

First it's a stone, and then it's a hill, and then it's a little mountain, and then it's a mountain range, and pretty soon it just fills the whole earth. If something grows, it's alive. It's a living stone.

It's a different kind of stone. It's organic. It's our Lord Jesus Christ.

The kingdom of man may appear impressive, but it's dead. But there's another kingdom, and it is the living stone. Verse 44, in the days of those kings, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which will never be destroyed.

It'll put an end to all the kingdoms, but it will endure forever. In this connection, I love 1 Peter 2.4. 1 Peter 2.4 says, Coming to him as to a living stone, which has been rejected indeed by men, but is precious in the sight of the Lord. I hope you can see at the beginning why I suggested Nebuchadnezzar's dream is a lot like Colossians 1.13. Because there's two kingdoms.

The kingdom of man. There's the kingdom of his dear son. Now, let me ask you to turn, please, to chapter 3. I want to show you three men who've been transferred.

I won't at this point tell you how. I won't give you their secret, but let me just show you. These men have been taken out of one kingdom, and they've been transferred to the other.

And they caused quite a stir. It's a radical thing to be translated from one kingdom to another. I think you better appreciate Daniel chapter 3 if you understand it in terms of that dream.

You have here the clashing of two kingdoms. The kingdom of man and the kingdom of God. The kingdom of man didn't smile when it found out its traitors.

It doesn't like people leaving its kingdom, breaking allegiance with them. You know, in chapter 3, verse 6, when Nebuchadnezzar built his great 90-foot image, he gave a universal command, But those three men, they'd been translated. Even at the threat of death, they were not about to bow down.

Now, when you come to Daniel chapter 3, most approach it this way. There's the chapter of the great miracle. The miracle of those men being preserved in the fire.

Chapter 3, verse 27, they were not incinerated. Their hair wasn't even singed. Not even the smell of smoke was upon them.

What a miracle! No doubt that was a great miracle that God preserved them in the fire. But I don't think that's the greatest miracle in chapter 3. Oh, that's a mighty miracle, but that's not the greatest miracle. You see, they were delivered before they were delivered.

A miracle took place before the furnace. A tremendous moral miracle that enabled them not to bow down to the kingdom of man. What a miracle that was! Don't think these three men started walking with the Son of God once they got in the furnace.

They walked with the Lord in the furnace. But they walked with the Lord before they got in the furnace. He was manifested in the furnace, but they were walking with Him before they got into the furnace.

Glance, if you would, at verse 24 and 25 of chapter 3. Nebuchadnezzar the king was astounded and stood up in haste. And he said to his high officials, Was it not three men we cast bound into the midst of the fire? They replied, Certainly, O king. He said, Look, I see four men loosed, walking about in the midst of the fire without harm.

The appearance of the fourth is like the Son of the gods. Some people have the idea that Jesus just showed up in the fire. That suddenly, poof, there's the Lord in the midst of the furnace of fire.

That's not how it happened. It isn't that they were thrown in the fire and then suddenly a heavenly visitor came to them and showed up in the fire. That's not how it happened.

He was there all along. They were walking with Him before they got to the fire. And they walked with Him in the fire.

And then when it was all over, you say three men came out. No, four men came out. Jesus didn't stay in the furnace.

He came out too. You couldn't see Him at that time with these eyes, but He came out too. When you look at verse 17 and 18 and you see how bold they were.

We will not bow down. God can deliver us. We don't know if He will.

He can. And even if He doesn't, we're not bowing down. What gave them the power to stand up against the kingdom of man like that? I'll tell you, it wasn't them.

They're naturally as chicken-hearted as you are and naturally as chicken-hearted as I am. Their resolve was from the Lord. It was a mighty miracle of God that enabled them to be courageous.

Why weren't they drawn in by the dazzle? This image was awesome. Why weren't they sucked in by the glitter, by the glory of this whole thing, or all that it represents? Why weren't they pulled in by the great pride of Babylon? Or the materialism of the Medes and the Persians, the Persian cats and rugs, and the wisdom of Greece, the power of Rome? How come they didn't bow down? And then when you look at verses 7 or 5 and 7, and you see these instruments of music, the world's music, how come they weren't charmed by the world's music enticing them, and drawing them, and charming them, coming from every direction? And when you read verse 7, all peoples of all nations and men of every language fell down in worship. Talk about peer pressure.

Everybody's doing it. And they're the only ones that are not. You know, my heart goes out to young people, young Christians who are so mesmerized by the glory of this world, who are so taken in by the music of this world, who are so pressured by the peer pressure of this world.

And then add to that the fear of man that brings a snare, because chapter 3, verse 11, whoever does not fall down in worship shall be cast into the midst of the blazing furnace. Here's an amazing thing. Three

men who had been translated out of this kingdom into another, and with all of its attraction and all of its drawing power, they didn't bow down.

There's the miracle of chapter 3. That moral miracle, I tell you, I appreciate the other miracle where God quenched the fury of the fire, but oh, this is a mighty miracle of God. They were preserved before they were preserved. Jesus was with them before the fire, keeping them.

Jesus was with them in the fire, keeping them. Jesus was with them when they came out of the fire. Now, as you know, before the fire, these eyes couldn't see the Lord Jesus, the human eyes.

He's with you before the fire, but the world doesn't see him at that time. They see your boldness. They see what they call courage, your stand for the Lord.

They see that you're rugged and going against the grain. But at that point, they think you're stupid and narrow and a religious fanatic. That's why they throw you into the fire.

They're offended at you, but once you're in the fire, verse 25, I see four men loosed and walking in the midst of the fire without harm, and the appearance of the fourth is like a son of the gods. Brothers and sisters in the Lord, don't despise it when the Lord allows the fire in your life. Walk with the Lord before the fire.

Walk with the Lord in the fire. It's been a great week. We heard about the cross.

We heard about the car wash, about the storm, now about the furnace. Furnace is not only for you, it's for them. It's redemptive.

You see, in those days, there was a peephole in the furnace. And they were looking in. The world was looking in.

Nebuchadnezzar was looking inside the furnace. Every time God brings a trial into your life, it's a missionary trial. And every time God brings a trial into my life, it's a missionary trial.

God has redemption on His heart. Not only as we've been hearing so beautifully, to conform us into the image of His Son, but to be an attraction to those who are looking in the peephole as you walk with the Son of God in the midst of the fire. What turned their heads when they looked in that peephole? I'll tell you what turned their heads.

They saw Christians walking in liberty with the Son of God. That's the first thing Nebuchadnezzar said. I see four men, loose, and they're walking together.

That's an awesome picture. When the world can look and see you and the Lord walking together through the furnace. I've often heard the only thing the fire burned was the cords that bound them.

I'm not convinced about that. I say I'm not convinced because the Bible doesn't say the fire burned their cords off. I don't think it did myself.

It's the Lord that burned the cords off. It's the presence of God that sets you free, not the fire. He's not going to share His glory with the fire.

It's Him, His presence. Well, we'll leave that anyway. Remember in chapter 3, verse 20 and 22, the valiant men that threw these folks into the fire? What happened to them? See, they were incinerated.

They were consumed. They were destroyed. And that's part of the testimony.

When they look in the peephole and they see a Christian walking with the Son of God in the fire, they ask this question. How come you can walk with Jesus in that fire and it's killing me? That's what was happening. They got killed.

They're destroyed. They're consumed by it. And that astounded them.

The same furnace that God allows in our lives, that affliction, that test, that doctor's report, that loss, that reverse, that upheaval, that accident, that catastrophe. That's killing them. That's killing them.

But they look through the peephole and they see God's people. And something strikes at their heart. They're free.

They're fellowshiping. They're walking. It would have been a wonderful testimony if suddenly, by a mighty miracle, God would have just lifted them out of the furnace and put them in a cool place.

It would have been a mighty testimony if God supernaturally snuffed out the fire. But oh, the testimony that He let them go through it as they walked in an unbroken fellowship with Him. That's the testimony.

That's His name. That's the renown. And so Christ walked with them before the fire and Christ walked with them in the fire.

And when they came out of the fire, the Lord Jesus came out with them. Verse 27, chapter 3, "...the satraps, the prefects, the governors, the king's high officials gathered round and saw in regard to these men that the fire had no effect on the bodies of these men, nor was the hair of their head singed, nor were their trousers damaged, nor had even the smell of fire come upon them." And after you've gone through it, the world is still looking, and they are so amazed at the grace that brought you through. Not even the smell of fire upon you.

You know, from the outside, when you see a Christian going through something, you say, oh, my dear brother so-and-so, what he's gone through. That's from your point of view. From his point of view, he's having a party.

He's walking with the Son of God through that thing. You know, I cringe when I hear some testimonies, because some testimonies have the smell of smoke all over them. They're just black with soot.

They just stand up and say, oh, you know, it was so hard, and I had such a terrible time, but finally the Lord dragged me through it. I wonder sometimes what kind of testimony that is. God's pilgrims go through the wilderness, and their feet don't even swell.

The testimony is that after you've been through it to the world, it doesn't even look like you've been through it. Anyway, these are the three men who had been rescued. Let me wrap it up and close with this.

I see those men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, so rescued, so free from this kingdom of man, so delivered, so transferred from one kingdom to another, and my heart cries out, what's their secret? How can I be delivered that completely from the kingdom of man? I don't want to be swallowed up with the glory

of the kingdom of man. I don't want to. I don't want to be influenced by its music.

I don't want to be overpowered by peer pressure. I don't want to be forced to bow down. Sometimes a Christian scratches his head, and he wonders, and he says, I know the Lord has done a work in my heart.

I know I'm born again. I know I'm saved. He's transferred me out of this kingdom.

But how come that big monster of the kingdom of man still has power in my life? What is going on? I know I'm a Christian. I know I've been transferred from one to the other. How come I don't have the strength to resist the kingdom of man? When those silver arms are stretched out to me, how come I run to them? When that golden head smiles at me, why am I drawn in? Why am I sucked into this kingdom of man when God says I have deliverance? I don't want to sin.

I don't want to dishonor the Lord. I don't want to be addicted to the passions of the kingdom of man. I don't want to worship at the feet of this monster.

How can I be delivered? And I thank every true child of God that question comes up. I know I'm saved. I'm out of this kingdom.

I'm in the kingdom of His darling son. How can I be free from that thing? Let me show you their secret. And in showing you their secret, let me show you your secret and my secret.

And may God burn this indelibly in our hearts. It's the interpretation. It's the last part of the dream.

The process by which He dealt with the kingdom of man in the dream is the way He deals with the kingdom of man in history. Is the way He deals with the kingdom of man in redemptive history is the way He deals with the kingdom of man in your life and in my life. May God help us to see this.

This principle will be true in the future when the living stone comes from heaven at the end and hits the feet of all the kingdoms of this earth and down they come. And His kingdom then grows to a mountain that fills the earth. It'll be true someday down the road in the future.

This principle was operative and true in the past. Two thousand years ago when the living stone came down from heaven. Don't you think on the cross that the living stone struck at the feet of the kingdoms of this world and the kingdom of man? Oh, indeed it did.

And the kingdom of heaven and the kingdom of earth was set up on the earth that is growing and will fill the whole earth. What will be true in the future, what was true in the past, is true right now when the living stone first came into your heart. Do you remember that day when you accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as your own personal Savior? We pray, Thy kingdom come.

And He says, Your kingdom go. He comes into your life. And isn't that what happened when you got saved? He came into your heart and that little stone struck the feet of that image of man and it started to come down and you were born again.

And that little stone began to grow and fill your heart. Glorious picture that. Do you realize every time you study this book under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and God dawns Christ on you when you see the Lord, He comes as the living stone into your life.

Every time He comes, He comes to strike the feet of the kingdom of man. Every time He comes, He comes that He might grow and fill the whole landscape of your heart. Look again, please.

Verse 34 and 35. You continued looking until a stone was cut without hands. It struck the statue on the feet of iron and clay and crushed them.

Then the iron and the clay and the bronze and the silver and the gold were crushed all at the same time, became like chaff from the summer threshing floors, and the wind carried them away so that not a trace of them was found. But the stone that struck the statue became a great mountain and filled the whole earth. Jesus Christ is everlastingly the same.

What that means practically is everything He ever will be. He is right now. You say someday He'll be King of Kings.

He is right now. Someday He'll be Lord of Lords. He is right now.

Everything He ever was, He is right now. And everything He ever will be, He is right now. This interpretation at the end of Daniel's dream gives the secret, and once again for those that like logical connection, let me give you the last three points.

Here they are. Here's how God did it then. Here's how He always does it.

Let me tell you before I mention the three, I hope you've come far enough along to realize you can't arm-wrestle this monster. You can't deal with the kingdom of man. Only the living stone can knock the legs out from under this tremendous thing.

Here's the first point. Christ, the living stone, must be the one to strike at the foundation of the kingdom of man. Unless He deals with it, it's not dealt with.

Unless He strikes it, it's not smitten. We're constantly cutting off weeds at the surface and dealing with things on a level that's not foundational. As you see Christ in the book, He comes in as a living stone and He touches the foundation of all of this.

Until Christ deals with your short fuse, it's not dealt with. Until Christ subdues your passions, they're not subdued. Until Christ tames your tongue, it's not tamed.

Until Christ works in you a forgiving spirit, you have no forgiving spirit. Christ must deal with it. Christ must come in.

And you know when the Lord Jesus starts to unveil Himself in the Word, it's not all blessing. You say, oh wow, what a revelation of Christ. Every time He comes in, the kingdom of man comes down.

And that's messy. You know, forever in our minds, 9-1-1 will be etched. We'll never be able until the day we die to get out of our mind the vision, the image, the devastation when those twin towers came down.

The rubble, the debris, the cloud of dust, the death. And that was only two buildings. We're talking about the kingdoms of the earth.

Christ comes in. And when He comes in, we say, He's not doing anything. It's just a mess in my life.

It's God's mess. That dust in your eye, don't say that's Satan's dust. That's God's dust.

He's working. He's bringing it down. I love when He talks about cleansing the temple.

He cleansed the temple like my children used to clean their rooms. When it was all over, the tables are upside down, and animals running around, and birds flying, and coins everywhere. We clean the room.

That's how He cleansed the temple. When Christ comes in, He is the one that's going to change your life. Nobody else.

Don't try to change your life. Beg, ask, cry out to see the living stone. That's your only hope.

The living stone comes in, and He deals with it or it's not dealt with. The second point, I love verse 35. It says, The wind came and blew it all away, so not a trace of it was found.

What do you think of spiritually when you think of the wind? Say it, the Holy Spirit. Jesus knocks it down, and the Holy Spirit blows it away. If Jesus doesn't knock it down, it doesn't come down.

And if the Holy Spirit doesn't blow it away, it's not gone. This is the secret of having God deal with this kingdom of man. It's Christ who comes in as a living stone.

It's the Holy Spirit that takes it away. So many Christians are in such bondage over their past. They've sinned in the past, and they say it just hangs on.

When they understand that Christ has truly dealt with it, then the Holy Spirit will blow it away. Third picture, And then the little stone grew, and it began to fill the earth. He replaces Himself.

He grows, the person, and replaces everything that's knocked down. Brothers and sisters in Christ, this is the simplicity of the Christian life. I see Jesus.

He strikes at the foundation of the kingdom of man. The Holy Spirit blows it away, and Christ begins to grow. Then what? I see Jesus, and He comes in and strikes at the kingdom of man, and it falls down, and the Holy Spirit blows it away, and He grows.

Then what? I see Jesus. That's the process. That's the Christian life.

That's the simplicity of it. That's victory. The more you see the Lord, the more He grows, and the other stuff is just blown away.

Colossians 1.13 says, He has translated us out of the domain of darkness into the kingdom of His dear Son. And how does He do that? And the answer is by the living stone. Oh, brothers and sisters in Christ, you who struggle so much, and I have sung from that hymnal.

I know what that's about. Struggle against this terrible monster. Set your heart to know the Lord.

Seek the Lord. Go after the Lord. All week, it's Jesus.

He'll come in. He'll deal with it. He'll change you and blow it all away, and He'll fill the whole landscape of your life.

That's His heart. That's His plan. Nothing less than that is the Christian life.

Oh, may God work it in us. Let's pray. Our Father, we thank You so much for Your precious Word.

And as we've prayed before, we pray again. Not what we think it might mean, but all You've inspired it to mean. Work in our heart.

Thank You, Lord, for the victory we can have as You walk with us before the fire, during the fire, after the fire, by just allowing the living stone to do His work. What You're going to do in history, do in the history of our hearts. We ask in Jesus' name, Amen.

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