STRANGE MAN OF THE SCRIPTURES

Tonight's message will come solely from Daniel 2. and I would imagine that once you hear this subject, you'll want to go home and read the entire chapter. For the Bible, in this awesome chapter, is going to tell us what to expect in the future of this world. Tonight's message deals with a prophetic picture of the world from hundreds of years before Christ was born to the coming of Christ. And as we begin Daniel 2 we see Babylon.

Babylon.

The city of Babylon was a marvel of ingenuity and technology even in those days of old. As a matter of fact, the hanging gardens of Babylon are called one of the seven wonders of the world even to this day. Inside this kingdom was a king called Nebuchadnezzar. Inside this city was the Tower of Babel. Babylon in those days had a sewer system comparable to sewer systems in kingdoms today. Archaeologists have explored the ruins and have found this evidence and have reported it to the world. The houses in Babylon had hot and cold water running in them. And the hanging gardens furnished a kind of humidity that created a kind of air conditioning system way back there. It was called the golden kingdom.

The city was fore-square. And there was a river running through it. It was a pagan city. And the scripture use it as a type of religious confusion today. Therefore, it's not surprising that it's a counterfeit holy city. For in heaven there is a city fore-square, with a river flowing into the midst of it.

One night Nebuchadnezzar had a dream. And as he slept he saw a strange thing in his dream. And when he awakened, he couldn't forget the dream, but he couldn't remember it either. Nebuchadnezzar couldn't understand why this dream bothered him so. And so he called for his wise men, his astrologers, his fortune tellers - he called for the same kind of fakes we got today. He had been paying them a good salary. They were on the government payroll. He didn't do anything without them. And not that he has a real problem he calls them and says, "Come here fellows, I had a dream that was impressive and yet I can't remember it. Its bothering me, and so I want you to tell me what I dreamed about and what it means."

Well these fakes were like all other fakes. And in verse 10 and 11 the Bible says, 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 magicians, or astrologer, or Chaldean. 11. and it is a rare thing that the king requireth, and there is none other that can show it before the king, except the gods, whose dwelling is not with the flesh." And so they told the king, if you tell us the dream, we'll tell you the meaning. Now isn't that something! And that's the way a lot of them are today. They want you to tell them the dream, then they'll make up a meaning.

"King! You tell us the dream and we'll tell you the meaning." Nebuchadnezzar became furious, and verse 12 says he commanded to destroy all the wise men in Babylon. Now among the wise men were four young men. Now when the king sent for his wise men he didn't send for them. But when he got ready to kill all the wise men he included them. Their names were Daniel, Shadrack, Meshack, and Abednego. If you've heard those names before say Amen. So when the soldiers went to grab these four men, Daniel said, "Why is this decree so hasty from the king? Why is he in such a hurry? Why doesn't the king give us a chance, he gave the other wise men and magicians a chance." Then the soldiers said, "Alright, I'll delay the order a little bit while, I'll let you live long enough to see what you can do. Daniel, Shadrack,

Meshack, and Abednego decided they'd better do what all Christians better know how to do - they'd better talk to God. What do you say!
I wanna tell you when you're confused and don't know what to do, have a little talk with Jesus. A little talk with Jesus makes it right. What do you say? And so Daniel, Shadrack, Meshack, and Abednego got on their knees and pleaded for light. And whenever a man is truly seeking the light, God will send it to him. Ladies and gentlemen, if your soul is hungering for the light, ask and it shall be given you; seek and you shall find. Knock and it will be opened unto you. What do you say out there? The reason a lot of people don't understand the truth is because they don't want to. They figure out the truth might tell them something they don't wanna do. But when you mean business God says, blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.
And so when Daniel, Shadrack, Meshack, and Abednego got on their knees to pray, God sent help that they required. And an Angel came. And that Angel not only told Daniel the king's dream, but told him the meaning. And so the next day, he appeared before the king. And in verse 26, the king said: "Art thou able to make known unto me the dream which I have seen, and the interpretation thereof?" In other words, "Daniel, don't waste my time. I had my other big shots in here yesterday and they couldn't do anything. Now can you do anything? If you can't, let me go on with the business of the kingdom and you go on to your execution." When the king asked that question, Daniel poked a little fun, verse 27 and 28. 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:" Did you get that? Daniel said "look here, you've been paying these fellows but you haven't been paying us. You've been paying them and they've been filling your head with lies all this time. Why can't they tell you?" Then Daniel in verse 28 said "But there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets…" Now I want you to notice that those other wise men, if they could have done it, would have taken credit. Daniel didn't take any credit! He said there is a God in heaven. Amen. Ladies and gentlemen, if we stopped there, we would have heard enough to keep us for the rest of our lives. When you've got problems - there is a God in heaven! When people are using you and abusing you - there is God in heaven! Be not deceived, God is not mocked. Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.
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." In which days? This means last days. Now way back there, 600 years before Jesus came, God is dealing with kings, and showing the history of the world in advance to the end of time. Amen.
"Thy dreams, and the visions of thy head upon thy bed, are these;" now Daniel's ready for business. Verse 31. "Thou, O king, sawest, and beheld a great image. This great image whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee, and the form thereof was terrible." Daniel's off to some start, isn't he. You know I think if I had a dream like that I would wanna know the meaning of it too. And so now Daniel starts to explain it, verse 32 and 33. 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."
If you understood that say amen. Now, ladies and gentlemen, no wonder the king was upset. To see a man with a golden head, breast and arms of silver, belly and thigh of brass, legs of iron - no wonder the king wanted to know what this thing meant. And I can imagine that as soon as Daniel began to tell him, his recollection must have began

to work. And the king must have been saying, “that’s it, that’s what I saw, that’s what I saw!”
Now Daniel said, “King, my God not only told me about what you saw, He also told me what it meant. Verse 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 break 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 threshing floors; and the wind carried them away; that no place was found for them; and the stone that the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.” Now that’s some dream, isn’t it? Alright, now we go on. And Daniel begins to interpret the dream.
37. “Thou, O King, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory … Thou art this head of gold.” If you understand this say amen. In this strange image, Babylon is represented and Nebuchadnezzar is the head of gold. That’s what the Bible says in Daniel 2:38.
Now you can begin to see this strange man of the scripture, dead from his head to his ankles. His feet and toes alive and kicking. Daniel said, “O King, you are the head of gold!” This image is God’s way of showing you symbolically the great kingdoms of the earth, and what shall come to pass in the latter days. And God told that king that that head of gold wouldn’t last forever. God was giving King Nebuchadnezzar, 600 years before Christ was born, a prophetic glimpse into the future by his servant, Daniel. Then in verse 39 Daniel said, “And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee …” Are you with me? Now I think it’s clear already that this image is dealing with kingdoms and nations. He said, “Thou art this head of gold, but after thee..” And when he said after thee, Nebuchadnezzar couldn’t hardly stand it! “You mean my kingdom’s gonna pass away?” “Yes!!! Babylon will not rule forever. After thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee.”
Well now how did that come about? One night, the king of Babylon, whose name was Belshazzar, Nebuchadnezzar was dead and gone. Belshazzar was his grandson even thou he’s called the son of Nebuchadnezzar. His father was Nabonidus. Belshazzar was a spoilt brat who stayed around the palace. One night he decided to throw a party. And the Bible says he invited all of his lords and all of his generals, and army men, his diplomats and statesmen to come to the party at the palace. And while they were drinking, the Bible says he sent for the golden vessels that had been taken from the temple of Jerusalem when the Jews were taken captive. And he ordered that wine be poured in these vessels. And he used God’s holy vessels in his party. He had gone too far.
And folks let me tell you something. Only a few things are called holy. God is holy. The word is holy. Amen. Marriage is holy. Only a few things are holy. And you’d better mind how you treat holy things. Would you say Amen out there.
Old Belshazzar called for his lords, and they all began to have a big party. And while they were drinking wine, there came a hand out of the sleeve of darkness and wrote up against the wall in Hebrew characters. MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN. And when he saw it, he got so scared, the Bible says that his knees smote together. I wanna tell you the day is coming then the fury of God will be revealed and men are gonna run to the rocks and the mountains crying for help - but they’re gonna cry too late. All of these devils will belittle Christ and make fun of God. One day they’re gonna tremble like Belshazzar. The time to fear God is now. Belshazzar got scared! He said if anybody can tell me what the writing says, I’ll make him the third ruler in Babylon. So they got all the magicians again. And they all came in and none of them could read it. And finally somebody remembered Daniel and said, “there’s a Hebrew here who

once told your daddy the meaning of a dream. And if you send for Daniel, I believe he can read the writing.
Ladies and gentlemen, the Bible says that spiritual things are spiritually discerned. Only God's people can understand God's word. The Bible says the carnal man cannot receive the things of God for they are foolishness to him. But when your heart is touched by grace, and you're born again into God's family, you can read the Bible and understand it. Let's say Amen.
So they sent for Daniel. Daniel came in. The king said, "Oh Daniel, tell me what that is. It's about to scare me to death. My wise men cannot read it, my professors can't read it. But if you read it, Daniel, I'll put a golden chain about your neck, I'll cloth you with regal garments. I'll make you the third ruler in Babylon." Daniel looked up and saw what the words said and he said, "King, that's no deal. You can keep your gold. You can keep your robe, for I'm gonna read it anyhow." He said, "But before I read it, I'm going back into history." And Daniel recounted from the chronicles of Babylon, how Nebuchadnezzar had become acquainted with the true and living God. Daniel said, "But thou, O King, though thou knowest all this…"
Ladies and gentlemen, don't miss that. The Bible says to him that knowest to do good and does it not, to him it is sin. When you know God's will and don't do it, it's ten times worst than one who does not know. Let's say Amen. Belshazzar knew what his grandfather had gone through. And incidentally, Nebuchadnezzar died a believer in God, and if we get to heaven, I expect to see him up there. Would you say Amen. Belshazzar knew better, but did it anyhow.
Now, Daniel said God is not being patient with you because you know better. Now he said, "I'm ready to read it. The writing says, thou art weighed in the balances and found wanting. This night your kingdom and your soul are required of you." Let's say amen.
In Isaiah 45:1 the Bible says, "Thus saith the Lord to His anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the leaved gates; and the gates shall not shut;" In this verse, Cyrus was named years and years before he was born, as the instrument of God's wrath. God named the man who would lead the forces of the Medes and the Persians against the city of Babylon. And it said he would go in through the two gates that had been left open.
Well, why were the gates left open? Because that night, all of the soldiers were drinking, and all the army officers were in the party. And that night men of Cyrus went in and began to slay the army of Babylon and Belshazzar died in a pool of his own blood in fulfillment of the prophecy that had just been written on his wall. Let's say Amen.
Breast and arms of silver are taking over now. The Medes and the Persians became the rulers of the entire world. And this is a historic fact. And during this time Daniel was thrown into the lion's den, and he was delivered by God.
In Daniel 2:39, Daniel said, "After thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, a third kingdom of brass." Daniel is talking about kingdoms and nations. The first was Babylon, head of gold. The second was Medo-Persia, breast and arms of silver. And now the third kingdom of brass which shall bear rule over all the earth. That third kingdom was Greece under Alexander the Great.
At battle of Arbella, Alexander defeated the last of the Persian generals, and became the ruler of the entire world. This great military genius, the likes of which the world had never seen before, and perhaps never will see again had conquered the entire world while he was yet in his twenties. But you know what? Folks please listen to me.

He couldn't conquer himself. He ruled the entire world! And before he reached forty he died from drinking too much liquor. Alexander the Great wasn't very great after all. That was Greece.
Daniel 2:40 says the forth kingdom shall be as strong as what? Iron. For as much as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things: and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise.
Now, ladies and gentlemen, you can go to your libraries and discover what nation ruled after Greece. I think most of you know it now. It was the Iron kingdom of Rome. Would you say Amen. In Luke 2:11, we read that Rome was ruling the world when Jesus came. "And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed." And while shepherds watched their flocks on the hills of Palestine, and Angels came unto them and said, "Be not afraid, for unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Savior, which is Christ, the Lord." I feel like Christmas. The organist/pianist is playing Silent Night. Let's sing it everybody, one stanza of it. People will think we've lost our minds, but let's sing it anyhow. Silent night.
Christ, the Savior of the world, came down here, and was born in the days of the iron kingdom of Rome. But Christ was not only born under the iron kingdom of Rome, but it was a Roman court that sentenced Him to death. A Roman governor turned Him over to a mob. A Roman cross was prepared for Him. Jesus was beaten with a Roman whip. The Romans were known for their cruelty. Jesus died under the iron monarchy of Rome. And I wanna tell you, they put Him in a tomb, but a Roman grave couldn't hold him. Let's say Amen. A Roman seal was cracked by an angel on Easter Sunday morning.
Ladies and gentlemen, were following history and we're gonna come right down to the end of time in that one dream. Daniel 2:41, "And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potter's clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; but this shall be in it of the strength of iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay." 42. "And the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken." All together on verse 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." These words are seven in that text that has stopped every world ruler since Rome. Now if these infidels are so sure that there is nothing to the Bible, they ought to try to prove that's a lie. God said after Babylon would come Medo-Persia; after Medo-Persia would come Greece; after Greece would come Rome, and God stuck his neck out six hundred years before Christ was born, and said after Rome, no other nation would ever rule the entire world. Let's say Amen. God said Rome would be divided, and like the feet and toes of iron and clay, it would be partly strong and partly weak. I wanna tell you that Rome was divided into these ten kingdoms of Europe. They are roughly the same as today. They were called different names in those days. They were called the Alamanni, the Ostrogoths, the Vsisgoths, the Vandals, the Suevi, the Franks, the Heruli, the Anglo-Saxon, the Lombards. But today they are known by the names of England, France, Italy, Germany and Turkey, let's say Amen. They were divided upon the fall of Rome in 476 AD, there has never been anybody who could prick the scriptures. Let's say Amen.
When God speaks you can count on it. Now there were great men who tried. There was Charlemagne, and Louis XIV, and Napoleon Bonaparte. These men said they were gonna do it, but they didn't get it done. Sometimes we think the United States is gonna last forever. We've had a wonderful nation. There have been a lot of problems,

a lot of mistakes, and God has given this nation ample opportunity to correct its problems. But instead of correcting them, they have been guilty of discrimination, racism, violence, and every other kind of evil and have compounded this by turning away from God. And today every kind of dirt is being sanctioned in America. We used to be called a Christian nation, but today we are pagan. Let's say Amen. Whenever a nation has turned its back on God, it hasn't stood very long. Let the Smart Alec's say what they will. This is a matter of history. God setteth up kings and He takes them down. Woe unto this nation if we don't get back to scripture, and get back to decency, get back to the law of God, get back to some high standards, get back to honoring marriage.

Napoleon Bonaparte wanted Europe to become one nation. Now this man was a genius. He had power, he had an army, he almost did it, but those seven words in Daniel 2 stopped him. God said, "they shall not cleave to another…." And when God speaks, it takes greater than Napoleon to do away with God's will.

Later on in some of your lifetime there came the handsome emperor of Prussia: his name was Kaiser Wilhelm. Ever heard of him? He said, "I have a dream!" So he lighted the fuse to World War I, and some of you sitting right here might have been in that was. And I wanna tell you something. When it was over, Kaiser Wilhelm did not have his dream fulfilled. He started out as a handsome general, he ended up as an old man chopping wood in Holland. His dream exploded, and World War I ended with Germany in defeat.

But after him there was already another maniac already on foot who said, "I'm gonna do it." His name was Adolf Hitler. Let's say Amen. Old Hitler said, "I'm gonna do it, or I'm gonna die." You know what he did. He died. Hitler put together the 3rd Right and then the Axis power shook hands. And Mussolini, the flamboyant leader of Italy, the man who had ravaged Ethiopia. The man who didn't know you reap what you saw. The man who ended up handing up-side-down at the mercy of his own people whi spit on him until it ran down and puddled under his head. This man joined Hitler along with him, the honorable Hirohito of Japan, they formed together the Axis power and World War I was fought. But once again God delivered the allied power and Hitler died in suicide. The rest of them were put to death, they could not stand up to the hand of God.

You know when I went off to college and got into these prophecies, this is what sealed my faith in God. When God speaks it comes to pass, let's say amen. And if God has done what He said in the past, it makes me believe, he's gonna do what He says in the future. When God says that these great nations won't unite and they don't, I believe God!

Now let's finish this dream. Daniel 2:44, "And in the days of these kings…" What kings? When the kingdoms of Europe are divided, never to be reunited. Daniel said "in the days of these kings shall 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 forever.

Thomas E. Murray, a scientist and Atomic Energy Commissioner, said, "For all we know it may be the incomprehensible will of God to make the 20th Century closing time for the human race." Daniel said in verse 45 "… thou sawest that a stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold …" The old Negro Spiritual says "I'm lookin' for that stone that was huged out of the mountain." That stone is Jesus Christ. He's coming.

Ladies and gentlemen, time is almost out. And out in space that planet springs around like a leprous sore, spreading contamination amongst the stars. Jesus is looking on.

And He says, be ye ready. Christ is coming! Christ is coming! Christ is coming! Let everybody say Amen. Ladies and gentlemen we've come all the way from Babylon to our day, and you have got to make a decision. You've gotta decide where you're going to spend eternity. You gotta decide between heaven or hell. You'd better decide now where you're going. If you decide you're going to heaven, you'd better put God first, put His word first, trust God, not man.

Ladies and gentlemen, I plead with you with all the earnestness I have, please prepare to meet God. I'm closing, if you have been impressed with this prophecy, and you want grace to put God first in your life, I want you to raise your hands.

Lord Jesus, see our hands raised tonight before Thee. We're reaching out to Jesus, knowing that You're reaching out to us. Lord, thank you for Your truth. Thank You for the word of God that is so rich and full. We don't know the Bible as we ought because we don't study it. We don't read it we just listen to what others have to say. God please, help us to get ready, we're in the last days. And we must be ready for Jesus to come. Save us, Lord! We beg in Jesus' name.

There is hope for you, in this violent age.
There is hope for you, though nations fight and rage.
There is hope for you, tis on the sacred page.
There is hope in Christ for you.
There is hope for you, though bombs and shells are heard.
There is hope, I say, no king shall rule the world.
There is hope for you, when Christ's own flags unfurled.
There is hope in Christ for you.