

# The Dream

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Preacher: Cory Brock

[ 0 : 0 0 ]     So as the kids head down, we're going to read scripture together from the Old Testament, Daniel chapter 2. So Chris, our minister in training, is going to come and read scripture for us, and let's read God's word together.

Thanks, Corey. So we're going to read Daniel in chapter 2. We're going to read through the chapter, various verses, and I'll try to let you know where we are as we go. This is God's word.

In the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuchadnezzar had dreams. His spirit was troubled, and his sleep left them. Then the king commanded the magicians, the enchanters, the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans to be summoned to tell the king his dreams.

So they came in and stood before the king. And the king said to them, I had a dream, and my spirit is troubled to know the dream. Then the Chaldeans said to the king in Aramaic, O king, live forever.

Tell your servants the dream, and we will show you the interpretation. The king answered and said to the Chaldeans, The word from me is firm. If you do not make known to me the dream and its interpretation, you shall be torn limb from limb, and your houses shall be laid in ruins.

[ 1 : 0 7 ]     But if you show me the dream and its interpretation, you shall receive from me gifts and rewards and great honor. Therefore, show me the dream and its interpretation. They answered a second time and said, Let the king tell his servants the dream, and we will show its interpretation.

And the king answered and said, I know with certainty that you're trying to gain time, because you see that the word from me is firm. If you do not make the dream known to me, there is but one sentence for you.

You've agreed to speak lying and corrupt words before me till the times change. Therefore, tell me the dream, and I shall know that you can show me its interpretation. The Chaldeans answered the king and said, There's not a man on earth who can meet the king's demand.

For no king, no great or powerful king has asked such a thing of any magician or enchanter or Chaldean. The thing that the king asks is difficult. No one can show it to the king, except the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh.

Because of this, the king was angry and very furious, and commanded that all the wise men of Babylon be destroyed. Then we're going to verse number 17. Then Daniel went to his house and made the matter known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions, and told them to seek mercy from the God of heaven concerning this mystery, so that Daniel and his companions might not be destroyed with the rest of the wise men of Babylon.

[ 2 : 3 0 ]     Then the mystery was revealed to Daniel in a vision of the night. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven. Daniel answered and said, Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, to whom belong wisdom and might.

He changes times and seasons. He removes kings and sets up kings. He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who have understanding. He reveals deep and hidden things.

He knows what it is to dwell in dark. He knows what is in the darkness. And the light dwells with him. To you, O God of my fathers, I give thanks and praise, for you've given me wisdom and might, and have now made known to me what we ask of you, for you have made known to us the king's matter.

And to verse 31. You saw, O king, and behold a great image. This image mighty and of exceeding brightness stood before you, and its appearance was frightening. The head of his image was of fine gold, its chest and arms of silver, its middle and thigh of bronze, its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay.

As you looked, a stone was cut by no human hand and struck the image on its feet of iron and clay and broke them in pieces. Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold all together were broken in pieces and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors.

[ 3 : 52 ] And the wind carried them away so that not a trace of them could be found. But the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.

And finally, verse 44. And in those days, and in the days of those kings, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed, nor shall the kingdom be left to another people.

It shall break in pieces all these kingdoms and bring them to an end, and it shall stand forever. Just as you saw that a stone was cut from a mountain with no human hand and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold.

A great God has made known to the king what shall be after this. The dream is certain and its interpretation is sure. Then King Nebuchadnezzar fell on his face and paid homage to Daniel and commanded that an offering, an incense be offered up to him.

The king answered and said to Daniel, Truly, your God is God of gods, the Lord of kings, and a revealer of mysteries, for you have been able to reveal this mystery.

[ 4 : 58 ] Amen. This is God's holy word. Thanks, Chris. Let's pray. Lord, we ask now that as we look at this text together that you would help us to hear and understand and that our hearts would be open.

So we ask for the presence of your Holy Spirit, and we pray that in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. We're working our way through the book of Daniel on Sunday mornings, and in the year 605 B.C., King Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, went to Jerusalem, and he sacked Jerusalem, but he didn't destroy it with violence.

Instead, he wanted to destroy God's people in Jerusalem by assimilating them, assimilation, annihilation by assimilation. He wanted to Babylonize the world and create a great empire where his name would be renowned in all the world.

And so what he did was he took the professional class from Jerusalem to Babylon. So these are the people with the most skills, the smartest people in the city of Jerusalem, to help build Babylon into this even better empire and city than it was.

And he wanted to really turn the whole world into Babylon. God's people here in this book are in exile, exile. And exile simply means any time where the people of the Lord, the people who follow God, are not in the place they're supposed to be.

[ 6 : 18 ] They're not in the garden city of God ultimately. They're not in the city of God. And throughout the Bible, Babylon and exile become metaphors, symbols of the reality that the Bible says every single Christian, every single person who follows the Lord is also living a life of exile, a life of pilgrimage, a waiting for the city of God.

So St. Augustine said that every single Christian is a citizen of the city of God living in the cities of men. And at the heart of the city of man, which is at the heart of Babylon, is the problem of idolatry.

Babylon is not only a living reality of putting an idol at the center of life, but it's a symbol in the rest of the Bible for that. And it tells us that what's at the heart of Babylon is also in every human heart that we all struggle with the same things.

No matter what you come and believe today, no matter your spiritual background or not, we all struggle with what the Bible calls idolatry. And idolatry is anytime we take something in this life that's creaturely, that God made, and we divinize that thing.

We turn anything in this world into a little God for us. So idolatry is when something absorbs your heart more than God does. Something takes over your imagination far more than God does.

[ 7 : 41 ] It's when you seek something and you give it all your attention and you center your life around it and you make it far more important to you than the God who made you. And so while the Bible says believers are living in exile because we're in a city of idols, a city that we do indeed love, but a city full of idols and our hearts are struggling with idolatry, there's a sense in which it doesn't really matter the background you came from today, you come from today.

We all struggle with exile because exile is just being away from where God made us to be. And that's in his presence, making him the center of our lives.

And so Babylon's in all of us. It's a space that we're all living in. It's just any time that we turn anything in this world into a little God and we worship it and we center our lives around it.

We take good things that God gave us and we turn them into bad things. That's idolatry. And that's at the center of Babylonian life. Now, the book of Daniel is wisdom literature.

And I mentioned this in week one, but in the original Hebrew Bible, the Old Testament, the order of the books is slightly different than the order we have in our English Bibles. And originally the book of Daniel was part of the wisdom text like Psalms and Proverbs and Esther and books like that.

[ 8 : 59 ] And so this is a book about wisdom. And it's really asking the question today, how do you live as a believer with faith and hope and wisdom in an age of exile in Babylon?

How do you live as a human being in a situation where we have Babylonian hearts prone towards idols? That's the wisdom question around the book of Daniel. And week one, week two, I can say it in one sentence.

I won't repeat the sermons. Don't worry. Week one and week two, what do we say? The first two principles we learn is that the book of Daniel in chapter one says, the call of the believer is to be in the world, never separate, to love Babylon, to give your life to her, to seek the peace of the city, to pray for Babylon, Jeremiah 29, to never back away from being a part of the culture that God's put us in, and yet not of Babylon.

Be in the world, but not of it. Seek the peace of the city, love her, and don't ever give your heart to idols. So starve your idols to death, fast from them.

That's the first two principles today. We get the third principle. It's very simple. I fear that if I say it right now, then you'll think I don't need to listen to the rest of this, but I'm going to say it, and hopefully you still will.

[ 10 : 18 ] And it's so simple, but remember, Daniel's a wisdom book, and it comes after the book of Proverbs in the original order. And the principle today that we learn from Daniel 2 is get wisdom.

To live well in Babylon, in exile, you need wisdom. And that's really the big idea here. So let's look at that. We're going to see that through, briefly through the lens of the man of Babylon, the dream, and the stone.

So first, the man of Babylon. Daniel 1, maybe you know today that the Bible, the Old Testament, is written in Hebrew, the New Testament, in Greek.

But there's a moment in the Old Testament, and here we are, where Daniel 1 is written in Hebrew, but Daniel 2 to 7 is written in Aramaic. There's a third language. And Daniel chapters 8 to 12 is in Hebrew.

So it goes Hebrew, Aramaic, Hebrew. So that means we've entered into this own stand-alone section, Daniel 2 to 7. And if you were, we'll see this over the next few weeks, but Daniel 2 to 7, Daniel 2 and Daniel 7 are all about dreams from foolish kings.

[ 11 : 26 ] If you take one step in, Daniel 3 and Daniel 6 are all about the courage of believers in the face of death. The fiery furnace and the lion's den. And then if you step to the very middle, Daniel 4 and 5 are both stories of the pride of kings that topple their empires.

So we're entered into this little section that's really carefully constructed and crafted together, this Aramaic section. And so it's making a point. We're honing down in on the problem in the middle, Daniel 3 and 4, 4 and 5, and that's pride at the human heart, at the center of idolatry.

And pride, the point of this text is pride, our pride, our idolatry makes us foolish. It makes us fools. And so this really is the story of Nebuchadnezzar's dream is a story, a dream that's focused all about how much Nebuchadnezzar's idolatry made him into a fool.

And it's just playing out Proverbs 1, Proverbs 2, Proverbs 3. Get wisdom, and to get wisdom, the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. But if you don't fear the Lord and you fear something else in your life far more than the Lord, you're going to struggle with foolishness.

That's the real idea here. And let's see it. In verse 1 and 2, Nebuchadnezzar, it says he had a dream and that dream made him very troubled.

[ 12 : 48 ] He couldn't sleep. He saw in this dream some type of terrifying image. And he does something wild in verse 5 and 6. He brings in all the magicians, all the sorcerers, all the Chaldeans, the priests, and he says to them, I want you not just to interpret my dream, I want you to tell me what the dream was.

And if you can't tell me what the dream was and then interpret it, I'm going to tear you from limb to limb. I'm going to cut your heads off. And he makes that pronouncement throughout all the realm. Every wise man that fails, all of you together will be collectively executed.

Now, this is classic Napoleon complex. Remember Napoleon? He was a great emperor, a conqueror of all of Europe, but he could never get enough.

He wanted power. Some people have said that it was because of his diminutive stature that caused that. And I can say today, I've never struggled with that or been accused of it. Okay?

Just to make that clear. I, another Napoleon that I like to think about is Lord Farquaad from Shrek. You know, he was so tortured and so power hungry that he tortured the gingerbread man.

[ 14 : 06 ] And, look, these are silly examples, but you know the story of Caligula, perhaps, the story of the literary figure Macbeth and Shakespeare's Macbeth, that Scottish king who was promised the hope of a crown.

And in that, he started off wise, but it made him crazy because he was so power hungry. And he became a murderer, paranoid. He couldn't live life.

And here, what we have is the fact that Nebuchadnezzar has centered his life on an idol. And that idol is, of course, his own pride, his own self-glory, but we could say it also is power.

Nebuchadnezzar is the most accomplished man in world history, and some say. And he has centered his life around power. And power promises to make you great.

And when it becomes the very thing that you want above anything else in life, it becomes a god to you and it begins to be a slave master and rule you.

[ 15 : 09 ] And you will do terrible things. To keep hold of the god that's at the center of your life. And that's what's happening here. Nebuchadnezzar is the most powerful man in all the world, and yet one little dream makes him go crazy.

He says, I will tear every wise man in this kingdom from limb to limb because of a little dream that he had. And we realize here that when you center your life around an idol, whether, you know, we could think here especially of achievement idols.

Success, wealth, power, the security that comes by way of being very financially successful. And in a city like ours, many, many people move here to pursue security idols, achievement idols.

And we can think about those and say that when you make those the actual goal of your life, what happens is not the security you seek through them, but a life of fragility and fear.

And that's exactly what's going on here. Let me just give you a couple ways this works. Idols promise you something and they can never deliver. And they create real fragility.

[ 16 : 15 ] So power promises security, but the more you have, the more you realize how you have to get more and more to actually keep the original power. And that's what's going on in Nebuchadnezzar's life.

He's so anxious. He's so fearful. He can't sleep. He's got such a fear of losing what he's built because he knows something. And that's what? That when you center your life around stuff, it's incredibly fragile.

It can easily be lost. And so here he's so afraid that he's going to lose his precious, his ring, the ring of power that he's put on his hand. He's so afraid of that.

So an idol promises you great things, but it leaves you in deep fragility and insecurity. Secondly, anxiety is typically a product of that. So one of the ways you can know what you're struggling with maybe that you've put at the center of your life is to ask, what makes me shake in my boots?

What am I most afraid of? What keeps me up at night? And oftentimes anxiety, that type of fear is a smoke signal. It's a symptom and it's like looking up above a forest line and seeing smoke on the horizon and you've got to trace that smoke down to the bottom of your heart and ask, why am I so afraid of this, of losing this?

[ 17 : 30 ] What is it that has captured me so much that I've centered my life around that if I lost this precious, this ring, I would be lost. That's what's going on in his life. Third, idolatry, especially achievement idolatry, reverses the master-slave relationship.

And so what happens here is instead of wielding the kingdom as a great tool for the common good, boy, the most powerful man in human history has this opportunity to wield these resources for such good, for the common good of the people.

Instead, what ends up happening is if, very precise here, if power is your goal, if achievement is your goal, if success is your actual goal, then what happens is that you'll end up becoming a slave of that goal.

It has now mastered you. In other words, power, success, achievement, and money are not bad things, they're good things. But if you make them the very object of your hope in your life, power itself, not the fact of power that could wield resources for so much good, then you'll become its slave.

It's become your God, it's become your master. Lastly, you see here in this passage how much this idol of power, hunger for him, isolates Nebuchadnezzar from love.

[ 18 : 54 ] Idols do that, they isolate us from real relationships and love. When power becomes your God, you can never be sure if people really love you or they just want something from you.

And here, all across this passage, you know, what do the Chaldeans do, the Magi do? They come to Nebuchadnezzar and they say, oh king, live forever. They say, we love you so much. And he turns around and says, I'm going to cut you from limb to limb.

And they say, well, oh king, live forever, just give us a little more time, we're going to do our best. Nobody will ever speak the truth and love to him. They flatter him, they enable him, right?

Because idols do that. They take loving relationship away from us because we're so fragile, we're afraid to actually have relationships of honesty and truth. And the takeaway here is that anytime we've made an achievement God, the very center of our lives, it turns us into slaves.

And at the very end of this section, this first section that we read, the Chaldeans themselves, the magicians, they say exactly the point in verse 11 and 12. They say, King, what you have asked, only a God could do.

[ 20 : 09 ] In other words, it's turning the tide, it's starting to make you think, where is it that you can get a foundation that will actually give you security? And they say, only a God could do the thing that you're asking for.

They're halfway there, so secondly, let's see the dream. Now, nobody in all the kingdom can do this. Nobody can tell Nebuchadnezzar the dream.

Nobody can interpret the dream. And what happens is that Daniel and his friends hear about this. And in verse 12 and 13, Daniel goes to Ariok, the king's advisor, and he says, Ariok, set up a meeting between me and Nebuchadnezzar.

And so Daniel rushes straight in. And the reason for that is because Daniel knows that he's also going to die. He and all the people that have come, the 10,000 that have come, Nebuchadnezzar's going to kill everybody about this.

And so he knows that everybody's life is at risk here. Now, what the passage the writer is doing here is setting up this great contrast in this moment between Daniel and Nebuchadnezzar. So we've seen Nebuchadnezzar, the man of Babylon, the man who has power at the very center of his life, that he's revolving his life around entirely.

[ 21 : 22 ] But then it turns to Daniel. And here's the test. Nebuchadnezzar has a scary dream. Nebuchadnezzar has a scary dream, and it makes him so fragile.

Daniel, the prophet Daniel, God's servant, what does he do? His life is actually on the line, and in verse 14, it turns and we're told, in verse 14, he acted with prudence and discretion.

All right, so you see that contrast? Nebuchadnezzar has a scary dream, and it absolutely breaks him, the most powerful man on earth. Daniel is a slave, and his life is under threat.

He's been told he's going to be executed, and the next verse in verse 14 says, but he was able to operate with prudence and discretion. And there's a great contrast between wisdom and foolishness.

The word prudence that's used in this passage is like the word wisdom, but it's a little more specific, and maybe prudence is not a word that we use very often in modern speech, but prudence means the ability to know what to do when there are no rules telling you what to do.

[ 22 : 34 ] So prudence is this ability to enter into a very complex life and live with justice and righteousness in the midst of Babylon, in the midst of exile, when there's nobody telling you how to operate in every single situation.

So this is a very complex situation. Daniel is a slave of the king. The king has said, I'm going to kill everybody because nobody can interpret my dream. Prudence says, what do I do in the midst of such a difficult, complex situation?

Now, if you were to go read throughout the last couple thousand years, and even beyond that, in philosophy, I'm going to talk about it in the classics, the classic literature, in theology, everybody gathers around this idea that says, what is wisdom?

And typically, four things have been said, and I won't go through them, I'll just list them for you. Typically, almost everybody is gathered around the idea that wisdom is prudence, the ability to know how to operate well in a complex world, justice, the ability to, with precision, and seek what's good in complex situations, seek justice, to do it with courage.

So, to be able to enter into a space and speak the truth, even at great risk of your own life. And lastly, the fourth is temperance. And temperance is a word we don't use very often either, and all it means is that over time, the more you use prudence with justice and courage, this is who you become, and that's what temperance means.

[ 24 : 02 ] It becomes second nature to you. And if you were to go through this passage, verse 16, Daniel sets an appointment. Daniel says to Ariok, make an appointment with Nebuchadnezzar for me to interpret the dream before he even knows the interpretation of the dream.

And he's willing to say, look, I don't know what to do right now exactly, but I'm willing to risk my life to go in and hoping that God will give this to me. That's prudence. It's the courage because of justice to take a risk in a really hard situation.

And then in verse 27 to 28, he tells Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuchadnezzar, your kingdom is going to fall. Boy, can you imagine? Imagine stepping into the court of Lord Farquhar, and you have to tell him, your little kingdom is going to fall because of your pride.

The man who kills gingerbread men, he, in other words, you see what Daniel's doing? He is willing to step into the fray and to say, the point is your kingdom is dust.

To a man who's so fragile that he's already said, I will kill everyone if they cannot tell me what this means. Daniel was so wise that he had prudence and he sought justice and he had great courage and it was just natural.

[ 25 : 17 ] It flowed out of him. Real wisdom. The point of the passage is get wisdom. And how do you get wisdom? And this is where we really hone in on the big idea. And that's that Daniel is not just morally good.

Daniel is not just wise in the story. There's far more than that. The question of the passage is, what is the foundation of your life that can make you wise? And even deeper than that, what is the foundation of your life that can give you the security in your life to operate with prudence, courage, justice, and temperance?

What is the foundation of your life that can actually ground this type of truth and love, this courage, this ability, this wisdom? And it's back in chapter 1. It comes up again in chapter 2.

And it's that when Daniel refused to give his heart to idolatry and said, I will fear the Lord no matter what, it says God then blessed him with all wisdom. And back to Proverbs 1.

If you want to be a wise person in a complex world, the Bible says get wisdom. And the way you do that is saying the fear, recognizing the glory of the Lord is the beginning of all wisdom.

[ 26 : 30 ] And so the question of this passage is, what is the foundation of your life that can give you a security where you're okay so that you can actually be a person who's growing in wisdom over time?

Now, this is just simply illustrated in the dream itself. And we only need to spend two minutes on it to get this across. And that's the dream in verse 31 to 35. The dream is that there is a great statue, a great image.

And it's a terrifying image. But it's got a head of gold. It's got a chest of silver. It's got a core of bronze. It's got legs of iron. And it's got feet of iron with clay on the bottom.

Now, Daniel goes and he tells the dream because God gave him that dream as a gift. He gave him the interpretation. And then from there, he then turns and tells Nebuchadnezzar the interpretation.

Now, people come to this and they make the dream into a moment of prophecy, a really important prophecy about world history. And it definitely is that. This is a moment where the real God is telling somebody a thousand year span of history.

[ 27 : 38 ] What's going to happen? And that's important to note. But the point of the dream is not about the prophecy. It's not about the kingdoms that are to come. Traditionally, we've said that the head of gold is, of course, Babylon.

Daniel tells Nebuchadnezzar that directly. Then the silver is the kingdom of Persia that's to follow this. And then the bronze is Greece. And then the iron is the kingdom of Rome that is to come.

But at the very bottom of the statue is clay. And from verse 38, you see the point, because in verse 38, he turns to Nebuchadnezzar himself.

He doesn't say, let me talk to you about everything here. Let me talk to you about the kingdoms that are to come. He turns to the man of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar, and said, you are the head of gold. And your feet are clay.

And your kingdom is going to get pulverized into dust. And the way that that happens is there's a supernatural event where in the dream, someone invisible cuts from a mountain, a great stone that strikes this image and casts all the kingdoms down.

[ 28 : 44 ] And the point is that he's looking at the face of Nebuchadnezzar and saying, let me give you a thousand year span of history that is to come and understand that you are not the climax of history.

And you've made your life centered around power and achievement and success and wealth, and it's all going to crumble. You have clay feet. And Greece is going to have clay feet, Alexander the Great will, and Rome, and everyone else.

And the big idea is that any time you center your life on your own personal kingdom, if your life is made through your own kingdom building, centering your life around your success and your glory and your power and your wealth, you've got clay feet.

And ultimately it's going to pass away and it's going to crumble. And it's not a foundation. You see, what foundation did Nebuchadnezzar and all of his achievements have?

Clay. Sand, as the New Testament says. And the question of the passage is, what is it that you're building your foundation upon in your life? What is, another way to say it is, what is your why? You know, what's, people debate about this kind of stuff all the time, but what is, what is the difference between a Christian banker, a Christian who is a banker, a Christian who is an accountant, a Christian who goes to work every day in the city, and someone, and somebody who's not, who centered their lives around power, wealth, achievement, and status.



[ 30 : 08 ] And the main difference is why? Why are you going to work every day? Why are you raising your family? Why are you seeking education? Why are you going to uni? Why? In other words, what is the thing at the center of your life that is a secure foundation for meaning and purpose that can provide a security that will never leave you, a foundation that will never go away, a meaning and a purpose that if your stuff gets taken from you, that still remains, that ultimately is still there.

Do you have that? That's the question of the passage. And so lastly, how do you get it? We'll finish with this, the stone. So at the heart of this dream, we're told that there is all of a sudden in the midst of the dream, a supernatural hand that cuts a stone out of a mountain in order to strike this great image.

And let me just mention a couple quick characteristics about that stone. Just think about this for a moment with me. Verse 34 and 35 says, this is a rock cut, not with human hands, but by supernatural hands.

Then secondly, it says, this is an instrument that will destroy the pride of all the great kings. And then third, it says, it's a stone. It's a rock.

Okay, think about it. It's not gold. If you look at every piece of the image of Nebuchadnezzar's dream, gold, silver, bronze, iron, all far more precious than stone, than rock.

[ 31 : 37 ] In other words, this stone is humble. It's small. It's of humble origin. And then in verse 35, it says, but this humble stone will one day become a great kingdom that will start small, but will fill the whole world.

Friends, the New Testament directly identifies this stone as Jesus Christ. The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone of a mighty kingdom, a mighty foundation.

And the New Testament, just think about it. The stone, it has to be crafted out of supernatural hands. Jesus Christ, born of flesh, truly human, but born of the Spirit, conceived by the Holy Spirit.

He is the Son of God Himself. He is supernatural. The stone, He's not gold. Boy, did Jesus come into this world? Not gold, not silver, not bronze. He was born and placed into a little animal feeding trough laying in the spit of the animals.

He's just a little stone. He's humble in His origin. The stone that the builders rejected became the cornerstone. The stone that all the kingdoms of this world hate because He comes to vanquish their pride has become the cornerstone of a kingdom that will last forever.

[ 32 : 55 ] This is talking about Jesus Christ, the stone in the stream. And the irony of the Christian gospel today is this. If you think, not Nebuchadnezzar versus Daniel, but Nebuchadnezzar versus the stone, Jesus Christ.

Nebuchadnezzar came to center his entire life around power and abundance and temporal wealth and security. Jesus Christ, the only one who controls the kingdoms, the absolute God Himself, came in such great irony that He didn't come seeking power.

He came in exactly the opposite way of Nebuchadnezzar. He came to be the stone that shatters all pride of the emperors. And yet, at the same time, He came giving away all power to release us and rescue us from our power hunger.

Jesus Christ is the stone that the builders rejected when He went to the cross so that He could free you and rescue you from centering your life around power hunger, around self-glory, around divinizing self and everything else in this life more than God.

He came to offer that rescue. The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone. And so the question today, friends, as we finish is, is Jesus Christ the foundation of your life?

[ 34 : 15 ] Do you have feet that have been secured temporarily by something else like achievement and wealth and power and glory and relationship and romance?

And the proportion to which your life is centered really does revolve around any of the stuff in this world like that that can be lost will be the proportion to which you will live in fear and fragility.

So anxiety is directly proportional to the degree to which we have made our feet something in this life, our foundation, something in this life that we can lose. But if Jesus Christ the stone is your foundation, something that can never be lost, an identity, a purpose, a rescue, a forgiveness from idolatry forever that can never be taken away, you have a foundation that will never leave you, that will give you true and lasting security.

I'll give the last word to just this comparison. Think about it. Nebuchadnezzar's empire was built through military conquest, political force, great evil, seeking absolute power.

It was maintained through fear and threat and executions. He demanded worship. We'll see that next week through intimidation. His kingdom lasted 70 years, 70 years.

[ 35 : 38 ] And today you can go visit the site of his kingdom in Iraq. It's a tourist center. It's an archaeological dig site. It's long gone. The dust has washed it away.

Jesus Christ's kingdom was built on sacrificial love, on giving power away, on seeing a much bigger perspective. And that's a kingdom that starts off so small but grows so big over the centuries.

It's maintained through servants like Daniel and others and the call upon all of us today that are willing to even die, to lose all power and death like he did. It has lasted thousands of years.

It's never going away. It will endure forever. It spans every continent, every culture, every kingdom, every language. The mountain is here. The kingdom has come.

It's in the now and not yet phase of history. Build your life on that rock. It's a far better identity, a far better purpose. Let us pray. Lord, we thank you that you rescue us from our idols.

[ 36 : 42 ] And so we pray today, God, that we would be able to identify the little gods in our lives that we continue to revolve our lives around. And that, Lord, you would give us wisdom to fear you more than the fragility, the fear that comes out of the fragility of chasing little rings in this life that will never satisfy us.

So we thank you that that's such a clear message. And Daniel, Lord, teach it to us more and more and more today. And especially as we sing, Lord, show us these truths. Meet with us in a particular way in this moment.

And we pray that in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Amen.