

## **Reflection - Daniel 2: The Sequel**

Pr. Manuel Fernández, who pastors the Wimauma Spanish Seventh-day Adventist Church in Florida, is a friend of mine. One day Manny called me. "Teresita, would you say that there could be a personal application to the prophecy in Daniel 2? What do you think?" I told Manny that I had noticed that in the Bible, when there are four of a kind, many times there is a world-wide application that embraces humanity as a whole, as well as a personal application; and certainly this prophecy in Daniel 2 brings forth four metals: gold, silver, bronze and iron. So his premise about Daniel 2 made sense to me. Thereupon, we considered a few examples. The first four Commandments, which speak of our relationship with God, is for all humanity as well as for each of us personally. The New Testament begins with four Gospels, and Jesus died for all of humanity and for each of us individually. The Tabernacle built by Moses had four coverings: curtains of fine woven linen, curtains of goat's hair, a covering of ram's skin dyed red, and a covering of badger's skin. (Exodus 26:1, 7 & 14) The Sanctuary message is the message of salvation given to all mankind as well as for each one of us to study.

But now we had to be careful. One cannot take a prophecy, apply a different interpretation, and then claim that this second view is the correct one, and that whatever had been taught prior was okay for the believers of ages past, but now no longer applicable. Oh, no, it doesn't work that way. Truth is like mathematics, it's progressive. It builds up atop previously established, irrefutable facts, and the conclusions we reach must not only affirm those facts but must enrich them. So Manny and I began to look at the spiritual characteristics of the kingdoms represented by the four metals to determine whether our own character parallels those traits.

*Babylon, the head of gold: Pride.* Daniel had declared, "You, O king, are a king of kings. For the God of heaven has given you a kingdom, power, strength, and glory.. You are this head of gold." (Daniel 2:37-38) But the king wasn't listening. He didn't want to merely be a head of gold. He wanted to be the whole image and be worshipped. Thus he built an image of gold which was sixty cubits high and six cubits wide. (Daniel 3) Further, Daniel 4 avows the king's own testimony of his pride. "King Nebuchadnezzar... was walking about the royal palace of Babylon. The king spoke, saying, 'Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for a royal dwelling by my mighty power and for the honor of my majesty?'" (vs. 28-30) How quickly he forgot! King Nebuchadnezzar forgot Daniel's words attesting that all he was and had come from God, and not due to his own merits. Soon enough the proud man he truly was came forth. "Pride goes before destruction; And a haughty spirit before a fall." (Proverbs 16:18) Though many times we must take a stand because we have dignity, if such dignity is wrapped inside a haughty spirit, it is not dignity any longer. It is pride. And the pride of life is not of the Father but is of the world. (1 John 2:16) I would say that pride is at the head of my character. How about you?

*Medo-Persia, chest and arms of silver: Hate, Envy, Egotism, Covetousness.* The world is so big and wide, and mankind can spread it's wings towards vast, empty places. Yet the Medes and the Persians wanted Babylon. Why? Not because of love. It is hate and envy that

## *From the Desk of Teresita Pérez*

March 2013

Archived at [www.women1844.com](http://www.women1844.com)

provokes wars, and at the heart of such evil is egotism and covetousness. The heart is in the chest, which in turn is the area designated for Medo-Persia. But there is more. Interestingly, Daniel 2:32 also mentions the arms of silver. We have two arms, one of which is domineering. Likewise, the silver represents a united, dual kingdom, one of which was pre-eminent over the other, like the bear of Daniel 7:5 which was raised up on one side. And what do we use our arms for? Do we use them to give? Most likely we use them to take, and that is what the Medo-Persian empire did. I regrettably admit that hate, envy, egotism and covetousness have surfaced at times as part of my character traits. How about you?

*Grecia, the belly and thighs of bronze: Passions and Appetite.* One need not look far for this one. Alexander the Great's reputation testifies of a lifestyle where passions and appetite were the order of the day and took him to an early grave. So what do we have in the vicinity of the belly and thighs? Digestive system and reproductive organs. I have now entered the winter of my life, and looking back I can affirm that throughout my life I have had to struggle with passions and appetite. How about you?

*Roman Empire, legs of iron: Intolerance and hypocrisy.* The Roman circuses and subsequent religious persecutions testify of her intolerance. Her religious fervor, marred by the blood of her martyrs, testifies of her hypocrisy. Those legs of iron took the world into the Dark Ages. And where is our spirituality taking us? Does it take us to show mercy and serve others, even those who reject us and God, and further does it lead us to attempt to draw them to Him with chords of love? Or does it take us to defend God by bulldozing over anyone who dares speak even one word against Him as if He were not Almighty and well able to defend Himself? We were called and commissioned to do the former. Yet looking back I shamefully admit that intolerance and hypocrisy have more often than not shown up in my character. How about you?

*Final kingdoms, feet of iron and clay: War between the flesh and the spirit.* The world has evolved into many kingdoms, some strong, some weak. Iron is a symbol of spirituality: "*And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron.*" (Revelation 19:15) I like how the Spanish Bible declares this, "*And He Himself will shepherd them with a rod of iron.*" Clay is a symbol of carnality. God formed man from the earth. We are clay. In Noah's time God declared that men were flesh. (Genesis 6:3) Flesh in Latin is *carnis* which is the root word for *carnal*. We are flesh, we are carnal. And just like the struggles and battles between the kingdoms of the world are never-ending, so I find that my spiritual nature and my carnal nature are constantly at war. Most of the time, the carnal is my strong kingdom. So what do I do? At times I've tried to make excuses for sin. I've tried to marry the spirituality in me to my carnality, just like kingdoms of the world tried to unite through human bonds. But just as iron and clay don't mix, so my excuses for sin do not hold water. I've found that in me there's been a constant war between my flesh and my spirit. How about you?

The description of Daniel 2's prophecy begins with the head of gold. Likewise, when I was born, I was born head first. And so it was that pride made it's entrance into my parent's world, followed by hate, envy, egotism, covetousness, passions, appetite, intolerance, hypocrisy,

## *From the Desk of Teresita Pérez*

March 2013

Archived at [www.women1844.com](http://www.women1844.com)

and open war. So there I was, the little *débutante*, a creature tenderly held in my mother's arms while she was unaware that she was softly rocking a body of sin. But now I am no longer a child. Now I can see what I truly am and I don't like it. But I cannot change me. All I can do is echo the apostle Paul's cry, "*O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?*" (Romans 7:24)

King Nebuchadnezzar "*watched while a stone was cut out without hands, which struck the image on its feet of iron and clay, and broke them in pieces... and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; the wind carried them away so that no trace of them was found.*" (Daniel 2:34-35) That stone is the Kingdom of Jesus Christ. That same stone is targeted towards my feet because I stumble with my feet. "*As it is written: 'Behold I lay in Zion a stumbling stone and rock of offense, And whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame.'*" (Romans 9:33) "And whoever falls on this stone will be broken; but on whomever it falls it will grind him to powder." (Matthew 21:44; Luke 20:18) It is Christ Who will shatter in me the kingdoms of pride, hate, envy, egotism, covetousness, passions, appetite, intolerance, hypocrisy, open rebellion and constant war. And as the image of Nebuchadnezzar's dream is to be struck, so also this body of sin is destined to be ground into powder and it is done "without hands," meaning that none of it is my own works. It is Jesus who does it. And because I believe in the Second Coming of Christ to do away with the kingdoms of the world and establish His kingdom, hence I must also believe that He will likewise establish His Kingdom in me having Him shatter my body of sin. It is all His doing. "*And the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.*" (Daniel 2:35) I believe that God likewise wants to fill me with His Spirit. "*The dream is certain, and its interpretation is sure.*" (vs. 45) I believe in the certainty of God's Word and I believe that my restoration is sure. I believe. How about you?

Manny and I discovered that Daniel 2's message for the whole world is also for each one of us personally. It conveys God's solution to put an end to the tyrannical kingdom's of this world, and it is also God's solution to put an end to our tyrannical traits of character that keep us enslaved to sin.