

Part I, Chapter III: Of the vision of the Image composed of four Metals

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CHAP. III.

Of the vision of the Image composed of four Metals.

The Prophecies of *Daniel* are all of them related to one another, as if they were but several parts of one general Prophecy, given at several times. The first is the easiest to be understood, and every following Prophecy adds something new to the former. The first was given in a dream to *Nebuchadnezzar*, King of *Babylon*, in the second year of his reign; but the King forgetting his dream, it was given again to *Daniel* in a dream, and by him revealed to the King. And thereby, *Daniel* presently became famous for wisdom, and revealing of secrets: insomuch that *Ezekiel* his contemporary, in the nineteenth year of *Nebuchadnezzar*, spake thus of him to the King of *Tyre*: *Behold*, saith he, *thou art wiser than Daniel, there is no secret that they can hide from thee*, Ezek. xxviii. 3. And the same *Ezekiel*, in another place, joins *Daniel* with *Noah* and *Job*, as most high in the favour of God, Ezek. xiv. 14, 16, 18, 20. And in the last year of *Belshazzar*, the Queen-mother said of him to the King: *Behold there* <25> *is a man in thy kingdom, in whom is the spirit of the holy gods; and in the days of thy father, light and understanding and wisdom, like the wisdom of the gods, was found in him; whom the king Nebuchadnezzar thy father, the king, I say, thy father made master of the magicians, astrologers, Chaldeans and soothsayers: forasmuch as an excellent spirit, and knowledge, and understanding, interpreting of dreams, and shewing of hard sentences, and dissolving of doubts, were found in the same Daniel, whom the king named Belteshazzar*, Dan. v. 11, 12. *Daniel* was in the greatest credit amongst the *Jews*, till the reign of the *Roman* Emperor *Hadrian*: and to reject his Prophecies, is to reject the Christian religion. For this religion is founded upon his Prophecy concerning the *Messiah*.

Now in this vision of the Image composed of four Metals, the foundation of all *Daniel's* Prophecies is laid. It represents a body of four great nations, which should reign over the earth successively, viz. the people of *Babylonia*, the *Persians*, the *Greeks*, and the *Romans*. And by a stone cut out without hands, which fell upon the feet of the Image, and brake all the four Metals to pieces, and became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth; it further represents that a new kingdom should arise, after the four, and conquer all those nations, <26> and grow very great, and last to the end of all ages.

The head of the Image was of gold, and signifies the nations of *Babylonia*, who reigned first, as *Daniel* himself interprets. *Thou art this head of gold*, saith he to *Nebuchadnezzar*. These nations reigned till *Cyrus* conquered *Babylon*, and within a few months after that conquest revolted to the *Persians*, and set them up above the *Medes*. The breast and arms of the Image were of silver, and represent the *Persians* who reigned next. The belly and thighs of the Image were of brass, and represent the *Greeks*, who, under the dominion of *Alexander* the great, conquered the *Persians*, and reigned next after them. The legs were of iron, and represent the *Romans* who reigned next after the *Greeks*, and began to conquer them in the eighth year of

Antiochus Epiphanes. For in that year they conquered *Perseus* King of *Macedon*, the fundamental kingdom of the *Greeks*; and from thence forward grew into a mighty empire, and reigned with great power till the days of *Theodosius* the great. Then by the incursion of many northern nations, they brake into many smaller kingdoms, which are represented by the feet and toes of the Image, composed part of iron, and part of clay. For then, saith *Daniel*, *the kingdom shall be divided, <27> and there shall be in it of the strength of iron,*^[1] *but they shall not cleave one to another.*

And in the days of these Kings, saith Daniel, shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; but it shall break in pieces, and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever. Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountains without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver and the gold.

[1] Chap. ii. 41, &c.
