

Let Freedom Ring!



6. A Tale of Two Statues: Earth's Final Superpower Prophesied

Introduction:

**Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed to me,
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!**

These words were written in 1883 by the poet Emma Lazarus, who saw refugees from persecution arriving in New York harbor on a tramp steamer, following incredible sufferings. In the background stood the Statue of Liberty, one of the most colossal sculptures in the history of the world, which has greeted many millions of the oppressed and venturesome of other lands who have crossed the ocean in search of greater freedom and opportunity in America.

Originally a gift from France to the United States in commemoration of America's first century as an independent country, many believe the Statue of Liberty is the most symbolic structure in the United States. To the French, the statue was called "Liberty Enlightening the World", with the figure a female representation of the French idea of the Goddess of Reason. As time has passed, the statue has come to include the ideas of human liberty and democracy, upon which America's form of government was founded.

The symbolism of the statue itself speaks of the desire for liberty. The broken shackles of tyranny that are molded at the statue's feet speak of generations of people fleeing tyranny. The tablet in the statue's left hand is inscribed July 4, 1776, and refers to the Declaration of Independence which proclaimed American ideal that "all men are created equal". The seven rays in the statue's crown represent both the seven seas and the seven continents. There are 25 windows in the crown representing gemstones found on the earth and the heaven's rays shining over the world. The torch, held high in the statue's right hand, lights the way to freedom and liberty.

The Statue of Liberty was conceived of at a French dinner party near Versailles around the time of Abraham Lincoln's assassination and the end of the Civil War one summer evening in 1865. From the start the colossal statue was seen as a joint two-nation project. France would design the statue, transport it, and assemble it. America was responsible for building the pedestal on which it would stand. Joseph Pulitzer, whose championing of the project through his newspaper was critical to raising the funds for the granite pedestal of the statue, claimed it was the greatest gift any nation had ever given to another. It celebrated the century old friendship between France and the United States of America forged when France gave aid and support to the Colonies in their attempts to break away from the rule of Great Britain.

Sculptor Frederic-Auguste Bartholdi was commissioned to design the sculpture with the centennial year of 1876 as the initial target date for its completion. While Bartholdi worked on his design of the colossal copper sculpture, Alexandre-Gustave Eiffel, the designer of the famous Eiffel Tower, was commissioned to design the massive iron pylon and secondary skeletal framework which allows the Statue's copper skin to move independently, yet stand upright. In all, 31 tons of copper were employed as the skin of the statue over an interior frame of 125 tons of steel. The concrete foundation weights 27,000 tons and was designed to hold the statue against the 50 mile hour winds that can sway the statue 3 inches or more. The copper skin, which was shaped piece by piece by hammering over wooden forms, is 3/32nds of an inch thick—the thickness of two pennies.

The statue arrived from France aboard the French frigate *Iser* as 350 individual pieces packed into 214 crates. Reassembly on the pedestal took four months. The pedestal and the statue are about 150 feet each, with the total distance from the ground to the tip of the torch just over 305 feet.

On October 28, 1886, the dedication of the Statue of Liberty took place in front of many thousands of spectators. Raising public awareness, obtaining financing, and building the statue and the pedestal on which it would stand took longer than expected. Now the statue stands within the courtyard of Fort Wood, on Liberty island, a 12-acre island in New York harbor. It is set to look out to sea to greet those arriving in America. Today the Statue of Liberty stands as truly an American icon, one of the most well-known and colossal statues in the world.

I. Another Statue

The Bible speaks of another statue which was also highly symbolic. The story of this second statue is found in the second chapter of the prophet Daniel and depicts events that occurred six centuries before the time of Jesus. Some Bible students call the second chapter of Daniel, “The ABC’s of Bible Prophecy”. It is basic, comprehensive, and its

implications are profound. It appears as a part of the story of a dream that the ancient Babylonian king, Nebuchadnezzar had during the days Daniel and his fellow Hebrew captives served in the court of Babylon.

A pagan philosopher began attacking the prophecy of this second statue we will examine together this evening part way through the events it predicted. He claimed its details were too accurate of a match with history to be anything other than a hoax. He said it was in fact the writing of history which was being passed off as a prophecy. He scathingly attacked this passage as a forgery.

Why this bitter opposition? The philosopher was fighting for the intellectual survival of everything he held dear as a pagan and a philosopher. He clearly saw that if Daniel's second chapter were admitted to be genuine, it would sweep away all other world views and all other religious viewpoints—including his own. No other intellectual or religious worldview could compete. This single prophecy was far too weighty an evidence that the God of the Bible exists and in control of human affairs.

The fact that the prophecy we will examine has continued to unfold and match history as accurately after the pagan philosopher made his bitter attacks as it had before puts all such claims to shame. His opposition part way through the prophecy stands as witness to the validity of the prophecy he intended to discredit.

Our story for this evening is twenty-six centuries old, yet at its heart blazes a simple and profoundly relevant truth:

*Long ago God foretold a coming kingdom
that lies just ahead.*

The second chapter of Daniel moves forward in three scenes. The dream forgotten, the dream revealed and the dream explained.

II. The Forgotten Dream

The first twelve verses tell of the king's forgotten dream. The Bible says:

“In the second year of his reign Nebuchadnezzar had dreams; his mind was troubled and he could not sleep. So the king summoned the magicians, enchanters, sorcerers, and astrologers to tell him what he had dreamed. When they came in and stood before the king, he said to them, ‘I have had a dream that troubles me and I do not know what it means.’”

As this incident occurred during the second year of Nebuchadnezzar’s reign, and Daniel and his three friends spent three years going to the royal university—it meant they were still undergraduates. It was the professors and the high priests called in, not their students in training. This sort of matter fell within the area of their expertise.

In ancient times dreams were believed to be the whispering of the gods. Whole professions were devoted to delving into the symbols and meanings of men’s dreams. Archeologists have recovered one ancient king’s library from this part of the world and time period. Fully a quarter of the baked clay tablets used for writing were devoted to decoding dreams and interpreting omens.

The counselors of King Nebuchadnezzar were of various professional guilds that specialized in explaining such matters and in predicting the future. Some warded off demons by enchantments. Some predicted future events by interpreting omens. Some charted men’s fates by the study of the stars. Some sought direction from beyond the grave through contact with the professed spirits of the departed dead. Some mingled sound early scientific accomplishments with the most appalling of superstitions.

The king’s concern cut across all their areas of specialty. Dream study and interpretation were big business in Babylon. There were hundreds of stock formulas and stock answers carefully arranged for easy reference. Nebuchadnezzar’s dream didn’t stand a chance of passing through the wise men’s dream machine unexplained.

There was only one problem. The king had forgotten the dream he wished for them to explain.

“Then the astrologers answered the king in Aramaic, ‘O king, live forever! Tell our servants the dream, and we will interpret it.’

“The king replied to the astrologers, ‘This is what I have firmly decided: If you do not tell me what my dream was and interpret it, I will have you cut into pieces and your houses turned into piles of rubble. But if you tell me the dream and explain it, you will receive from me gifts and rewards and great honor. So tell me the dream and interpret it for me.’”

The smiles of conscious competence disappeared from the faces of the king’s counselors. It was as if a man with no hands had come to a palm reader to have his fortune told, or a woman who didn’t know her birthday required her horoscope be calculated. Surely the king could not be serious. But he made it exceedingly plain that he was.

“Once more they replied, ‘Let the king tell his servants the dream, and we will interpret it.’

“Then the king answered, ‘I am certain that you are trying to gain time, because you realize that this is what I have firmly decided. If you do not tell me the dream, there is one penalty for you. You have conspired to tell me misleading and wicked things, hoping the situation will change.

“‘So then,’ roared the king, ‘tell me the dream, and then I will know that you can interpret it for me!’”

The counselors looked grave. They held a hurried huddle, then turned to the seething king.

“The astrologers answered the king, ‘There is not a man on earth who can do what the king asks. No king, however great and mighty, has ever asked such a thing of any magician, or enchanter, or astrologer. What the king asks is too difficult. No one can reveal it to the king except the gods—and they do not live among men.’”

The king exploded in royal fury. These cunning, lying, plotting, conniving pretenders! He had seen through them. He knew how to trim the national budget of Babylon. Off with their useless heads!

“This made the king so angry that he ordered the execution of all the wise men of Babylon. So the decree was issued to put the wise men to death, and men were sent to look for Daniel and his friends to put them to death.”

An ancient historical record mentions another king from about a hundred years later than Nebuchadnezzar’s time who ordered a similar blood purge of the wise men within his realm. The purge was carried out and nearly brought the Magi to extinction.

Daniel and his three friends were in serious danger. As undergraduates from the royal university for training wise men, they had not been called in to interpret the king’s dream. But as members of the condemned class that perhaps numbered several hundred, they would be swept away in the general penalty. This forgotten dream held the sword to their throats too.

III. The Dream Revealed

Let’s turn now to the dream revealed. Arioch, the royal executioner, soon arrived at Daniel’s door to take he and his friends into custody. When served with his death warrant, Daniel asked, “Why did the king issue such a harsh decree?”

When he learned what had happened, Daniel went directly to the king to ask for time so that he might interpret the dream. Nebuchadnezzar relented, perhaps delaying the execution from sunset that night to daybreak the next morning. This was a temporary stay of no more than hours. It would take that long to round up the wise men properly for execution anyway.

“Then Daniel returned to his house and explained the matter to his friends Hananiah, Michael, and Azariah. He urged them to plead for mercy from the God of heaven concerning this mystery,

so that he and his friends might not be executed with the rest of the wise men of Babylon.”

Earlier these four young men had honored God by refusing to eat the unclean and idolatrous sacrifices from the king’s table, or to drink his wine. Now God honored their prayers. He revealed the mystery to Daniel in a night vision.

The second chapter of Daniel records Daniel’s hymn of praise to God for revealing the king’s dream and its interpretation. This section is written in the regular, metered poetic style employed in the original Hebrew. Daniel took time to render God a suitable and beautiful thanks for help received before hurrying to the king to reveal the dream. It takes character to compose a hymn of thanks during the countdown to your own execution!

On his way to the king’s court, Daniel stopped to see Arioch, the executioner. Perhaps Arioch was glumly sharpening his beheading ax, sobered and the thought of beheading Babylon’s brightest. Many among the condemned were surely close personal friends.

Daniel burst in, his eyes blazing.

“Do not execute the wise men of Babylon,” he cried. “Take me to the king and I will interpret his dream for him.” Arioch took Daniel to the king at once and said, ‘I have found a man among the exiles of Judah who can tell the king what his dream means.’”

The executioner seems oblivious to the fact that Daniel had appeared before Nebuchadnezzar only hours earlier to request time. Perhaps he had been rounding up slinking sorcerers and disenchanted enchanters all night and hadn’t heard of the earlier interview. While selfishly seizing this opportunity to claim full credit for discovering the man who could interpret the king’s dream, Arioch was also laying himself open to wind up on the wrong end of his executioner’s ax should Daniel fail.

The king ignored Arioch’s servile boasting entirely. He spoke directly to Daniel. “Are you able to tell me what I saw in my dream and interpret it?”

Daniel replied:

“No wise man, enchanter, magician, or diviner can explain to the king the mystery he has asked about. But there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries. He has shown the king what will happen in the days to come.”

Daniel reminded Nebuchadnezzar of how he had been concerned for the future of his empire when he had gone to bed the night before. These concerns troubled his mind as he drifted into slumber. Then Daniel turned to the content of the dream itself.

“You looked, O king, and there before you stood a large statue—an enormous, dazzling statue, awesome in appearance. The head of the statue was made of pure gold, its chests and arms of silver, its belly and thighs of bronze, its legs of iron, and its feet partly of iron and partly of baked clay.”

The young king’s eyes riveted Daniel. He leaned forward on his throne eagerly. Now he remembered! It had been just as this Daniel said. Daniel went on.

“While you were watching a rock was cut out, but not by human hands. It struck the statue on its feet of iron and clay and smashed them. Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold were broken into pieces at the same time—and became like chaff on the threshing floor in summer. The wind swept them away without leaving a trace. But the rock that struck the statue became a huge mountain and filled the whole earth.”

The king sat stunned as the enormity of this mysterious dream swept over him again. The colossal statue looming above... The disturbing downward plunge in the value of the materials employed in its construction... The absurd attempt to mingle iron and clay in its feet... The shock of the dream stone quarried invisibly, then hurled to crush the image’s weakened feet, before growing to fill the whole earth... The weird winds that swept the blasted shards of the exploded statue into oblivion... He shuddered. What could these things mean? It seemed those dream winds chilled his soul.

IV. The Dream Interpreted

At this point, we must divide our attention and follow two related tracks. Daniel goes on to interpret the king's dream point by point. As we see his interpretation, we will also briefly touch on certain corresponding points of human history that have unfolded from Daniel's day and our own. Prophecy is one rail of the track we will follow. History is the other.

Daniel said, "You, O King Nebuchadnezzar, are king of kings. The God of heaven has given you dominion, and power, and might, and glory. In your hands he has placed mankind, and the beasts of the fields, and the birds of the air. Wherever they lie, he has made you ruler of them all. You are the head of gold."

In extra-Biblical history, Nebuchadnezzar figures prominently as the first great ruler of the Neo-Babylonian empire. He inherited the throne of a nation and culture that had its roots in the earliest dawning of civilization. The first ruler of this early and ancient empire had been Noah's great grandson, Nimrod, who had built the tower of Babel fourteen centuries earlier.

Under Nebuchadnezzar, the genius of the empire would blossom into full splendor. The king was truly the Babylonian power personified. The military conquests, the architecture, the promotion of learning and culture, the golden blaze of excellence to which it rose were largely due to Nebuchadnezzar's prowess.

The double honor of headship and of gold as the symbols for his kingdom were remarkably fitting. Babylon was famed as the "golden city". Both ancient historians and Bible writers speak of the abundance of gold used in embellishing the Chaldean capitol. Jeremiah calls Babylon "a golden cup". Herodotus tells of gold blazing in the numerous shrines of Babylon. Pliny notes that the Babylonian priests' robes were interwoven with golden thread.

Other ancient records reveal that the great idol of Marduk, Babylon's chief god, was of pure gold. The throne on which this image sat, the

table and altar that stood before the image, the walls and halls of this vast shrine were all of gold. Ancient inscriptions reveal that Nebuchadnezzar even removed the silver his father had used to overlay the king's chapel and replaced it with gold. Historians declare that no other capital city has ever been the center of so much power, wealth, and culture over so vast a span of centuries.

Babylon was the fountainhead of human knowledge and technology. Many things we take for granted today had their origins in the think tank of Babylon. Take a look at the watch on your arm, for instance. The Babylonians invented time keeping. They divided the year into 12 months, the month into 30 days, the day into two twelve hour halves, the hours into 60 minutes and the minutes into 60 seconds.

They devised the first system of weights and measurements that made trade possible. They invented banking, compound interest, and even a check cashing system. The Babylonians were mathematicians who calculated the eclipses of both the sun and the moon. They could even calculate when an eclipse of the sun and moon would coincide. Long before Columbus, the Babylonians knew the earth was a sphere and calculated its circumference to within a few miles of what scientists hold today.

Astrology and the horoscope were invented in Babylon. The reason there are sixty minutes and seconds on the face of your watch is because 60 was the sacred mystic number of Marduk, that great sun god of Babylon. From Babylon the golden flowed the original genius behind our science, architecture, government, mathematics, natural history, and false religion.

These things are not a matter of the ancient past alone, however. We find a Babylon at both ends of the Bible—one in the past and the other in the future. In some form, the principles upon which this kingdom rested will rise again before the world ends.

The head of gold in the dream image is usually dated from 605 B.C. when Nebuchadnezzar took the throne to 539 B.C. when Babylon fell. Truly Babylon was a head of gold among the earth's empires. But it would pass away.

Daniel speaks again to Nebuchadnezzar.

“After you, another kingdom will arise, inferior to you.”

This second kingdom is clearly identified in the fifth chapter of Daniel as the Medo-Persian power. Daniel told Nebuchadnezzar’s grandson, “Your kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and the Persians.”

In 538 B.C. Belshazzar, the last king of the Babylonians, was slain. Darius the Mede took over the kingdom, conquering and ruling in connection with his Persian allies.

While the Medo-Persian kingdom was larger in territory conquered than Babylon had been, it was inferior in magnificence, central control of power, outward show, and culture. Strangely enough, the metal of note within the Medo-Persian empire—represented by the chest and arms in the dream image—was silver. Silver was extracted as tribute from conquered kings. Silver was used to pay wages to Medo-Persian armies. Silver was the standard coin of the realm.

After its bloodless overthrow of Babylon, the silver empire boasted a line of perhaps a dozen monarchs. Darius Codomannus was the last of the Medo-Persian kings. He fell before the armies of Alexander the Great in the Battle of Arbella in 331 B.C.

Though Alexander’s Greek troops were outnumbered 20 to 1 in that clash—they swept the field in a decisive victory over the Persians. King Codomannus was executed by his own soldiers, and Alexander the Great paid the funeral expenses for his fallen rival. So the Greeks swallowed the Persian empire, and silver gave way to brass.

Daniel had said of this kingdom:

“Next, a third kingdom, one of bronze, will rule over all the earth.”

Again we find an amazing correspondence between the dream images’ belly and thighs of brass and the chief metal of the Greek empire so represented. Alexander’s armies were famed for their brass armor and weaponry. This new, lighter metal gave them a decided military

advantage. The army used brass for helmets, shields, and even battle axes. Brass was strong and light. The Greek armies could march quickly and strike hard. The further prediction that this kingdom would rule over all the earth was fulfilled in Alexander's rapid and extensive military campaigns. They conquered their known world.

A Greek historian named Arrian wrote of Alexander the Great. He said, "I am persuaded there was no nation, city, or people then in being whither his name did not reach." (*History of Alexander's Expeditions, Book 7, chapter 30.*)

From almost all parts of the world ambassadors came to Alexander, to congratulate him on his victories, to offer him their crowns, and to make leagues and alliances with him. Yet this brilliant and tireless conqueror drank himself into a fever and died in his wife's arms in 323 B.C. at the age of 33 years. Under his successors Alexander's third world empire of brass continued on another 150 years before it fell before a fourth world empire in 168 B.C.

Daniel had predicted this, too. He told King Nebuchadnezzar, "Finally there will be a fourth kingdom, strong as iron, for iron breaks and smashes everything—and as iron breaks things to pieces, so it will crush and break all the others."

The rising power of Rome conquered the Syrian division of the formerly powerful Greek empire in 190 B.C. The Macedonian division of the brass kingdom fell in 168 B.C.—the same year Egypt acknowledges Rome's iron rule. Rome's relentless armies overran the world, crushing all resistance ruthlessly.

As Rome is represented by the legs of iron in the dream image—both the strongest of the metals and the longest of the body parts pictured—so the fourth world empire lasted longer than the other's combined, beginning Babylon's timing with Nebuchadnezzar's reign. Rome was still in full power in the days when Caesar Augustus sent forth a decree that all the world should be taxed—and our Lord Jesus was born in Bethlehem. It was Roman judges who sentenced Jesus to die, Roman Soldiers who drove iron nails into his feet and thrust a Roman spear into His side in the traditional Roman death blow used on the battle field.

Curiously, (we should have come to expect it by this time) the fourth and final world empire rose to power in connection with a new military technology that relied on weapons of iron and steel. Apparently they could cut right through brass.

Unlike the three earlier empires, Rome was not absorbed into a single more vigorous nation that replaced it. Instead it fell into long decay and was divided piecemeal by the invading barbarian tribes that carved its former territories into the various nations of modern Europe.

By 476 B.C. Rome had passed from power. Daniel's explanation of the king's dream foretold this development a thousand years in advance. Who could have guessed there would be only four world empires rather than three, or five, or twelve?

But there is more. Daniel told Nebuchadnezzar:

“Just as you saw that the feet and toes were partly of baked clay and partly of iron, so this will be a divided kingdom—yet it will have some of the strength of iron in it, even as you saw iron mixed with clay.

“As the toes were partly iron and partly clay, so this will be partly strong and partly brittle. And just as you saw the iron mixed with baked clay, so the people will be a mixture and will not remain united, any more than iron mixes with clay.”

These verses sum up the last fifteen centuries of European history. Some nations have proved strong and others weak. Many attempts to re-weld the seams of the mighty Roman empire have occurred—just as the prophecy foretold. All have failed, even as the prophecy predicted.

Among those who have sought to recreate the fourth world empire, or to erect a fifth world empire in its place, are names familiar to history: Charlemagne, Charles the 5th, Louis the 14th, Napoleon, Kaiser William the 2nd and Adolph Hitler. All attempted to resurrect Rome's power and glory. All failed.

What the strong failed to achieve by the sword, the kindly sought to achieve by love. The prophecy says, “so the people will be a mixture”. The King James translation makes this point even clearer. It says:

“...they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men, but they shall not cleave one to another.”

A basic European diplomatic policy in the years prior to World War I was the intentional intermarriage between the various royal households of the European nations. The royalty were attempting to restore Rome’s former power by intentional blood ties to the rulers of the other nations. In the latter part of the 19th century, Queen Victoria was jokingly called, “the Grandmother of all Europe”. All this mingling of royal blood made poor glue, however.

George H. Merrith, writing on the subject of “The Royal Relatives of Europe” in October 1914 said, “Europe at was can almost be likened to a huge family quarrel. The royal houses, especially the countries that are most vitally concerned by the war, are...almost of one blood. There have been so many intermarriages between these houses that German blood dominates every European throne—with the exception of the small kingdoms of Servia and Montenegro...”

He goes on at some length tracing the intricate tangle of royal family connections of the heads of nations who were bitterly at war. What he affirms from history was foretold in detail in prophecy. Twenty-five hundred years before a captive Hebrew student stood before a conquering king and declared, “They shall mingle themselves with the seed of men, but they shall not cleave one to another.”

The Bible is on the only functioning time machine. It has a demonstrated ability to see into the future. In the forgotten dream of Daniel’s second chapter, we see the rise and fall of earth’s empires, the charting of the course of human civilization, and the final end of the ages. There is only more final scene of the dream statue prophecy still unfulfilled.

“In the time of those kings,” Daniel said referring to the time of the divided nations of Europe, our own time) “the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed, nor will it be

left to another people. It will crush all those kingdoms and bring them to an end, but it will itself endure forever.”

“This is the meaning of the vision of the rock cut out of a mountain but not by human hands—a rock that broke the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold to pieces. The great God has shown the king what will take place in the future. The dream is true and the interpretation is trustworthy.”

Long ago God foretold that final coming kingdom. When the prophecy of the multi-metal image was first given in the days of Nebuchadnezzar, nearly the whole of the dream statue’s prediction still lay ahead. Now only Christ’s coming kingdom of stone remains to be fulfilled. That kingdom will be Earth’s final, eternal superpower when all of human power and glory have passed away.

Appeal:

This evening we have told the tale of two statues. The first is the Statue of Liberty. The second is the dream image from the great prophecy of Daniel. Each symbolizes liberty—one for America and those who have sought liberty here, the other for humanity as a whole in Christ’s soon coming kingdom of stone. First statue speaks of those things which deal with time, the second points forward to an eternal kingdom that will never pass away.

Tonight we can thank God for the liberty America offers as symbolized in the Statue of Liberty. We can also thank God for the final liberation of mankind and the setting up of Christ’s endless kingdom at His soon return. Let freedom ring from sea to shining sea! Let freedom ring for all those who choose King Jesus!

There is no conflict between being a good American, and a good Christian. Jesus said, “Give unto Caesar those things which are Caesar’s, and unto God those things which are God’s.” Even while we pray for America and seek her good, we may choose to become citizens of Christ’s coming kingdom. Dual citizenship in an earthly nation and in God’s coming kingdom are indeed possible—and highly desirable.

Many who first viewed the Statue of Liberty upon their arrival as immigrants in New York harbor began the process that changed citizenship upon their arrival at Ellis Island. Between the years 1892 and 1924 over 22 million passengers and members of ships' crews came through Ellis Island—many seeking to become American citizens. There in the shadow of the Statue of Liberty with her torch held high above the golden door, they pledged a new allegiance to a new nation.

Tonight we can make sure our citizenship in Christ's coming kingdom of stone. Tonight in this place is our heavenly Ellis Island. Here in the shadow of Daniel's dream image of human history we can choose Jesus as our Lord and Savior. Do you wish to become a part of Christ's coming kingdom? You may. This is the only citizenship that extends beyond this life we now know. Jesus told Pilate, "My kingdom is not of this world."

Do you wish to apply for citizenship in Christ's final, endless kingdom of stone? I do! How do we do this? It is easier than you may imagine. It is simply a matter of choosing to accept God's offer openly.

Jesus said:

"All that the Father gives to me will come to me, and the one who comes to me I will in no wise cast out."

This is the greatest golden door of all. You may step through it tonight, if you have not done so before.

The Bible says:

"All who call on the name of the Lord will be saved."

You may call on God this evening. His ear hears even the prayer prayed in your heart. His eye sees. But this is not enough alone.

Jesus said:

"Whoever acknowledges me before men, the Son of Man will also acknowledge him before the angels of God. But he who disowns me before men will be disowned before the angels of God." *Luke 12:8*

We need opportunity to pledge our allegiance to King Jesus not only in the hidden places of our hearts, but also openly before others. This He requires of us. This evening, if you wish to say, “Lord Jesus, I desire to become a citizen of your coming kingdom of stone. Please count me as your follower and enroll my name on the books of heaven” we would like you to come forward. For all who will come, acceptance in Christ’s coming kingdom is assured. Your coming is your calling upon God for the salvation all who are a part of Jesus’ kingdom are granted. It is your acknowledging of Jesus before others on earth so that he may acknowledge you before his Father and the angels in heaven.

So come forward as the music plays. We would like to have a few minutes with those who are making this decision this evening for the first time, or renewing a decision you may have turned from in the past.

Note: Those who come forward should be taught “The Five C’s of Christian Faith” with their hand motions and provided with a review leaflet that covers the first five topics covered in the series. Also, have them mark their names and addresses. Affirm their decisions to become a part of Christ’s Coming Kingdom with prayer. Let them know there are more things they will need to learn as they follow through on the decision they have made, and that these will be covered in the evenings ahead.