

## Daniel - Chapter Two

Vs.1-3. In the second year of King Nebuchadnezzar's reign, he had a dream that troubled his spirit. He couldn't remember it, but the dream troubled him greatly. It's likely that he believed the gods were trying to communicate something to him. Therefore, he called for the 'diviners' (magicians, astrologers, sorcerers, and Chaldeans), expecting them to tell him what he had dreamed. (These 'wise men' had claimed power to reveal secrets and future events, so this was their opportunity to make good on their claims.)

- This dream occurred just a year or so after Daniel and his friends were taken captive, proving that they were considered among the 'magi' even before their three-year training was completed.

Vs.4-6. 'Then spake the Chaldeans to the king in Syriac'. Note: Up until this point the book of Daniel is written in Hebrew. Here, it changes to Syriac (Aramaic), which was the language used in governmental communications during that time in the Middle East.

- Not only does the king make an unusual demand, but a command that was unheard of. (The wise men were to reveal his forgotten dream, and, give its meaning.)

- If able to do so they would receive gifts and rewards, along with great honor.

- But if they failed they would be cut in pieces, and their houses would be made a dunghill.

Note: Some believe that Nebuchadnezzar realized the importance of his dream, but wanted to put the wise men to the test. If they could give him the dream (which he likely remembered), then he would know they could give the correct interpretation. If they could not give both the dream and interpretation, then he would destroy them. (I don't believe the king remembered the dream at all.)

Vs.7-9. The wise men stalled for time, hoping the king would somehow realize the impossibility of his request, and would lift his 'impossible' demand.

- 'for ye have prepared lying and corrupt words to speak before me, till the time be changed'. (You have conspired together to speak false and deceitful words to me, till things take a turn.)

Vs.10,11. 'There is not a man upon the earth that can shew the king's matter'.

- What they said was 'true'. Only God could give such a revelation, or interpretation. And it's still true, even after all these years.

- The wise men recognized that only the gods (supernatural beings), whose dwelling is not with mortal flesh, could reveal to the king what he was asking.

Vs.12,13. At their answer, the king flew into a rage and ordered all the Babylonian sages be put to death. (This would include Daniel and his Hebrew friends.)

Vs.14-18. Daniel personally went before the king.

- He and his three friends (still in training) had not been with the other diviners when they were brought before the king (v.2).

- Daniel had absolute faith in the God of Israel, that He would not only reveal the dream but would give the interpretation, as well. So he requested of the king that he be given time. Amazing how God works!

- The others had been accused of stalling when they asked for additional time, yet the king grants Daniel's request; seemingly, without hesitation.

- Daniel returned to his house to make it known to his three companions. And they had a 'prayer meeting', desiring the mercies of God concerning this untold dream.

- They had to have an answer. They had to have it within a given time. And they knew that only God could supply it. Note: I like to think that Daniel was familiar with the writings of King Solomon outlined in Prov.3:5,6, when he said, 'Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths'. Amen! What a mighty God we serve!

Vs.19-23. 'Then (after they had prayed) was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a night vision'. He was given both the 'king's dream' and its 'interpretation'.

- Afterwards, Daniel gives praise and thanksgiving to such a wonderful and merciful God. Note: Too often, after God answers prayer, we fail to worship and give Him thanks as we should.

- 'He removeth kings, and setteth up kings'. Regardless of how dark things might seem (sin, immorality, apostasy, etc.), God is still in control!

- Note: Dake gives fifteen reasons in vs.20-23 for praising God:

- (1) Wisdom belongs to Him.
- (2) Power belongs to Him.
- (3) He changes the times.
- (4) He changes the seasons.
- (5) He removes kings.
- (6) He sets up kings.
- (7) He gives wisdom to the wise.
- (8) He gives knowledge to men of understanding.
- (9) He reveals deep things.
- (10) He reveals secret things.
- (11) He knows what is in darkness.
- (12) He dwells in light.
- (13) He has given wisdom.
- (14) He has given power.
- (15) He has answered prayer by revealing the king's matter.

Vs.24-26. Daniel went to Arioch, the executioner, and announced that he had the answer to the king's problem. Arioch believed him. Amazing!

- So he hurriedly took Daniel before the king, and said, 'I have found a man, of the captives of Judah, that will make known unto the king the interpretation'.

- Note: Many times in history God has used a 'despised Jew' to solve the problems of mankind in bringing deliverance and salvation.

(1) Joseph, a Hebrew sold into Egyptian slavery by his brothers, was used by God to save his people during famine.

(2) Mordecai, a Hebrew, saved his people when wicked Haman was determined to have them destroyed.

(3) Jonah, a Hebrew, reluctantly preached to the people of Nineveh. But they repented, and were spared destruction.

(4) Jesus, a Hebrew, died on the cross for the sins of the world.

Vs.27-30. Daniel testifies before the king, giving God the credit, and glory, for revealing secret things that only He could know.

- 'there is a God in heaven'. Daniel, being honest and humble, took no personal credit for making the dream and its interpretation known to the king. Instead, he wanted the king to know it was the omniscient God of heaven that has the answers to life's perplexities.

- The primary object of the king's dream was to show 'what shall be in the latter days'. (What would happen to Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom after his death.)

- Note: Dake gives twelve reasons why an answer was given:

(1) To save the lives of Daniel and his companions.

(2) To magnify God to be greater than all the wise men of Babylon.

(3) To demonstrate that God answers prayer for those who depend upon Him.

(4) To reveal that God is sovereign over all nations.

(5) To demonstrate the fact that God still guides human affairs.

(6) To prove that God is infinite in knowledge and wisdom.

(7) To make it clear that God is the author of prophecies.

(8) To prove that God is the only true God.

(9) To testify that the true God is the God of Israel.

(10) To prove that the one receiving a revelation may or may not be a true child of God.

(11) To reveal the thoughts of men.

(12) To make known the plan of God from that day into all eternity.

Vs.31-35. Daniel reveals Nebuchadnezzar's dream (great image), which actually foretold the world empires that would exist from that day forward. Note: Will explain in detail later.

- The image had a head of gold, breast and arms of silver, belly and thighs of brass, legs of iron, and feet, part of iron and part of clay. (The 'image' speaks of Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome, and Revised Roman Empire.)

- Too, the king saw in his dream 'a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces'. (The 'stone' represents the Lord Jesus Christ.)

- The entire image was broken to pieces, became like chaff of the summer threshing floors, and was carried away with the wind. (To take place when Christ comes to earth the second.)

- 'and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth'.

Vs.36-45. Daniel interprets the dream.

- Note: Before this time there had been two empires that had ruled the known world; both of which had persecuted Israel: Egypt and Assyria.

- 'the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory'. We read in v.21, that 'God removeth kings, and he setteth up kings'. He is sovereign, and can do as He will among men.

- Paul said, 'There is no power but of God' (Rom.13:1). He gives power to all, but He is not responsible for how each one uses that power.

- 'Thou art this head of gold' (v.38). This speaks of Nebuchadnezzar and the nation of Babylon.

- Note: At that time, Babylon was a great city located approximately 50 miles south of modern-day Bagdad (capital of Iraq). It's believed to have been the largest and most elaborate city in the ancient world.

- It's walls were 60 miles around (15 miles on each side), 300 feet high, and 80 feet thick. Too, the walls had a foundation that extended 35 feet below ground.

- A moat, one-fourth mile wide, filled the area between the city and the wall.

- The city had 250 'towers' on the wall, and 100 gates (all of solid brass).

- It was divided by the River Euphrates. And there was a 'bridge' across the river with a palace at each end.

- The Temple of Bel was an outstanding structure, having a golden image of Bel valued at 50,000 pounds. (At \$1312.00 an ounce (in 2018), that would amount to \$1 billion 56 million dollars.).

- The 'Hanging Gardens' of the city were built by the king to please his wife, who was raised in the hill country. And the 'gardens' were recognized as one of the 'Seven Wonders of the Ancient World'.

- Nebuchadnezzar's palace was magnificent. And there were 50 temples in the city.

- Note: It was here that Nimrod began building the 'Tower of Babel', both desiring and expecting it to reach into heaven (Gen.11:4). In recent years, millions of dollars of 'oil money' have been allocated to finance a team of Japanese to rebuild the Tower of Babel.

- In Daniel's interpretation of the king's dream, he foretells each successive empire that would rule the world from his day (604-603BC) until the end of history.

- The first empire to rule the world in Daniel's day was Babylon. Now, he says, 'after thee (Babylon) shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee' (v.39). This kingdom is represented by the 'breast and arms of silver' (v.32). (Medo-Persia)

- 'and another third kingdom of brass, which shall rule over all the earth' (v.39). (Greece)

- 'And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron'. (Rome)

- The feet and toes of the image speak of the kingdom being divided, and were a mixture of potter's clay and iron (v.41). Therefore, the kingdom will be 'partly strong, and partly broken' (v.42). (Revised Roman Empire of the last days.)

Vs.44,45. In the dream, the king saw a 'stone cut out of the mountain without hands' (supernaturally) strike the image in the feet. And not only were the feet destroyed, but the entire image, which included the nations (powers) represented by the gold, silver, brass, iron, and clay, as well.

- According to Nebuchadnezzar's dream, the world order, with its philosophy and values, will be completely destroyed in order that Christ's kingdom may be fully established upon His return to earth at the end of the 7-year tribulation.

- 'The great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter' (from the days of Nebuchadnezzar and on into eternity).

Vs.46-49. The King is humbled; God is exalted; and Daniel is promoted.

- The king worshipped Daniel. (There is no indication that Daniel accepted this worship.) The king did this because Daniel had given the interpretation to his dream.
  - Nebuchadnezzar says, 'Your God is a God of gods'. Amen! He's the one 'true God'! There is no other.
  - Daniel became the 'chief officer' of the palace and the greatest counselor of the king. He sat in the gate of the king as president of the council, the chief justice. Too, he procured places in the government for his friends, for Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. They had helped him with their prayers, so he sees to it that they share with him in his honors.
  - They were given the responsibility of looking after the affairs of the province of the city of Babylon.
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- Note: Historians often differ on 'dates', but I submit the following from the 10th Edition of the 'Rose Book of Bible Charts, Maps and Time Lines', printed in 2015.
  - Head of gold - Babylon (626 - 539 BC)
  - Chest and Arms of Silver - Medo-Persia (539 - 332 BC)
  - Belly and Thighs of Bronze - Greece (332 - 63 BC)
  - Legs of Iron - A Divided Rome - (63 BC - A.D.476)
  - Feet and Toes of Iron and Clay - Revised Roman Empire of last days (after the rapture of the Church). Note: Neither the name nor time of this last listed empire was taken from the above mentioned publication.