

DANIEL: Life in the Present; Hope for Our Future

Chapter 2 (Daniel 1:17-18; Daniel Ch. 2)

What is your favorite story? Easop's fables? Grimm's Tales? Disney? Star wars/ Tolkien?

Daniel represents historical narrative, redemptive History – what God has done! A Story of Daniel.

The O.T. is full of historical narratives: STORIES () which we find easier to relate to. As Kids, we learn these stories; as adults we spend more time in the NT – Jesus; and Theology, The Church

IN DANIEL – We have both Daniel's Story – Theology (Sovereignty of God) – Escatology/End Times
(Title of Series: Life in the Present HOPE for the Future)

Daniel Chapter 1: RECAP

- **God answered Daniel's prayer and test of faithfulness to trust in the Lord for his and his three friends' provision – so as not to defile themselves with meat/wine sacrificed to idols.** (They ate vegetables for 10 days and appeared healthier, stronger, & more fit than the others who ate meat and wine).
- **God answered Daniel's prayer for provision. For Favor. For Protection: (God gave Daniel favor with his overseer Ashpenaz, then later with Arioch)**
- **God answered Daniel's prayer for wisdom – for divine direction in his life. God anointed Daniel for a purpose, a kingdom purpose:**

VS. 17: As for these four youths, **God gave them knowledge and intelligence** in every branch of^[a] literature and wisdom; Daniel even understood all *kinds of* visions and dreams. (supernatural, spiritual gifting)

VS. 18: Then at the end of the days which the king had^[a] specified^[a] for presenting them, [3 years of training] the commander of the officials^[a] presented them before Nebuchadnezzar. ¹⁹ The king talked with them, [The King himself gave them the oral exam to test their knowledge and worthiness to serve in his court], and out of them all not one was found like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah; so they^[a] entered the king's personal service. ²⁰ **As for every matter of wisdom^[a] and understanding about which the king consulted them, he found them ten times better than all the^[w] magicians and conjurers who were in all his realm.**

- **How is your work ethic?** Students how do you prepare for your exams? Does the lost world find you ten times more qualified? Ten times more dedicated? More competent? Does God's favor rest on you because you have been a faithful steward of the time, your mind, your opportunities, your resources that He has given to you?

Notice: The Sovereignty of God in all things in Chapter 2

1. God was going to use a **Pagan** King (Nebuchadnezzar) to **glorify** Himself (by giving a glimpse of predictive prophecy – the span of great world empires beginning and end).
2. God was going to do **the impossible** – to show that as He alone can know someone's mind and dreams (omniscient) – so too, God can reveal that to another person (**Joseph in Egypt**, Daniel in Babylon)
3. God was going to glorify Himself by revealing His true **power** to a pagan king, a pagan country – and how? Through the lowliest person, a Hebrew **slave**.

= God thrives in displaying His power in weakness 2 Cor. 12:9 “And He has said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in **weakness**.” Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my **weaknesses**, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me.”

READ Daniel Chapter 2:

VS 1: Now in the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuchadnezzar ^[a]had dreams; and his spirit was troubled and his sleep ^[b]left him. ² Then the king ^[c]gave orders to call in the ^[d]magicians, the conjurers, the sorcerers and the ^[e]Chaldeans to tell the king his dreams. So they came in and stood before the king. ³ The king said to them, “I ^[f]had a dream and my spirit ^[g]is anxious to ^[h]understand the dream.”

VS 4: Then the Chaldeans spoke to the king in ^[i]Aramaic: “O king, live forever! Tell the dream to your servants, and we will declare the interpretation.” ⁵ The king replied to the Chaldeans, “^[j]The command from me is firm: if you do not make known to me the dream and its interpretation, you will be ^[k]torn limb from limb and your houses will be made a rubbish heap. ⁶ But if you declare the dream and its interpretation, you will receive from me gifts and a reward and great honor; therefore declare to me the dream and its interpretation.” King Nebuchadnezzar was putting his wisemen to the ultimate test; **putting God to the test!**

Wisemen responded: VS11: Moreover, the thing which the king demands is ^[l]difficult, and there is no one else who could declare it ^[m]to the king **except gods**, whose dwelling place is not with *mortal* flesh.” ¹² Because of this, the king became indignant and very furious and gave orders to destroy all the wise men of Babylon. ¹³ So the ^[n]decree went forth that the wise men should be slain; and they looked for Daniel and his friends to ^[o]kill *them*.

VS14: Then Daniel replied with discretion and discernment to Arioch, the captain of the king’s ^[p]bodyguard, who had gone forth to slay the wise men of Babylon;

RECALL: Daniel was wise enough to be submissive to his captors, to find the best way forward in a difficult environment (i.e. **work, school, this society**) “so he sought *permission* from the commander of the officials that he might not defile himself.” Daniel was polite, considerate, temperate, submissive, and honoring to his captors. = He kept a good testimony even in the hardest of circumstances.

¹⁵ he said to Arioch, the king’s commander, “For what reason is the ^[q]decree from the king *so* ^[r]urgent?” Then Arioch informed Daniel about the matter. ¹⁶ So Daniel went in and requested of the king that he would ^[aa]give him time, in order that he might declare the interpretation to the king. = Huge RISK -his life

¹⁷ Then Daniel went to his house and informed his friends, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah, about the matter, ¹⁸ **so that they might request compassion from the God of heaven concerning this mystery**, so that Daniel and his friends would not be destroyed with the rest of the wise men of Babylon.

- Upon the devastating news, Daniel gathered his friends and they **prayed!** (First act = PRAYER)
- God in His mercy, answered Daniel’s prayer – God gave Daniel supernatural wisdom & revelation
- NOTE Daniel’s **response** to God answering his prayer. (James 5:16 *The effective prayer of righteous man*)
- This is a prayer that reflects the heart of a worshipper, a worshipper of THE **SOVEREIGN GOD**

VS. 19: Then the mystery was revealed to Daniel in a night vision. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven; ²⁰ Daniel said, “Let the name of God be blessed forever and ever, For wisdom and power belong to Him. ²¹ “It is He who changes the times and the epochs; He removes kings and ^[ab]establishes kings; He gives wisdom to wise men And knowledge to ^[ac]men of understanding. ²² “It is He who reveals the profound and hidden things; He knows what is in the darkness, And the light dwells with Him. ²³ “To You, O God of my fathers, I give thanks and praise, For You have given me wisdom and power; Even now You have made known to me what we requested of You, For You have made known to us the king’s matter.” (Ps. 103:1-2; 113:1-2) Daniel thanked the Lord before he even shared the interpretation with the King. = Confidence in God!!! **BIG FAITH**

VS. 27: Daniel answered before the king and said, “As for the mystery about which the king has inquired, neither wise men, conjurers, ^[ag]magicians *nor* diviners are able to declare *it* to the king. ²⁸ **However, there**

is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries, and He has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what will take place in the [ab]latter days. This was your dream and the visions [ai]n your mind *while* on your bed.

Daniel uses this opportunity to witness to Nebuchadnezzar and the whole Babylonian court that there is One True God – the God of the Hebrews, a Covenant God who is all wise and all powerful.

Daniel also displays his humility, deflecting any praise that might demonstrate his gifts to GOD

Vs. 30: But as for me, this mystery has not been revealed to me for any wisdom [al]residing in me more than *in any other* living man, but for the purpose of making the interpretation known to the king, and that you may [am]understand the thoughts of your [an]mind. Daniel points to God as the ONE TRUE, Sovereign God

- Supernaturally, **miraculously**, Daniel tells the King his dream, then interprets it. Daniel also subtly declares the reality of king's worldview: There is ONE True God and He is Sovereign, in charge of ALL

The King's Dream - The Interpretation—

Vs. 36: "This *was* the dream; now we will tell its interpretation before the king.³⁷ You, O king, are the king of kings, to whom the God of heaven has given the [ar]kingdom, the power, the strength and the glory; ³⁸and wherever the sons of men dwell, *or* the beasts of the field, or the birds of the sky, He has given them into your hand and He has caused you to rule over them all. *You are the head of gold.*

SHOW GRAPHIC OF IMAGE: the representation of the four great Gentile world powers until the endtime

1. Babylon = the First Kingdom (The King = head of gold) – symbolic: Rev. 18:2-20 -Babylon the great (symbolism of the last great metropolis – ONE World Order – **capital of the world?**)

A. Human Materialism B. Religious Apostasy C. Great Rebellion/Revolt against God

2. Medo-Persia (Iran) and 3. Greece

Vs. 39: After you there will arise another kingdom inferior to you, then another third kingdom of bronze, which will rule over all the earth.

4. Rome

Vs. 40: Then there will be a fourth kingdom as strong as iron; inasmuch as iron crushes and shatters all things, so, like iron that breaks in pieces, it will crush and break all these in pieces.

5. The Kingdom of God – inaugurated in Christ Jesus

Vs. 44: In the days of those kings, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which will never be destroyed, and *that* kingdom will not be [av]left for another people; it will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, but it will itself endure forever.⁴⁵ Inasmuch as you saw that a stone was cut out of the mountain without hands and that it crushed the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver and the gold, **the great God has made known to the king what will take place [aw]in the future**; so the dream is true and its interpretation is trustworthy."

***Human Response to a true Miracle:** ⁴⁶ Then King Nebuchadnezzar fell on his face and did homage to Daniel, and gave orders to present to him an offering and [ax]fragrant incense. ⁴⁷ The king answered Daniel and said, "Surely your God is a God of gods and a Lord of kings and a revealer of mysteries, since you have been able to reveal this mystery."

- **Who because of your life is responding like this?**

Matthew 5:16 "Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven."

People are watching YOUR life. People are watching to see how you react when things get tough, or when things are going really well. Are you consistent in your life with your FAITH?

⁴⁸ Then the king ^[av] promoted Daniel and gave him many great gifts, and he made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon and chief prefect over all the wise men of Babylon. ⁴⁹ And Daniel made request of the king, and he appointed Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego over the administration of the province of Babylon, while Daniel *was* at the king's court.

Remember, it's not the king who promoted Daniel – But God used the king to promote Daniel.

- **Joseph went from Zero to Hero -in Egypt.**
- **Daniel went from refugee and slave to become the second highest leader in Babylon.**

Genesis 50:20 “As for you, you meant evil against me, *but* God meant it for good in order to bring about ^[a]this present result, to preserve many people alive.”

APPLICATION:

How is your FAITH in God? Do you need a Faith Upgrade?

How is your prayer life? Do you pray like your life depends on it?

What are you praying for, asking God to show out in your life? Asking God to glorify Himself in your request?

Are you willing to risk big on God's Behalf? To take opportunities God gives you to boldly share your faith?