

Daniel 2 Teaching

Daniel Interprets Nebuchadnezzar's Dream

This chapter begins as king Nebuchadnezzar was tormented by a dream. The king asked the wisemen, astrologers, magicians, sorcerers, and enchanters to tell him what he dreamt and then interpret it for him. When they could not, he threatened to kill them all. They pleaded with the king and said nobody can do what he asked except the gods, whose dwelling is not of this world.

The king's anger overtook him and he was determined to kill all of those in the highest court, which also included Daniel and his three friends. We read that when summoned by Arioch, the commander of the king's guard, that "Daniel spoke to him with wisdom and tact." (v. 14) He kept his cool in a very heated situation and then asked for an appointment with the king to explain his dream. Daniel was confident in what he had: The favor of the living God! He wisely went and asked his godly friends, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah, to pray over this situation. This is just what we are to do when trouble comes!

We must remember no matter the circumstance, we are to go directly to prayer. We should ask others to pray with us in agreement as the word tells us in Matthew 18:19-20:

"Again, truly I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything they ask for, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them."

Daniel was doing this long before Jesus spoke the words over 500 years later. He understood where his help came from and so did his friends. Let us never forget this in our own lives. This is a timeless precept that stands true no matter the situation we find ourselves.

We see in verse 19 that God answers their specific and urgent prayer request by revealing the mystery to Daniel (He is faithful!) and then in verses 20-23, Daniel shows us how to pray a prayer of exaltation, worship, and thanksgiving:

²⁰“Praise be to the name of God for ever and ever;
wisdom and power are his.

²¹ He changes times and seasons;
he deposes kings and raises up others.

He gives wisdom to the wise
and knowledge to the discerning.

²² He reveals deep and hidden things;
he knows what lies in darkness,
and light dwells with him.

²³ I thank and praise you, God of my ancestors:
You have given me wisdom and power,
you have made known to me what we asked of you,
you have made known to us the dream of the king.”

In this, Daniel acknowledges who God is and the power He alone holds and what He can do when we seek Him and ask Him for help. We need not fret or worry. When we go to the One that holds up the universe, we can rest assured that He can hold us up too:

Philippians 4:4-6:

“Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”

We too can rejoice as we wait and stay gentle in disposition as Daniel did knowing our God is indeed working behind the scenes when we go to Him in prayer that aligns to His will. When Daniel prayed he showed God adoration and dependence on Him alone. This is a beautiful model of just what to do when we face trouble in this world.

Daniel reminds the king that his request is impossible by human ability. And, he shows humility and points to the One deserving of glory when he says to king Nebuchadnezzar, "...but there is a God in Heaven..." that can reveal the truth. He declares this two separate times, once in verse 28 and the other in verse 37. Sometimes people need reminding of important things. This repeated proclamation shows Daniel's reliance on not just a random, dead, man-made, powerless god as this king was used to seeking help from, but instead *The Living God* who resides in a real location and has real power to affect change.

Daniel then proves it as he tells what the mysterious dream meant:

The statue consisting of a head of gold, breast and arms of silver, belly and thighs of brass, and legs of iron and feet of iron and clay represented kingdoms of the four monarchies. Each metal was shown from most valuable to least and corresponded to the kingdoms from most powerful to least.

Gold represented the Chaldean monarchy – Nebuchadnezzar's own kingdom.

Silver represented the kingdom of the Medes and Persians.

Iron represented the Grecian kingdom.

Iron and clay represented the Roman kingdom.

We note that all these monarchies were set against the Jewish nation and people at one point of history or another. They had *temporary* control, but God has the final say. The stone cut without human hands speaks of Christ – the final King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

“The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone.” (Psalm 118:22)

From Luke 20:18: “Everyone who falls on that stone will be broken to pieces; anyone on whom it falls will be crushed.”

He will abolish all human kingdoms once and for all as is shown in the dream when the rock “...became a huge mountain and filled the whole earth” (v. 35) and He will reign forevermore in the eternal kingdom of God. The only thing that lasts is the kingdom of Christ. We are wise to not reject Him but become faithful and trustworthy servants like Daniel and his friends.

Now, some loving exhortation and encouragement friends: We saw the prophecy of Jesus foretold in Daniel 2, and now that He has come to the world and ascended, He has commissioned us as His chosen people. This is relevant to our current days that we live in. He wants us to know who we are in Him. He wants us to know the authority we have on the earth in His name so we can do mighty works. As He said in John 14:12: “Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father.”

Let us learn valuable lessons from Daniel and his three dear friends. We are to rely on God, we are to wait on God, and then we are to act in the authority given to us in His mighty name. Amen.

-A. Johnson (All Bible references are from the New International Version (NIV))