

Nebuchadnezzar's Dream

Daniel 2

Part 2

Introduction: Last week in our study we started into Daniel chapter 2. It is in this chapter where God will reveal the Times of the Gentiles through a dream of Nebuchadnezzar. Last week we considered how important this chapter is concerning prophecy. This chapter is foundational when it comes to interpreting prophecy. The image in the king's dream is the framework for the prophecies of Matthew 24 and 25 as well as the book of Revelation. In other words, if our interpretation of prophecy in Matthew or Revelation does not agree with what we see in this chapter of Daniel then we can be sure our interpretation is not correct. The image given to the king in this chapter is the skeleton upon which all future prophecies must be attached to, and it must fit the framework. Let me remind all of us one more time of the words of Charles Clough.

"However you approach every other prophecy in Scripture depends basically on how you handle Daniel 2. This is the cornerstone of the whole thing. Come up with the wrong answer here and you're bound to misinterpret Matthew 24 and 25, the book of Revelation and other passages of prophecy in Scripture. This is a central point of prophecy."

The Dream

Part 2

Notice Daniel 2:1-4

These are the verses we considered last week. The king's dream came about from the Lord, but it also came because of the king's thoughts and concerns.

Notice Daniel 2:29

He was concerned about what would happen in the future. The language change in verse 4 to Aramaic will remain up to Daniel 7:2. There was a very good reason for the change. These prophecies are given in the language that the Gentiles could understand because God was warning them that their kingdoms would not remain forever. He desired to see them saved. Israel was to be the light to the Gentile nations but they failed as they became involved in idolatry so God would send a warning to the Gentiles through the dream of a Gentile king.

Notice Daniel 2:5

Here we see the brutality of these pagan kings. Lives meant very little to these dictators. It was all about power and control.

Notice Daniel 2:6-11

Possibly the king suspected that these men were pretenders and here was an opportunity to expose them. He demanded that they not just give an interpretation of the dream but also tell the king what he had dreamed. The statement which they make is very accurate. There was not a man on the earth that could do what he had asked them to do. There was only One who could tell the dream and the interpretation and that was God, but they did not know Him.

Notice Daniel 2:12-13

Maybe the king was looking to purge the wisemen out of the palace and get a new group, but we do not know. His orders are certainly radical. This helps us to understand that the dream really troubled his soul. In the hasty order to kill the wisemen we see that Daniel and his friends were now under the death sentence. This is another test for Daniel and his friends. They were tested 3 years earlier and the choice they made put their lives in danger. Now we see them in another test, and they are right in the middle of the will of God. Not only are they in the will of God they have been prepared for this high pressure test they are facing.

Application:

God works in our lives the very same way. The tests and the trials that we face are there to strengthen us for what is coming later down the road. There was no panic in Daniel at this time because he knew what the Lord could do based upon what he had learned 3 years earlier. We can see from this that Daniel will have the faith he needs all because of the stand he had taken earlier. Had he compromised he would not have seen the power of God 3 years prior and he would have had every reason to panic. Notice the words of John Walvoord.

"Thus Daniel, the obscure Jewish captive, would have been lost to history like many others if he had compromised in chapter 1."

All that we go through is designed to strengthen our faith for the next trial.

James 1:2-8

² *My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations;*

³ *Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.*

⁴ *But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.*

Notice Daniel 2:14

Here we see Daniel's response. He did not panic but instead he responded with counsel and wisdom. The word "counsel" here is very interesting. It means exactly what it says. Why would he need to offer counsel to Arioch? I believe there was great anxiety in Arioch because he and Daniel had developed a close relationship.

Notice Daniel 2:15

Daniel requested the details about why the decree was so hasty, and Arioch took the time to explain the entire matter to Daniel. This is a rare situation. This is the man in charge of the executions, and he takes the time to explain everything to one of the subjects who was to be executed. This is the result of the relationship that Daniel and this man had from the events that had happened 3 years before. Getting back to the counsel, what happened here is amazing. If anyone should have needed counsel it would be Daniel and his friends. But Daniel and his friends needed no counsel for they had their faith settled in their God. For this reason, Daniel, under the death penalty, can offer counsel to a man who is to see that the death penalty is to be carried out. With the counsel David also exercised wisdom in the way that he answered. This is a 17-year-old young man. He is not moved by the entire situation.

Application:

Daniel was in a very high-pressure situation, and he remained calm because of his faith in his God. How do we respond in situations that are high pressure? It is the high-pressure situations in life that will reveal what is in our heart. Someone has said if you want to know what is inside the cup then just upset it. The same is true of us. If we want to know what is inside of a person's heart just watch them when something or someone in their lives puts them in a high-pressure situation.

James 1:19-25

¹⁹ Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath:

²⁰ For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.

²¹ Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.

²² But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.

²³ For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass:

²⁴ For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was.

²⁵ But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.

Proverbs 15:1-2

A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger.

² *The tongue of the wise useth knowledge aright: but the mouth of fools poureth out foolishness.*

Ecclesiastes 5:2

² *Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God: for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few.*

Notice Daniel 2:16

Here we see the hand of grace upon Daniel. He had not been invited into the king's presence so to go in would endanger Daniel's life. God not only gives him favor with Arioch, but He also allows him to enter the presence of the king and ask him for an extended time period. Then Daniel tells the king that if he is given time he will reveal the dream and the interpretation. Notice the words of Dwight Pentecost.

"Now this reveals a lot about Daniel's confidence, his knowledge of God, that God would hear the petition, that God can deliver those who trust Him from these awesome circumstances, that the knowledge of the future belongs to God, that God does reveal

Himself and His plans and His purposes to men. See all those things are inherent in Daniel's approach to God."

Application:

What happens here is so encouraging to you and me. When situations look impossible our God can make a way for us to get through doors that others cannot even approach. He can move hearts so that they show us favor.

Notice Daniel 2:17-18

Daniel gathered his friends and revealed to them his meeting with the king. They then had a prayer meeting to seek the mercies of God concerning the king's dream.

Daniel knew the principle that Jesus taught to His disciples long before it was ever taught.

Matthew 18:19-20

¹⁹ Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven.

²⁰ For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.

No doubt that Daniel and his friends were familiar with many passages of the Old Testament.

Psalms 34:3-4

³ O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together.

⁴ I sought the LORD, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears.

Psalms 145:18-20

¹⁸ The LORD is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth.

¹⁹ He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him: he also will hear their cry, and will save them.

²⁰ The LORD preserveth all them that love him: but all the wicked will he destroy.

Notice Daniel 2:19a.

God revealed the secret to Daniel in a night vision.

Conclusion/Application:

God does not reveal Truth to us today through dreams or visions. Today we get Truth through His Word.

John 17:15-17

¹⁵ I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.

¹⁶ They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

¹⁷ Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.

What would have happened had Daniel and his friends not spent this time in prayer? We do not know that answer, but we do know that the book of Daniel speaks loudly of the sovereignty of God. But it also speaks loudly of the responsibility of man. Notice the words of Charles Clough.

"Now [the book of] Daniel is very, very heavy on sovereignty of God. The book of Daniel would be the Calvinist delight because of its absoluteness on the sovereignty of God. God is the final authority over every event of history. But I want you to notice that along with the sovereignty of God in Daniel is an element that amateur Calvinists always miss and it is the fact that the God of history is dynamic, He interacts with prayer; He is not a fatalistic God because the implication of verse 18 is that if they don't pray they're going to die, if they do pray they won't. In other words, their future destiny does depend upon their response to the situation. If Daniel believed like some amateur Calvinists he would have sat around and said whatever is going to happen is going to happen and done absolutely nothing. But he does do something and he has this big long concerted prayer in response. . . . [Daniel] wants God to personally respond to him. And whatever your belief about sovereignty is, if you've gotten to the point in your thinking where now you can't pray because you keep getting hit with this idea of what's the use of praying because God knows what I'm going to pray before I pray it so therefore I won't pray it, if you get stuck in that you're way off on your Biblical understanding of sovereignty. It's incorrect and its unbiblical, somewhere along the way you've gotten off the track."