

Bible Study – Daniel

Week 4 – Chapter 2, Part 2

I. Daniel 2:24-26

Therefore Daniel went to Arioch, whom the king had appointed to destroy the wise men of Babylon, and said to him, “Do not destroy the wise men of Babylon; bring me in before the king, and I will give the king the interpretation.”

²⁵ Then Arioch quickly brought Daniel before the king and said to him: “I have found among the exiles from Judah a man who can tell the king the interpretation.” ²⁶ The king said to Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, “Are you able to tell me the dream that I have seen and its interpretation?” ¹

- a. After Daniel and his friends sought the Lord to reveal the dream/interpretation, Daniel went to find Arioch. Daniel doesn’t seem to be concerned about his own safety, but rather about the rest of the wise men as he asked for the wise men to be spared.
- b. Arioch seems to be excited about bringing Daniel before the King, as inferred by the statement that he “quickly brought Daniel before the King”.
- c. Arioch is likely excited because he feels that he will be given credit for finding and bringing Daniel. His statement, “I have found” shows that he was trying to take credit for what the interpretation that Daniel was about to give. This may also allude to Arioch’s need to display to the King that he had not been negligent in fulfilling the execution order, but rather discerning in finding someone to interpret the dream for the King.

II. Daniel 2:27-28

Daniel answered the king, “No wise men, enchanters, magicians, or diviners can show to the king the mystery that the king is asking, ²⁸ but there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries, and he has disclosed to King Nebuchadnezzar what will happen at the end of days. Your dream and the visions of your head as you lay in bed were these:

- a. This is the first time the term “diviner” is used. It comes from the root word *gēzar* and means “to cut” or “determine”. Basically this is a fortune teller.

¹ *The Holy Bible : New Revised Standard Version* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1989), Da 2:24–26.

- b. Daniel does not take any credit for the interpretation himself. Instead, he reinforces the same idea that the wise men had told the King, that no mortal could reveal the answer, but that there is a God in heaven that could.
- c. Further, Daniel tells the King that it wasn't the "gods" that gave him the dream, but the one true God. Daniel, in short, denies the existence of the pagan gods.
- d. "End of Days" is an eschatological statement. While some of the dream referred to the near future, some of the events described were obviously intended to reference the return of Christ and His Kingdom.

III. Daniel 2:29-30

To you, O king, as you lay in bed, came thoughts of what would be hereafter, and the revealer of mysteries disclosed to you what is to be.³⁰ But as for me, this mystery has not been revealed to me because of any wisdom that I have more than any other living being, but in order that the interpretation may be known to the king and that you may understand the thoughts of your mind.

- a. Daniel told the King what he was doing when the dream came to him. He told him that he was laying on his bed (perhaps couch), pondering his kingdom and what would happen to it after he was dead. This is to further reinforce that God revealed exactly what He had given to Nebuchadnezzar.
- b. Daniel takes no credit for the interpretation that he is about to give. He says that he is nothing special, but it is because God wanted to reveal the dream to the King that Daniel was given the ability to interpret it.
- c. Daniel is very humble before the King. Just as he was able to talk to Arioch and convince him not only to stay the order of execution, but also to describe exactly what had triggered the order. It is in the same manner that Daniel appears before the King. Instead of Daniel inciting the wrath of the King by appearing before him, he flatters the King and soothes him by saying that the dream was meant for his understanding and God had sent him there to interpret it.

IV. Daniel 2:31-35

You were looking, O king, and lo! there was a great statue. This statue was huge, its brilliance extraordinary; it was standing before you, and its appearance was frightening.³² The head of that statue was of fine gold, its chest and arms of silver, its middle and thighs of bronze,³³ its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay.³⁴ As you looked on, a stone was cut out, not by human hands, and it struck the statue on its feet of iron and clay and broke them in pieces.³⁵ Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold, were all broken in pieces and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away, so that not a trace of them could be found. But the stone that struck the statue became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.

- a. The statue in his dream was not defined in dimensions. However, Nebuchadnezzar did build a statue later on that may have symbolized this dream. That statue was 90 feet tall.
- b. The word “Brilliant” comes from the word *dēḥal* which means “awesome” and “to fear”.
- c. This prophecy is also elaborated on in verse Daniel 7. We will investigate it more in depth when we get there.

V. Daniel 2:36-38

This was the dream; now we will tell the king its interpretation. ³⁷ You, O king, the king of kings—to whom the God of heaven has given the kingdom, the power, the might, and the glory, ³⁸ into whose hand he has given human beings, wherever they live, the wild animals of the field, and the birds of the air, and whom he has established as ruler over them all—you are the head of gold.

- a. “We will tell the King its Interpretation”
 - a. This could mean that Daniel was accompanied by his friends, and he included them in the “we”, but it could also refer also to God. Likely it could have meant both.
- b. “King of Kings” – This title given to him by God. (Romans tells us that all power and authority is ordained by God). Daniel is also quick to remind the King of this.
 - a. Supreme monarch of the earth at this time.
 - b. Ezekiel also called him the King of kings in Ezekiel 26:7
- c. The head of Gold was the nation of Babylon.
 - a. Nebuchadnezzar was preoccupied with gold. The proliferation of which is mentioned in Isaiah 14:4.
- d. Babylon was the only kingdom defined as having a King. The rest of the kingdoms that are described didn’t have an absolute monarchy.

VI. Daniel 2:39-40

After you shall arise another kingdom inferior to yours, and yet a third kingdom of bronze, which shall rule over the whole earth. ⁴⁰ And there shall be a fourth kingdom, strong as iron; just as iron crushes and smashes everything, it shall crush and shatter all these.

- a. The empires that Daniel describes here were not single nations, but rather they ruled over the entire civilized world that was known at that time.
- b. The second Kingdom was identified by breasts and arms of silver. This was the Medo-Persian empire lead by Cyrus the Great.
- c. There were two parts to the vision, “breast” and “arms”. This likely symbolized the two different parts of the empire, Medes and Persians.
- d. “after you shall arise another kingdom inferior”

- i. This is not referring to the size or the power of the kingdom, but rather the way men perceived glory and richness. Silver is worth less than Gold, Bronze is worth less than Silver, Iron is worth less than Bronze, and Iron/Clay is worth less than just Iron. Yet each kingdom described is larger and has more military might than the previous.
- e. The Medo-Persian army was mainly outfitted in thick cloth armor and wore Turbans.
- f. The third Kingdom was identified as being the Bronze “Middle (belly)” and “Thighs”. This was the Greek Empire
 - i. The Greeks wore Brass Helmets with a plume, brass armor, brass shields, and carried brass swords.
 - ii. In 332 BC, Alexander the Great defeated the Medo-Persia empire in several conflicts and gained dominance. This kingdom lasted 185 years (331-146 BC)
- g. The forth Kingdom was identified as being the Iron “Legs”. This was the Roman Empire.
 - i. The two legs likely symbolized the Eastern and Western Roman Empire.
 - ii. Roman soldiers were equipped with Iron weapons. Though they were much less flashy, they were considerably stronger. – The Iron Legions of Rome.
 - iii. The legs were the longest part of the image, possibly symbolizing that the Roman Empire would last the longest.
 - iv. The Roman Empire began in 146 BC after the defeat of Carthage.
 - 1. The empire lasted about 500 when the east and west were divided in 395.
 - 2. The last Roman emperor for the Western Empire ruled until 476 AD
 - 3. The Eastern Empire continued on until 1453 AD.
- h. “it shall Crush and Shatter all of these”
 - i. The Roman Empire controlled all of the land that the previous Empires had held.

VII. Daniel 2:41-43

As you saw the feet and toes partly of potter’s clay and partly of iron, it shall be a divided kingdom; but some of the strength of iron shall be in it, as you saw the iron mixed with the clay. ⁴² As the toes of the feet were part iron and part clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly brittle. ⁴³ As you saw the iron mixed with clay, so will they mix with one another in marriage, but they will not hold together, just as iron does not mix with clay.

- a. The feet and toes partly of clay may indicate a fifth empire that is yet to come.

- b. The kingdom is characterized by feet and toes of iron/clay. This could be symbolizing that the fifth kingdom has some tie with the fourth kingdom (Rome).
- c. Many scholars believe that this kingdom is symbolic of a revised Roman Empire that is ruling during the days of the return of Christ.
 - i. This empire may be comprised of 10 nations, as symbolized by the 10 toes, or it could be that the number 10 symbolizes a number of completion or fulfillment.

VIII. Daniel 2:44-45

And in the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed, nor shall this kingdom be left to another people. It shall crush all these kingdoms and bring them to an end, and it shall stand forever;⁴⁵ just as you saw that a stone was cut from the mountain not by hands, and that it crushed the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold. The great God has informed the king what shall be hereafter. The dream is certain, and its interpretation trustworthy.”

- a. The rock is described as being cut from the mountain, but not by hands. This indicates the supernatural power behind this symbol.
- b. All the previous nations had been built by men, by “hands”.
- c. God is the Supernatural power that throws down all the kingdoms and scatters them like chaff in the wind.
- d. The rock is symbolic of Jesus.
- e. “Never be destroyed, nor shall this kingdom be left to another people.”
 - a. When God sets up his Kingdom, it will be an eternal Kingdom with Christ reigning supreme. This Kingdom will never be destroyed, so it will never be left for another people to inherit.

IX. Daniel 2:46-49

Then King Nebuchadnezzar fell on his face, worshiped Daniel, and commanded that a grain offering and incense be offered to him.⁴⁷ The king said to Daniel, “Truly, your God is God of gods and Lord of kings and a revealer of mysteries, for you have been able to reveal this mystery!”⁴⁸ Then the king promoted Daniel, gave him many great gifts, and made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon and chief prefect over all the wise men of Babylon.⁴⁹ Daniel made a request of the king, and he appointed Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego over the affairs of the province of Babylon. But Daniel remained at the king’s court.

- a. The King realized that Daniel had not only given the description of the dream but also the proper interpretation. He had just witnessed a supernatural miracle and he fell down to worship Daniel.
- b. Likely the King wasn’t elevating Daniel to a deity status, but worshipped him as the emissary and representative of Yahweh. This is supported because the

Nebuchadnezzar immediately recognizes God as the God of gods and Lord of Kings.

- c. Nebuchadnezzar was not converted to Judaism at this point. Since he was already a polytheist, he likely just added Yahweh to the pantheon of gods he already worshiped. Though he did acknowledge God as the God of gods.
- d. The King kept his word and lavishly rewarded Daniel.
 - a. He made Daniel ruler over the province of Babylon, the most important province in the Empire.
 - b. He made Daniel chief of the wise men. This was likely because he was the only one that had shown himself to be in communication with God.
- e. Daniel remembered his friends and made them all administrators in the province of Babylon. While Daniel ruled, his friends were in charge of going into to province and seeing to the king's business.

X. The Elevation of Daniel

- a. Daniel was a political prisoner and was intended to be brainwashed by the Chaldeans.
- b. Daniel held on to his faith and put God first in all things.
- c. Daniel was educated for 3 years by the Chaldeans, learning their culture, science, and politic, but never wavered in his faith.
- d. After becoming a new graduate and apprentice wise man, Daniel did not yet have the privilege of appearing before the King.
- e. God caused Nebuchadnezzar to have a dream of prophecy and made certain that the only person that could interpret it was Daniel.
- f. Daniel prayed for the knowledge and the interpretation of the dream and gave thanks when God answered him.
- g. God again provided for Daniel.
- h. After giving the correct interpretation to Nebuchadnezzar, Daniel is put into a position of power and is given the ability to elevate his friends who also worshiped the Lord.
- i. This all occurred in approximately during the first 3 year of Daniel's captivity.
- j. What lesson should we learn from Daniel?