

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

BOOK OF DANIEL

DREAMING (DANIEL 2:1-4)

THE 2ND YEAR OF NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S REIGN

In this pagan king's 2nd year he started receiving dreams that bothered him. This would have been during the time Daniel was still in training. This has happened before with Pharaohs and kings in the OT.

- God was causing the dreams, which resulted in loss of sleep and stress.

SO, THE PROS WERE BROUGHT IN TO HELP

Diviner-Priests: worked in religious literature

- Mediums: foretelling the future through the stars, communicated with the dead
- Sorcerers: worked in drugs (phariko) and cutting

NEBUCHADNEZZAR TARGETS ONE DREAM

The king insisted that his "cabinet of supernatural affairs" tell him what he had dreamed, and also what it meant.

- "May the king live forever" shows their confidence in their contribution to Babylon up to this point. But, their façade was about to be exposed

DREAM INTERPRETATION WAS EASY

These men could say anything, and there was no way to prove them wrong, but when Neby asks what the dream is, that caught them off guard

- Don't we see this with many charismatic leaders today? We have many that take advantage of "itching ears" and offer vague easy answers.

We must all be cautious about who has a strong voice in our lives. We must learn to check all counsel through the filter of the Word of God, and by the fruit in the life of the one offering help.

FRAUDS (DANIEL 2:5-11)

"MY WORD IS FINAL"

In an absolute monarch, the king can demand whatever he wants. Neby threatened them with dismemberment and their estates burned if they don't produce

- We don't know if he had forgotten his dream or not, but that's not the point. It was not a question of why, but a do or die situation for the frauds

THESE THREATS WEREN'T ROUTINE

Though not routine, the barbaric nature of ancient kings is worth noting and comes up several times in the OT.

- **If the men could accurately tell him the dreams, Neby would grant them rewards and favor from the throne**

FRAUDS TYPICALLY STALL

Neby put these men into a situation to test if they were legit, and he did not give them time to stall with their plea to "tell the dream, and we will interpret."

- "I know you're trying to gain time" is pretty straightforward and reemphasizes that he is serious about his threats

HERE COMES THE EXCUSES

They said that no one on earth can do this, the king has never asked such a thing, and only the gods know and won't share with us

- Some see humility, but it is most likely sheer terror. They were paid to interpret dreams, read the stars, and tell the future, but they were in over their heads now!

ONLY ONE SOURCE OF CLARITY AND TRUTH

19th Century Lutheran theologian said, "It proves to me that all the religions, arts, sciences, philosophies, attainments, and powers of man, apart from God's inspired prophets, and Christ, are but emptiness and vanity as regards to any true and adequate knowledge of the purposes of God and the destinies of man"

HAVE OUR WAYS WORKED?

Have the things our culture finds valuable made our lives fulfilled? If so, why do we never have enough? Does universalist/pluralistic thinking make sense? Doesn't it contradict itself? Do human idols consistently come through?

TACT AND DISCRETION (DANIEL 2:12-16)

NEBUCHADNEZZAR BECOMES FURIOUS

His anger was not as noteworthy as the decree it produced-to destroy the all of the wise men in Babylon.

- Again, history shows us how barbaric kings could be, so this was not just a threat, but a real order to wipe out all wise counselors in Babylon

YET AGAIN, DANIEL HAS FAVOR

This time with the head of the guard and chief executioner, Arioch

- When Arioch arrived at Daniel's house, Daniel asked about the harsh decree with much **wisdom and tactfulness**
- Though God was obviously at work, Arioch must have also agreed the decree was too harsh

ARIOCH TOOK HIM TO THE KING

The guard showed no hesitation, again showing that God was at work and that he thought the decree was excessive

I NEED SOME TIME...

Daniel assured Neby he could interpret the dream, but needed time. Time for what? Time to pray and seeks God's counsel. God would provide when all others couldn't.

THE STAGE WAS NOW SET FOR GOD TO SHOW HIMSELF POWERFUL AND WISE THROUGH DANIEL.

Overtime we will also see God come through compared to the gods of this world. The evidence of the wisdom of God is clear if one is honest enough to see it.

- Love and tactfulness are more effective than harshness and hate. Do we pray before we act? Do we seek His counsel through prayer and then make sure what we feel like we have received is in line with His Word?

LOOKING AT LIGHT (DANIEL 2:17-23)

IN AGREEMENT

Daniel went to his friends house to warn them and to encourage them to pray for mercy and that they wouldn't be killed

- We see Daniel's humanity here. He is thinking about his friends and himself first. This doesn't mean he isn't righteous, but human

INTERCESSION

Daniel's prayer spread like a blanket over all the Chaldeans, sparing them as well.

- Our prayers can do this too. We can't pray others into salvation, but we can pray for enough protection and grace to position them to feel God

A VISION, NOT A DREAM

Neby had a dream, Daniel had a vision. The difference is one is awake during a vision, but asleep in a dream

- In this vision, the answer to Neby's dream is revealed by God to Daniel in the 2nd half of chapter 2

PRAYER TURNS TO PRAISE

v20 thru 23 is a praise poem written to God about His wisdom and power. The entire prayer is like a psalm, probably showing Daniel's knowledge of Psalms.

- Our prayers should also be surrounded by praise and acknowledgement of God's power and provision

HE KNEW BEFORE HE PRAYED? (V21-22)

We learn later on that Daniel knew the interpretation before he prayed. This shows that God had gifted him, and that he lived in constant communion with God, not just in turbulent times.

- God not only poses infinite wisdom, but shares it to willing followers that communicate with Him

"HE REVEALS THE DEEP THINGS"

Through a relationship with God, we get clarity on the deeper issues of life and of the supernatural. God also knows of all things that happen in the dark, but remains in the light

- We can live righteously in dark places, but only through a communication with God

A MODEL PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

This prayer is concise and shows a genuine appreciation for God's sovereignty and grandeur

- Notice that Daniel includes his friends in the prayer. He says, "You have let us know the king's mystery" showing that we can all experience direction from God if we so allow.

TO REALLY FOLLOW CHRIST

- We truly repent. We must have a day-to-day relationship. We praise, not just pray.
- We pray, not just praise and worship. We accept Him completely, not in pieces.
- We focus and think on the Light, not on the darkness.