

1. Last week I completed the teaching of Dan 1:1-17 and when time ran out I was about to begin the analysis of Dan 1:18.
2. Before we proceed let's take a look at an expanded translation of Dan 1:1-17.

Dan 1:1 In the third year of Jehoiakim's reign as king of Judah Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon surrounded the city of Jerusalem and began to siege the city.

Dan 1:2 Jehoiakim king of Judah surrendered the city of Jerusalem; the sieging of the city ceased when Jehoiakim agreed to certain terms mandated by Nebuchadnezzar. As part of the settlement certain very valuable vessels used in the Temple liturgy were carried off to Babylonia where Nebuchadnezzar stored them in the house of his god. The death of Nebuchadnezzar's father Nabopolassar occurred during the siege which in part motivated Nebuchadnezzar to cut short his siege; his need to return to Babylon also resulted in Jehoiakim being left on the throne as his Regal agent.

Dan 1:3 In order to guarantee the loyalty of Jehoiakim, Nebuchadnezzar ordered Ashpenaz whose title was "Prince of The Eunuchs, to take as hostages some seventy young men from Jehoiakim's palace; they were to be of nobility, young men who had been raised in the palace. As was the custom of the day the boys were to be between the ages of 14 and 17.

Dan 1:4 All seventy were to be handsome, well built, intelligent and good students; they were to be well mannered and capable of standing in the presence of King's and Potentates; men who had a special aptitude for learning. They were one might say to be the cream of the crop." Young men who would one day serve Nebuchadnezzar as advisors, prophets, administrators; young men capable of learning the Chaldean language and becoming as Chaldean as Nebuchadnezzar himself.

Dan 1:5 The king decreed the boys would eat with him in the royal dining hall; he assigned them special rations and they were to drink the finest of wine from the king's cellars. They would be trained for three years said Nebuchadnezzar, and after that he would assign them special duties depending on their demonstrated abilities...

Dan 1:6 Among the seventy were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah:

Dan 1:7 Ashpenaz gave the four boys new names: to Daniel, Belteshazzar; to Hananiah, Shadrach; to Mishael, Meshach; and to Azariah, Abednego.

Dan 1:8 But Daniel from the Bible Doctrine stored in his right lobe decided he should not defile himself by eating at the palace dining hall; Daniel was certain that the food and libation had not been prepared in accordance with the dietary rules proscribed in the Mosaic Law therefore he asked Ashpenaz if he might be excused from attending.

Dan 1:9 Now God Himself had made certain Ashpenaz saw Daniel as a young man with a future; Ashpenaz looked upon Daniel with favor and genuine appreciation.

Dan 1:10 And Ashpenaz said unto Daniel, "I am afraid of Nebuchadnezzar. Remember he has selected what you will eat and drink; now if he sees that a diet other than that selected leaves you less healthy than the other Hebrew children, I will lose my job and maybe my life."

Dan 1:11 Then Daniel met with the Meltsar, the officer responsible for the immediate supervision of Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah:

Dan 1:12 "I want you to let us eat only vegetables and water as a test, all you have to do is simply permit a trial for ten days." Daniel paused for a moment and then continued "what possibly bad can happen by feeding us vegetables and water for such a short time?"

Dan 1:13 Daniel continued: "at the end of ten days you can check our appearance in comparison with the other Hebrew hostages who are eating at the King's table and at that time depending on what you see, you can decide to either stop the test or continue."

Dan 1:14 So the Meltsar agreed and permitted them to eat only vegetables and water.

Dan 1:15 At the end of the ten days the appearance of Daniel and his companions improved, they looked in general healthier than the boys eating from the King's table.

Dan 1:16 As a result, the Meltsar decided to continue their special diet of vegetables and water.

Dan 1:17 As to the four teenagers, God provided not only doctrine for their souls but He also gave them special understanding in all learning and wisdom; and Daniel was given the gift of prophecy; he was able to interpret all manner of dreams and visions.

3. Now let's see what we can learn from verse eighteen. It is time for the boys to receive their examination.

KJV

Dan 1:18 Now at the end of the days that the king had said he should bring them in, then the prince of the eunuchs brought them in before Nebuchadnezzar.

NIV

Dan 1:18 At the end of the time set by the king to bring them in, the chief official presented them to Nebuchadnezzar.

1. Three years have elapsed between verses 17 and 18.

2. During these years the boys had learned not only the language but the various sciences of the Chaldeans.

3. They have been thoroughly trained to assume their positions within the administration of the Chaldean Empire.

4. The time had come for their final examination; an oral exam before the great King Nebuchadnezzar and his staff.

KJV

Dan 1:19 And the king communed with them; and among them all was found none like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah: therefore stood they before the king.

NIV

Dan 1:19 The king talked with them, and he found none equal to Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah; so they entered the king's service.

1. The word for communed in the KJV is the very common Davar in the piel imperfect.
2. This tells us the oral examination was continuous and intense.
3. King Nebuchadnezzar and his staff grilled the boys, probably individually.
4. The King more than likely headed up an examination committee of educators who also together with the King would have fired questions at each boy, not only to see what they knew but to see how they held up under pressure.
5. That they boys passed is an understatement. They passed with flying colors.
6. Let me give you Col. Thieme's translation of the verse: "And the king gave them an intensified examination; and among them all, none were like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah: therefore they were given positions in the Chaldean administration."
7. Now let's look at verse twenty where we will see how well the boys did:

KJV

Dan 1:20 And in all matters of wisdom and understanding, that the king enquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers that were in all his realm.

NIV

Dan 1:20 In every matter of wisdom and understanding about which the king questioned them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and enchanters in his whole kingdom.

1. Babylon was well known for having pushed the envelope of learning to new heights.
2. The Hanging Gardens, one of the great wonders of the world, had been engineered and built for a wife of Nebuchadnezzar; it was a feat of brilliance.
3. Chaldea was known for its advances in engineering, math, astronomy and military science but Daniel and his friends demonstrated capabilities above and beyond not only their peers but they even surpassed the "wise men" already assigned to the King's staff.
4. Those on the examination committee no doubt were a little embarrassed that here were four boys as wise as their teachers and wiser than the king's existing staff.

5. They were not just wiser but they were ten times wiser than the experts in the King's cabinet.

6. Daniel was promoted immediately to a staff position. He was given a position of responsibility early in life.

7. From there he will advance rapidly to the number three man in the Kingdom as we will later see.

7.1 Daniel was, to say the least, most precocious. Not only was Daniel a prodigy but so also were the other three boys; all four were advanced beyond their years.

KJV

Dan 1:21 And Daniel continued even unto the first year of king Cyrus.

NIV

Dan 1:21 And Daniel remained there until the first year of King Cyrus.

1. Daniel will remain as either a coveted advisor or the third man in charge until the year B.C. 536 when Cyrus the Great solidified his rulership over the Medo-Persian empire.

2. It will be Cyrus who in B.C. 536 will authorize a return of many Jews to the land to rebuild the Temple.

3. It can be assumed that Daniel may very well have had a strong hand, together with Zerubbabel in getting Cyrus the Great to grant permission to rebuild the Temple.

4. Daniel had started out as a teenager in a foreign land; he grew in wisdom and in strength, truly a man blessed of God and a man who influenced the Kings of the Chaldea, the Kings of the Medes and the Kings of the Persians.

5. Daniel in the first year of Cyrus would have been approximately 85 years old. Let's see what we learned in Daniel chapter one—Summary Points.

1. God disciplines both individuals and nations.

Heb 12:6 because the Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes everyone he accepts as a son."

Dan 1:1 In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it.

Dan 1:2 And the Lord delivered Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, along with some of the articles from the temple of God. These he carried off to the temple of his god in Babylonia and put in the treasure house of his god.

Hos 4:6 my people are destroyed from lack of knowledge. "Because you have rejected knowledge, I also reject you as my priests; because you have ignored the law of your God, I also will ignore your children.

2. Religion seeks to obscure the truth.

Dan 1:7 Ashpenaz gave the four boys new names: to Daniel, Belteshazzar (meaning Bel's Prince - chief of the Babylonian gods); to Hananiah, Shadrach (meaning illumined by the sun god); to Mishael, Meshach (meaning who and is Ishtar or Venus goddess of love and pleasure); and to Azariah, Abednego (meaning the servant or slave of Nebo, god of wisdom and education).

3. Divine viewpoint from doctrine in the soul results in right living.

Dan 1:8 But Daniel resolved not to defile himself with the royal food and wine, and he asked the chief official for permission not to defile himself this way.

Rom 12:2 Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is--his good, pleasing and perfect will.

Pro 23:7 For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he: Eat and drink, saith he to thee; but his heart is not with thee.

4. World leaders tend to be insecure and frightened.

Dan 1:10 but the official told Daniel, "I am afraid of my lord the king, who has assigned your food and drink. Why should he see you looking worse than the other young men your age? The king would then have my head because of you."

5. A student with doctrine in the soul is a better classroom student even in public school.

Dan 1:17 To these four young men God gave knowledge and understanding of all kinds of literature and learning. And Daniel could understand visions and dreams of all kinds.

Dan 1:18 At the end of the time set by the king to bring them in, the chief official presented them to Nebuchadnezzar.

Dan 1:19 The king talked with them, and he found none equal to Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah; so they entered the king's service.

6. God blesses those who put the Word first.

Rom 8:31 What, then, shall we say in response to this? If God is for us, who can be against us

Deu 11:26 See, I am setting before you today a blessing and a curse--
Deu 11:27 the blessing if you obey the commands of the LORD your God that I am giving you today;

7. God uses prepared people.

Dan 1:20 In every matter of wisdom and understanding about which the king questioned them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and enchanters in his whole kingdom.

8. God honors faithfulness.

Dan 1:21 And Daniel remained there until the first year of King Cyrus.

Psa 18:25 To the faithful you show yourself faithful, to the blameless you show yourself blameless,

Psa 25:10 All the ways of the LORD are loving and faithful for those who keep the demands of his covenant.

Psa 31:23 Love the LORD, all his saints! The LORD preserves the faithful, but the proud he pays back in full.

Psa 37:28 For the LORD loves the just and will not forsake his faithful ones. They will be protected forever, but the offspring of the wicked will be cut off;

Pro 2:8 for he guards the course of the just and protects the way of his faithful ones.

9. God never leaves himself without a witness.

Dan 1:20 In every matter of wisdom and understanding about which the king questioned them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and enchanters in his whole kingdom.

Dan 1:21 And Daniel remained there until the first year of King Cyrus.

10. A Soul full of doctrine is the basis for resisting brainwashing.

11. Now we are ready for Daniel chapter two. First let me tell you what we are going to see in chapter two:

1. Chapter two chronologically follows chapter one. After Daniel passes his exam he takes his place among the prophets and soothsayers on the staff of Nebuchadnezzar.

2. Though verse one of chapter two begins "in the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar" it is really the third year.
3. We know this because Daniel was captured in the first year of the King and he was trained for three years.
4. We also know from history that a Babylonian King's first year did not count in computing his tenure thus sometime after the third year of Daniel's captivity which would be B.C. 603 Nebuchadnezzar has a series of disturbing dreams.
5. One in particular has him very upset.
6. It would seem the King had forgotten just what he had dreamed but feels very disturbed over the forgotten dream. Historians tell us it was considered "bad luck" and a "black omen" in the Babylonian culture to forget a dream.
7. King Nebuchadnezzar calls in his brain trust and asks them to tell him the meaning of his dream.
8. The brain trust is astounded the King would ask for someone to not only tell the meaning of the dream but to first tell what the dream was.
9. That the wise men of the land cannot tell the King what he dreamed and thus they are unable to tell him its meaning makes the King very angry so he orders all wise men, which would include Daniel, to be executed and their homes destroyed.
 - 9.1 At this point in his reign Nebuchadnezzar is very powerful having just conquered the "world;" he is not worried about what the "cabinet" thinks.
 - 9.2 This will not always be true, later he will pronounce a death sentence on Daniel because he caters to his "staff."
10. Daniel being the rookie wise man was apparently not summoned into the king's presence; Daniel does however soon hear about the pending execution of all "wise men" and this would include Daniel and his friends.
11. Daniel consults the executioner and asks permission to take a shot at interpreting the dream. Nebuchadnezzar consents after visiting briefly with Daniel.
12. He and the boys hold a prayer meeting and God responds by telling Daniel the dream and its meaning.

13. Daniel then tells the King he saw a large statue with a head of gold, its arms and chest were made of silver, its waist and thighs were made of bronze and its legs were made of iron and its feet partly of iron and partly of clay.

14. Daniel then tells the king that the statue represents that which will happen in the future. Specifically he tells Nebuchadnezzar the statue represents future kingdoms to come after him although Daniel points out the head of gold represents Nebuchadnezzar's Babylonian empire.

15. So the head then is Babylon to be followed by three subsequent world empires. From hindsight and other Scriptures we know the following:

15.1 The head is Babylon.

15.2 The arms and chest represent the Medo Persian empire.

15.3 The waist and thighs represent the Grecian empire.

15.4 The legs of iron represent the Roman empire and the feet made of part iron and part clay represent the revived Roman empire.

16. One last comment about the coming empires. Notice how gold to silver to bronze to iron to clay represents a devolvement rather than an evolution.

16.1 Each of the successive empires move down the scale not only in terms of the intrinsic value of the metal but also there is a devolution with reference to the gravity scale.

17. The book of Daniel is a tribute to the grace of God for it demonstrates God's faithfulness in advancing prepared believers.

18. Daniel and his three friends were stabilized from doctrine in their souls and thus able to not only survive loss of family, friends, and country but because of their spiritual maturity they themselves were prospered.

19. These boys unlike their troubled king were able to maintain inner peace and happiness though under tremendous pressure.

20. The boys had successfully resisted Babylon's brainwashing attempts.

21. The boys were placed in Nebuchadnezzar's "State Department" just in time to encounter and solve a royal crisis.

22. Now I think we are ready to see what principles we learned from verse one of chapter two:

KJV

Dan 2:1 And in the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuchadnezzar dreamed dreams, wherewith his spirit was troubled, and his sleep brake from him.

NIV

Dan 2:1 In the second year of his reign, Nebuchadnezzar had dreams; his mind was troubled and he could not sleep.

1. In his third year just after he has examined Daniel, the King has a distressing series of dreams.

1.1 In the church age everything God wants us to know has been communicated in the completed Canon of Scripture.

1.2 In contrast however, before that completed Canon, God communicated His will in various ways:

1.2.1 The written Word as it then existed

Dan 9:2 In the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, understood from the Scriptures, according to the word of the LORD given to Jeremiah the prophet, that the desolation of Jerusalem would last seventy years.

1.2.2 The spoken word

Isa 6:8 Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?" And I said, "Here am I. Send me!"

1.2.3 Through dreams

Gen 20:3 But God came to Abimelech, King of Gerar, in a dream one night and said to him, "You are as good as dead because of the woman you have taken; she is a married woman."

Gen 20:4 Now Abimelech had not gone near her, so he said, "Lord, will you destroy an innocent nation?"

Gen 20:5 Did he not say to me, 'She is my sister,' and didn't she also say, 'He is my brother'? I have done this with a clear conscience and clean hands."

Gen 20:6 Then God said to him in the dream, "Yes, I know you did this with a clear conscience, and so I have kept you from sinning against me. That is why I did not let you touch her.

Gen 20:7 Now return the man's wife, for he is a prophet, and he will pray for you and you will live. But if you do not return her, you may be sure that you and all yours will die."

1.2.4 In visions

Gen 40:1 Some time later, the cupbearer and the baker of the king of Egypt offended their master, the king of Egypt.

Gen 40:2 Pharaoh was angry with his two officials, the chief cupbearer and the chief baker,

Gen 40:3 and put them in custody in the house of the captain of the guard, in the same prison where Joseph was confined.

Gen 40:5 . . . the cupbearer and the baker of the king of Egypt, who were being held in prison--had a dream the same night, and each dream had a meaning of its own.

Gen 40:8 ". . . there is no one to interpret them." Then Joseph said to them, "Do not interpretations belong to God? Tell me your dreams." . . .

Gen 40:12 "This is what the dream means," Joseph said to him. . .

Gen 40:13 "Within three days Pharaoh will lift up your head and restore you to your position, and you will put Pharaoh's cup in his hand, just as you used to do when you were his cupbearer."

1.2.5 Through angelic teaching

Gen 16:7 And the angel of the LORD found her by a fountain of water in the wilderness, by the fountain in the way to Shur.

Gen 16:8 And he said, Hagar, Sarai's maid, whence camest thou? and whither wilt thou go? And she said, I flee from the face of my mistress Sarai.

Gen 16:9 And the angel of the LORD said unto her, Return to thy mistress, and submit thyself under her hands.

Gen 16:10 And the angel of the LORD said unto her, I will multiply thy seed exceedingly, that it shall not be numbered for multitude.

2. There is apparently one dream which bothered Nebuchadnezzar greatly.

3. The King however is unable to recall his dream and though he can't recollect the dream, it left him anxious and in a state of dread.

4. Here was a man who had just conquered Assyria, Egypt and Judah (effectively the world), a man who "had everything" and yet we find him pacing the floor pained and in a state of anxiety and unrest.

5. There is a principle here; neither position of greatness nor personal ability nor wealth can provide peace of mind. True stability comes from Bible doctrine in the soul.

6. Nebuchadnezzar panics and begins to call out for help.

7. He calls upon what we might "think of" as a strange "State Department."

8. Daniel chapter one verse two tells us Nebuchadnezzar's "think tank" consists of "magicians, astrologers and sorcerers.

9. Let's take a look at these three classifications of court officials.

KJV

Dan 2:2 Then the king commanded to call the magicians, and the astrologers, and the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans, for to shew the king his dreams. So they came and stood before the king.

NIV

Dan 2:2 So the king summoned the magicians, enchanter as, sorcerers and astrologers to tell him what he had dreamed. When they came in and stood before the king,

1. Magicians-Chartummim in the Chaldean language means: "Those who write with a pen."

1.1 They were the scribes who wrote in hieroglyphics. They recorded and filed all the secrets of the Chaldean religion, as well as laws, contracts, etc.

1.2 This "legal department," brilliant in administration, was consulted because the king hoped they could find some precedent on which to base the interpretation of his dreams.

2. Astrologers-Ashaphim in the Chaldean language means: "Those who whisper and breathe, those who blow."

2.1 They were those who performed incantations - the mumbo jumbo people.

2.2 These men were also highly trained in science, mathematics and astrology.

2.3 Their skills were used as a cover for predicting the actions of other nations-actually, historians tell us they engaged in espionage and functioned as an intelligence agency.

2.4 That they were demonically guided was no doubt true.

3. Sorcerers is a translation from Mekashephim a Chaldean word for, "Those who were influential in handling people."

3.1 Today we would call them the human resource department or public relations personnel.

3.2 They entertained visiting dignitaries. They also practiced the occult art of necromancy and witchcraft.

4. Chaldeans is a translation from the Chaldean word KASDIM meaning, "Those belonging to the priestly caste" - a holdover from the conquered Medes and early Babylonians.

4.1 Through witchcraft and idolatry they kept the citizenry under control.

4.2 They were exceedingly powerful and served like as a Gestapo and/or KGB.

5. Soothsayers-GAZERIM in the Chaldean language means: "Those who foretold the future.

5.1 The Cambridge Ancient History, Vol. III, p 237 has this to say: "... superstition had made men's lives a burden ... The king as head of the state was hedged about with religious formalities; he would ask oracles whenever he was undertaking a new expedition. But the innumerable omen tablets which forecasted events demonstrated ... how the common people trusted such Books of Fate, and it was clearly not only the king who tried to peer into the future." ... The power of the party of clerics (under various names) was admitted by Nabopolassar and Nebuchadnezzar ... the clerics even would blackmail the King himself ... Nebuchadnezzar often assented to the itching palms of the clergy and he took care to court their favor ...

6. Let's review the dialogue between the king and the magic men.

NIV

Dan 2:3 he said to them, "I have had a dream that troubles me and I want to know what it means."

Dan 2:4 Then the astrologers answered the king in Aramaic, "O king, live forever! Tell your servants the dream, and we will interpret it."

Dan 2:5 The king replied to the astrologers, "This is what I have firmly decided: If you do not tell me what my dream was and interpret it, I will have you cut into pieces and your houses turned into piles of rubble.

End Lesson Taught

8-20-200