

1. Last week I taught Daniel chapter two verses 13 through 16. When time ran out we were about to begin an analysis of Dan 2:17.
2. Before we continue let me give you an expanded translation of Dan 2:1-16.

Dan 2:1 In the third year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, the King began to have several very troubling dreams; he was greatly disturbed; so panic stricken that he developed a serious case insomnia.

Dan 2:2 Accordingly Nebuchadnezzar summoned his scribes, his best scientists, his sorcerers, priests and soothsayers; they were told the nature of the King's problem.

Dan 2:3 The king said to them, "I had a dream which greatly troubles me and I want to know its meaning."

Dan 2:4 The men summoned to the palace bowed before Nebuchadnezzar saying in unison "O King live forever." The leader of the group said "now tell us the dream and we will tell you its interpretation.

Dan 2:5 The king answered "I have already issued an irrevocable decree "If you do not tell me what I dreamed and then interpret it for me, I will have you cut into pieces and your houses turned into piles of rubble.

Dan 2:6 But if you tell me what I dreamed and then tell me its meaning, I will give you gold bullion, silver utensils and a chest full of precious stones along with a large monetary stipend and a promotion. So take a shot and tell me the dream and its interpretation.

Dan 2:7 Once more their spokesman replied, "Tell us the dream, and then we will interpret it."

Dan 2:8 Nebuchadnezzar answered, "You are simply trying to buy time, because you realize I have issued an unalterable decree that a failure to tell the dream and interpret will result in your deaths.

Dan 2:9 If you fail to tell me the dream, there is just one penalty for you. For you see in the past I have watched you on occasion develop misleading interpretations and now I think you are simply stalling, hoping the situation will change. Tell me the dream, and then I will know that your interpretation can be trusted.

Dan 2:10 One of the more respected scholars answered, "There is not a diviner on earth who can do what the king asks! In fact we know of no king, Egyptian or Assyrian who has ever asked a scholar, enchanter or astrologer to tell a ruler what he dreamed.

Dan 2:11 What you are asking is frankly just too difficult. There is no human who one can reveal your dream; only the gods know what you dreamed but unfortunately the gods do not live among us.

Dan 2:12 This response made the king not just angry but livid; he exploded and summarily ordered the execution of all the wise men of Babylon.

Dan 2:13 The decree to execute all Babylonian diviners was received by Arioch, Nebuchadnezzar's Chief of Execution, he immediately led a sweeping search for all diviners and this included Daniel and his four friends.

Dan 2:14 When Arioch arrived at Daniel's palace apartment, the young teenager met the Chief Executioner at the door; Arioch read the decree to Daniel and then Daniel answered with counsel and wisdom.

Dan 2:15 "Why is the decree being so hastily carried out? Then Arioch told Daniel how the King had already met with the palace diviners and given each a chance to tell the King his dream.

Dan 2:16 Daniel went straight to the King's Quarters and asked permission from his Chief of Staff to see the King; Daniel promised, if given just a little more time, he would tell the King what he had dreamed and then interpret the dream.

3. Now let's see what principles we can learn from verse sixteen.

1. No one ever visited the King's quarters without his permission.

2. Daniel had to go through proper channels to get his audience. As we will later see there is the possibility he may not have gotten a personal audience.

3. Recall from our study of Esther, she risked her life by entering her husband's throne room in order to plead the case of her people.

4. Earlier the King announced "all wise men will be killed"; he could not retract his pronouncement, after all, a middle eastern potentate as God, could make no mistake therefore his pronouncements were intractable.

5. We should take note of Daniel's attitude of faith: not for a moment did he doubt God's ability to provide the answer to the dream.

6. This kind of confidence as we have noted can only come from a mind full of doctrine.

7. He was prepared; he had doctrine in his soul.

8. Daniel is our example; we must take in the Word consistently under the filling of the Spirit so we too can demonstrate in the angelic conflict that even in a fallen state we can choose God's way over Satan's way.

9. Because Daniel is occupied with Christ he moves forward even though he does not know the answer; he does know that his future does rest in God's hands.

10. Through proper channels he sent word to the king that if given time God would show him not only the dream but also the interpretation of the dream.

11. From the Scripture we cannot be sure Daniel actually made a personal visit to the king. There is the possibility he simply saw his chief of staff who in turned conveyed his request.

11.1 All we really know is that Daniel received permission to tell the king his dream and its interpretation.

11.2 If I might be permitted a bit of conjecture, it is possible that after the king cooled down, and after hearing of Daniel's request, whether in person or through official channels, he may have remembered the earlier examination when he observed that Daniel was ten times wiser than all his staff diviners.

12. Now let's take a look at verse seventeen:

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Dan 2:17 Then Daniel went to his house, and made the thing known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions:

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Dan 2:17 Then Daniel returned to his house and explained the matter to his friends Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah.

1. What was going through Daniel's mind at this point is unknown.
2. The phrase "returned to his house" for me raises a picture of a man busily thinking of a plan while walking briskly away from the palace.
3. His plan as we can see is to seek God's help in prayer even though he has the gift of prophecy.
4. Just because you or I have a particular gift does not mean we do not need all the other forms of worship and this clearly is shown here.
5. Daniel not only needed prayer to get him through this time of testing but he needed intercessory prayer.
6. The Scriptures tell us "the prayers of a righteous man availeth much."
 - 6.1 If you want results ask a righteous man to pray for you.
- Pro 15:8 The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD: but the prayer of the upright is his delight.
7. Daniel certainly knew three righteous young men: Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah.

8. He wanted some artillery support so he seeks out three close friends.

9. We could say that Daniel approached this problem with fellowship and prayer.

10. The Bible teaches us to pray when we need wisdom. Daniel needed wisdom so He calls upon the Lord.

Jam 1:5 If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.

11. Daniel was not unlike other Old Testament saints who sought the Lord's help in time of need.

11.1 Abraham pleads with God for wicked Sodom, persistently bringing down the minimum number of righteous for whose sake the city can be spared.

Gen 18:23 And Abraham drew near, and said, Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked?

Gen 18:24 Peradventure there be fifty righteous within the city: wilt thou also destroy and not spare the place for the fifty righteous that are therein?

Gen 18:25 That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked: and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee: Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?

Gen 18:26 And the LORD said, If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes.

Gen 18:27 And Abraham answered and said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which am but dust and ashes:

Gen 18:28 Peradventure there shall lack five of the fifty righteous: wilt thou destroy all the city for lack of five? And he said, If I find there forty and five, I will not destroy it.

Gen 18:29 And he spake unto him yet again, and said, Peradventure there shall be forty found there. And he said, I will not do it for forty's sake.

Gen 18:30 And he said unto him, Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak: Peradventure there shall thirty be found there. And he said, I will not do it, if I find thirty there.

Gen 18:31 And he said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord: Peradventure there shall be twenty found there. And he said, I will not destroy it for twenty's sake.

Gen 18:32 And he said, Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak yet but this once: Peradventure ten shall be found there. And he said, I will not destroy it for ten's sake.

Gen 18:33 And the LORD went his way, as soon as he had left communing with Abraham: and Abraham returned unto his place.

11.2 Moses asks that his own name might be blotted out of the book of life if God would forgive those who worshiped the golden calf.

Num 14:13 And Moses said unto the LORD, Then the Egyptians shall hear it, (for thou broughtest up this people in thy might from among them;)

Num 14:14 And they will tell it to the inhabitants of this land: for they have heard that thou LORD art among this people, that thou LORD art seen face to face, and that thy cloud standeth over them, and that thou goest before them, by day time in a pillar of a cloud and a pillar of fire by night.

Num 14:15 Now if thou shalt kill all this people as one man, then the nations which have heard the fame of thee will speak, saying,

Num 14:16 Because the LORD was not able to bring this people into the land which he swore unto them, therefore he hath slain them in the wilderness.

Num 14:17 And now, I beseech thee, let the power of my Lord be great, according as thou hast spoken, saying,

Num 14:18 The LORD is longsuffering, and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression, and by no means clearing the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation.

Num 14:19 Pardon, I beseech thee, the iniquity of this people according unto the greatness of thy mercy, and as thou hast forgiven this people, from Egypt even until now.

12. The three boys had much in common. They were what we would call true friends.

13. Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were friends upon whom Daniel could rely. Friends he could turn to in time of trouble; friends he could trust even with his most pressing needs.

14. These young men knew that "mercy" is grace in action and that asking God in prayer transforms grace into positive action.

15. Now let's take a look at verse eighteen and the substance of their prayer:

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Dan 2:18 That they would desire mercies of the God of heaven concerning this secret; that Daniel and his fellows should not perish with the rest of the wise men of Babylon.

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Dan 2:18 He (Daniel) urged them to plead for mercy from the God of heaven concerning this mystery, so that he and his friends might not be executed with the rest of the wise men of Babylon.

1. Daniel goes to his apartment in the palace and asks his friends to come over and talk about their little problem.

2. What the reaction was of Daniel's friends we do not know.
3. We do know Daniel is not afraid to ask God about this situation.
4. His prayer here is rather simple: "Lord show us the dream and its interpretation in order that we are not executed."
5. Daniel certainly knew that God's ways are not always our ways. Just think of the "famous lions den episode and the fiery furnace episode."

5.1 These boys knew God's will was perfect and that "their safety rested with Him and Him alone."

Isa 55:8 "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the LORD.

Isa 55:9 "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Isa 55:10 As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater,

Isa 55:11 so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.

Isa 55:12 You will go out in joy and be led forth in peace; the mountains and hills will burst into song before you, and all the trees of the field will clap their hands.

Isa 55:13 Instead of the thornbush will grow the pine tree, and instead of briars the myrtle will grow. This will be for the LORD'S renown, for an everlasting sign, which will not be destroyed."

Isa 56:1 This is what the LORD says: "Maintain justice and do what is right, for my salvation is close at hand and my righteousness will soon be revealed.

6. Daniel and the boys accepted whatever solution God had determined.

7. Now let's take a good at the Victory - God answers in spades verse 19:

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Dan 2:19 Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a night vision. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven.

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Dan 2:19 During the night the mystery was revealed to Daniel in a vision. Then Daniel praised the God of heaven

1. There are those who think the statement "Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a night vision" indicates God let Daniel dream the same dream.

2. This is no doubt a possibility; we only know for sure, however, that God revealed the dream to Daniel.

3. Daniel had faith that God would provide him the dream; he prayed even though he had the gift of prophecy and as a result not only does God deliver both he and his friends but God through Daniel blesses the entire diviner cadre of Babylon.

3.1 The entire diviner staff will be saved from execution.

4. God is glorified just as much as Daniel, his three friends and/or Nebuchadnezzar and his cabinet. Notice what Psa 50:15 has to say: "... call upon me in your time of trouble: I will deliver you and you shall glorify Me."

5. God honored Daniel and his faith; He showed the prophet the dream and the exact meaning of the dream.

6. In the dream Daniel will tell the King how the history of the world will unfold from Nebuchadnezzar until the coming of Christ.

7. The result of God's revelation will result in Daniel's promotion and as a result of his witness many in Babylonia and Persia will be saved.

8. Now let's see Daniel's response of praise. Dan 2:20-23

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Dan 2:20 and said: "Praise be to the name of God for ever and ever; wisdom and power are his.

Dan 2:21 He changes times and seasons; he sets up kings and deposes them. He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to the discerning.

Dan 2:22 He reveals deep and hidden things; he knows what lies in darkness, and light dwells with him.

Dan 2:23 I thank and praise you, O God of my fathers: 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."

1. There is no doubt in Daniel's mind Who deserves the credit.

2. At no time does Daniel get carried away with his own importance.

3. His theme is "blessed be the name of the Lord."

4. Daniel is perfectly oriented to the plan of God and though others, as we shall later see, may try to take credit, this little known rookie prophet is full of praise to God as the source of all power and might.

5. In verse 21 the word Iddan translated "times and the word Zeman translated seasons are similar to the Greek words "Chronos and Kairos" which are familiar to us—these two words are usually translated “times” and “seasons.”

6. By using these words Daniel reveals his knowledge of dispensations. As we have noted earlier dispensations and cycles of discipline were commonly understood by the Old Testament prophets and certainly Moses.

7. In Leviticus chapter 26 we have one of the most extensive dissertations on the cycles of discipline promised for reversionistic nations devoid of a pivot of positive believers.

8. Now before we look at the Doctrine of The Fifth Cycle of Discipline I want to review the description of the statue:

Dan 2:32 The head of the statue was made of pure gold, its chest and arms of silver, its belly and thighs of bronze,

Dan 2:33 its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of baked clay.

Dan 2:34 While you were watching, a rock was cut out, but not by human hands. It struck the statue on its feet of iron and clay and smashed them.

Dan 2:35 Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver and the gold were broken to pieces at the same time and became like chaff on a threshing floor in the summer. The wind swept them away without leaving a trace. But the rock that struck the statue became a huge mountain and filled the whole earth.

End Lesson Taught 9-24-2000