

1. We are in the middle of Daniel chapter two. Last week I spent the entire hour teaching the *Doctrine of the Five Cycles of Discipline*.
2. We are now ready to begin a study of Daniel chapter two verse twenty-four.
3. First however I want to review by way of an expanded translation Dan 2:1-23.

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 was the King that he developed a serious case of insomnia.

Dan 2:2 Accordingly Nebuchadnezzar summoned his best educated scribes, his best astrologers, his best diviners (men skilled in the black art of incantations) and his priests; 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." Then 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 where the refuse of the city will be dumped.

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 "a failure to tell the dream and its interpretation 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 develop misleading interpretations; 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, who has ever ordered 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 his advisors was received by Arioch, Nebuchadnezzar's Chief Executioner, he immediately led a sweeping search for all diviners and this included Daniel and his three 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 you give me just a little more time, I will tell you what you dreamed and then I will tell you its interpretation."

Dan 2:17 Later Daniel met with his three friends and explained the entire situation.

Dan 2:18 The four in prayer asked God to make known the dream and its interpretation so that they would not be drawn and quartered with the rest of the Babylonian diviners.

Dan 2:19 The dream and its interpretation was given to Daniel in a night vision; and Daniel responded to God's revelation by praising God.

Dan 2:20 Daniel extolled the name of Jehovah God by exclaiming "Blessed be the name of God forever, for He is the source of all wisdom and might.

Dan 2:21 He went even further by proclaiming "it is Jesus Christ who controls events and breaks up time into epochs; he both raises up kings and puts them down; He gives wisdom to the wise, and more doctrine to those who desire it.

Dan 2:22 He reveals the deep and hidden things to those who know Him; God knows what is in the minds of men; and because the light dwells in Him, He can reveal everything that I, Daniel need to know.

Dan 2:23 I thank You and praise Your name, Oh God of my fathers, who has given me wisdom and has revealed to me the king's dream."

4. As we will see in the next several verses the king will attempt to give Daniel the credit but Daniel will give credit to God.

4.1 Daniel will testify in the palace, "there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets."

5. Daniel from doctrine in his soul has the proper "frame of reference."

6. His frame of reference had established a new conscience which is compatible with God's norms and standards.

7. A frame of reference from doctrine is the basis for the application of doctrine to experience.

8. A proper frame of reference is the only lasting therapy for past, present and future hang ups and this includes guilt complexes.

9. It also provides content for proper prayer.
10. It provides an accurate basis for witnessing.
11. It provides discernment to detect false doctrine.
12. The frame of reference provides capacity for life and love in all six categories; toward God, toward spouse, toward friends; toward others in general; toward enemies; and toward family.
13. It makes possible God sharing His happiness with the believer.
14. A divine frame of reference causes the proper function of the believer in the devil's world.
15. It provides capacity for love and the ability to recognize the right man or woman.
16. These are concepts beyond comprehension of believers today.
17. Believers today think "singles classes" and/or "recently divorced classes" are the answer for finding a right man and/or right woman.
18. It appears that Arioch was just another time serving bureaucrat who was willing to claim credit for what he had no part in providing.
19. Now let's see what verse 26 has to say:

KJV

Dan 2:26 The king answered and said to Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, Art thou able to make known unto me the dream which I have seen, and the interpretation thereof?

NIV

Dan 2:26 The king asked Daniel (also called Belteshazzar), "Are you able to tell me what I saw in my dream and interpret it?"

1. Belteshazzar is Daniel's Chaldean name.
2. We have a record of this in Daniel 1:7. The name recall means "Bel's prince."
 - 2.1 Bel was the ruling god of the Chaldean pantheon, equivalent to Zeus or Jupiter.
 - 2.2 Daniel was as attractive and brilliant as a teenager that he looked as though he came "right from the hand of Bellu."

- 2.3 Recall, Daniel's Hebrew name means 'God is judge'.
3. King Nebuchadnezzar is no doubt anxious to hear from Daniel.
4. The King had heard Arioch's report and now wants to hear from the "man" himself.
5. Daniel now has opportunity to take credit for knowing the dream and its interpretation but he will instead show his perfect orientation to the grace of God.
6. Now let's move to verse twenty-seven.

KJV

Dan 2:27 Daniel answered in the presence of the king, and said, The secret which the king hath demanded cannot the wise men, the astrologers, the magicians, the soothsayers, shew unto the king;

NIV

Dan 2:27 Daniel replied, "No wise man, enchanter, magician or diviner can explain to the king the mystery he has asked about,

1. This verse in the KJV seems to ask a question.
2. Such is not the case. In the Hebrew we do not find a question but an assertion.
3. Daniel is saying "I understand your staff cannot answer the King's questions concerning his dream."
4. Nebuchadnezzar had summoned his best educated scribes (his legal advisors), his best astrologers (men who watched the stars and predicted the future based on celestial alignments), his best diviners (men skilled in the black art of incantations) and his priests (his religious leaders); they were told the nature of the king's problem but none could tell the king what he dreamed nor could they therefore interpret the dream.
5. Notice in the NIV the translators properly translate Daniel's response.
6. From human viewpoint one could conclude Daniel was rather brash in his response, like he might be rubbing the incompetence of the king's staff in Nebuchadnezzar's face.
- 6.1 We might even be prone to say had we been there (to ourselves of course) "attaboy rub it in Daniel "show'm" where the power is."
7. It would better seem Daniel's motivation is more one of making clear that human effort had failed and now it was time for God to reveal His power.

8. Much like Elijah did I suspect with the Priests of Baal when the forces of nature were purposefully stacked against God.

8.1 You will recall Elijah had them soak the wood with water and dig trenches around the altar and then fill the trenches with water before asking God to lap up the sacrifice with fire. Let's review that scenario:

1Ki 18:21 Elijah went before the people and said, "How long will you waver between two opinions? If the LORD is God, follow him; but if Baal is God, follow him." But the people said nothing.

1Ki 18:22 Then Elijah said to them, "I am the only one of the LORD'S prophets left, but Baal has four hundred and fifty prophets.

1Ki 18:23 Get two bulls for us. Let them choose one for themselves, and let them cut it into pieces and put it on the wood but not set fire to it. I will prepare the other bull and put it on the wood but not set fire to it.

1Ki 18:24 Then you call on the name of your god, and I will call on the name of the LORD. The god who answers by fire--he is God." Then all the people said, "What you say is good."

1Ki 18:25 Elijah said to the prophets of Baal, "Choose one of the bulls and prepare it first, since there are so many of you. Call on the name of your god, but do not light the fire."

1Ki 18:26 So they took the bull given them and prepared it. Then they called on the name of Baal from morning till noon. "O Baal, answer us!" they shouted. But there was no response; no one answered. And they danced around the altar they had made.

1Ki 18:27 At noon Elijah began to taunt them. "Shout louder!" he said. "Surely he is a god! Perhaps he is deep in thought, or busy, or traveling. Maybe he is sleeping and must be awakened."

1Ki 18:28 So they shouted louder and slashed themselves with swords and spears, as was their custom, until their blood flowed.

1Ki 18:29 Midday passed, and they continued their frantic prophesying until the time for the evening sacrifice. But there was no response, no one answered, no one paid attention.

1Ki 18:30 Then Elijah said to all the people, "Come here to me." They came to him, and he repaired the altar of the LORD, which was in ruins.

1Ki 18:31 Elijah took twelve stones, one for each of the tribes descended from Jacob, to whom the word of the LORD had come, saying, "Your name shall be Israel."

1Ki 18:32 With the stones he built an altar in the name of the LORD, and he dug a trench around it large enough to hold two seahs of seed.

1Ki 18:33 He arranged the wood, cut the bull into pieces and laid it on the wood. Then he said to them, "Fill four large jars with water and pour it on the offering and on the wood."

1Ki 18:34 "Do it again," he said, and they did it again. "Do it a third time," he ordered, and they did it the third time.

1Ki 18:35 The water ran down around the altar and even filled the trench.

1Ki 18:36 At the time of sacrifice, the prophet Elijah stepped forward and prayed: "O LORD, God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, let it be known today that you are God in Israel and that I am your servant and have done all these things at your command.

1Ki 18:37 Answer me, O LORD, answer me, so these people will know that you, O LORD, are God, and that you are turning their hearts back again."

1Ki 18:38 Then the fire of the LORD fell and burned up the sacrifice, the wood, the stones and the soil, and also licked up the water in the trench.

9. Nebuchadnezzar has before him a young foreigner who has rejected the food and worship practices of Babylon.

10. Daniel is a man who is known to the king as a Jew; a Jew who has a reputation for wisdom and a Jew who is still loyal to Jehovah God.

11. Nebuchadnezzar, after hearing the denouncement of his wisest, may have suspected Daniel was about to claim credit for himself but instead as we have mentioned Daniel will give credit where credit is due; He will claim no greatness for himself, all the credit he will give to God.

12. Daniel is making certain all those observing understand this is not a coordinated effort of the cabinet, this is not a product of his three year training program this is going to be "show time" for Jehovah God.

13. There was in Babylon a feeling of superiority; after all thought the Babylonians had not their god Bel successfully led them in battle against the Jews and their God Jehovah.

14. That Nebuchadnezzar was prone to arrogance is also abundantly clear in Scripture. This we are going to see in chapter four when a prideful King Nebuchadnezzar is brought to his knees.

15. In fact this dream and Daniel's interpretation is but one of many which will ultimately lead to his conversion.

16. Let me give you a quick preview of chapter four in part so you can better understand what might be going on in the mind of the great King.

Dan 4:28 All this happened to King Nebuchadnezzar.

Dan 4:29 Twelve months later, as the king was walking on the roof of the royal palace of Babylon,

Dan 4:30 he said, "Is not this the great Babylon I have built as the royal residence, by my mighty power and for the glory of my majesty?"

Dan 4:31 The words were still on his lips when a voice came from heaven, "This is what is decreed for you, King Nebuchadnezzar: Your royal authority has been taken from you.

Dan 4:32 You will be driven away from people and will live with the wild animals; you will eat grass like cattle. Seven times will pass by for you until you acknowledge that the Most High is sovereign over the kingdoms of men and gives them to anyone he wishes."

Dan 4:33 Immediately what had been said about Nebuchadnezzar was fulfilled. He was driven away from people and ate grass like cattle. His body was drenched with the dew of heaven until his hair grew like the feathers of an eagle and his nails like the claws of a bird.

Dan 4:34 At the end of that time, I, Nebuchadnezzar, raised my eyes toward heaven, and my sanity was restored. Then I praised the Most High; I honored and glorified him who lives forever. His dominion is an eternal dominion; his kingdom endures from generation to generation.

Dan 4:35 All the peoples of the earth are regarded as nothing. He does as he pleases with the powers of heaven and the peoples of the earth. No one can hold back his hand or say to him: "What have you done?"

Dan 4:36 At the same time that my sanity was restored, my honor and splendor were returned to me for the glory of my kingdom. My advisers and nobles sought me out, and I was restored to my throne and became even greater than before.

Dan 4:37 Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and exalt and glorify the King of heaven, because everything he does is right and all his ways are just. And those who walk in pride he is able to humble.

17. Nebuchadnezzar, though arrogant, was desperate however, he had tried everything and the dream still had him so upset he could not even sleep.

18. So the King waited expectantly for the hammer to fall. He might have simply nodded to Daniel or maybe he said "yes you are correct none could help me."

19. Now let's see what we have in verse twenty-eight.

KJV

Dan 2:28 But there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days. Thy dream, and the visions of thy head upon thy bed, are these;

NIV

Dan 2:28 but there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries. He has shown King Nebuchadnezzar what will happen in days to come. Your dream and the visions that passed through your mind as you lay on your bed are these:

1. Daniel tells the King that it is Jehovah God who reveals secrets consequently credit and glory must be given to the God of Israel alone.

2. Boy is there a message for us.

3. No mature believer should ever consider taking credit unto himself for that which happens; it is the grace of God.

4. The problem however is there are many immature believers in this world who strut around like a rooster in a chicken coop, full of arrogance and self-importance.

5. Daniel is obviously not one of these but rather he is a mature young man who knows from where his power comes.

End Lesson Taught 10-22-2000