

Daniel Chapter 2

Pastor Matt Postiff

Fellowship
BIBLE CHURCH

Verse 1: Dream-Induced Insomnia

- Note the time: second year, 604/3 B.C.
 - Daniel and his friends are not even finished with their training.
- King Nebuchadnezzar had very bothersome dreams. Evidently he had a repeating dream that became fixed in his mind and troubled him deeply.

Side Note: Handling Insomnia

- There are physical helps (good sleep hygiene).
But they are not a cure-all.
 - These are connected to our spiritual life (the practice of discipline).
- But when anxiety strikes, what to do spiritually?
 - Don't become upset, either at God, or the situation, or the people who have created the anxiety, or at others who are sleeping well 😊.

Side Note: Handling Insomnia

- What to do?
 - Use the time to pray for yourself and others.
 - Get up and read the Bible.
 - Do something that will get your mind off your problems. Do something you *have to do*. Do something *for someone else*.
 - You will lose sleep. Resolve—by God’s grace—not to allow *that* to dictate your attitude the next day.

Side Note: Handling Insomnia

- If there is some problem that you can't stop thinking about...
 - Hand it over to God. *Trust* Him that He will take care of it. The problem is not going anywhere: it will still be there in the morning—or it may be solved by then!
 - God may include you in the solution. But recognize that you cannot solve many things.
 - You may have done all you can, say, to live peaceably with all men. All you can do is wait on the Lord.

Verses 2-9: A Forgotten Dream?

- Read these verses carefully. Did Nebuchadnezzar forget his dream like we sometimes do and like the non-inspired NKJV heading says?
- The key phrases are “tell me the dream” and “give me its interpretation” in verse 9.

Verses 2-9: A Forgotten Dream?

- The King wanted both of those things. He wanted them to tell him the dream, and for them to tell its interpretation.
- He didn't forget the dream; he was testing them to see if they were "legit" in their abilities. He refused to tell them the dream.

Verses 2-9: A Test

- This was early in Nebuchadnezzar's reign. He knew these astrologers were colluding fakers.
 - They would give a generic interpretation and then wait for the circumstances (time) to change.
- He was the new sheriff in town and was going to find out who was real and who wasn't. This was an occasion he could use against them.
- As a tyrant, he could set such conditions, harsh punishments, and rich rewards (v. 5-6).

Verses 10-13: A Test Failed

- The astrologers, etc. said what the king asked was impossible for people.
- Only the gods, they said, could do that, and they don't dwell with flesh.
- Nebuchadnezzar was furious, and ordered them all killed.

Verses 13-16: Daniel Endangered

- Somehow Daniel and his friends were lumped in with the astrologers.
 - Perhaps they were all in the same “department” of the government, even though they were not of the same stripe whatsoever.
- Daniel inquired of the official about the urgency of the matter. Then he asked the king for time.

Verses 17-18: Seeking God's Help

- There was a problem that had only one solution: God.
- So they prayed to the only living and true God.
- Their request was for mercy concerning the secret of the king, so that they could live.
 - A collateral benefit: otherwise men would live.

Verse 19: God Answered

- The method that God chose to use was a vision in the night.
 - A vision is a dream that, like Nebuchadnezzar's, was a revelation from Heaven to mankind.
 - This, like miracles, is very rare in the course of world history.

Verse 19-23: Thanksgiving

- The specific answer to prayer induced Daniel to express gratitude to God.
- Daniel first gave thanks to God for His general attributes and actions.
- Then Daniel thanked God for the specific issue at hand.

Verses 19-22: General Thanks

- Blessedness/praise forever belongs to God.
- Why? To Him belongs wisdom and might (which He shares a portion of with Daniel).
- He changes times and seasons: **God of history.**
- He sets in power whom He wills: **God of nations.**

Verses 19-22: General Thanks

- He is the source of all true wisdom and knowledge: **God of wisdom.**
- He is a revealer of secrets: **God of revelation.**
- He knows everything—including what is in darkness: **God of knowledge.**
- All light (insight, wisdom) dwells with God.

Verse 23: Specific Thanks

- Thanks and praise. All credit goes to God.
- Daniel did not abandon the God of his fathers.
- God gave wisdom and might to Daniel.
- God made known to them something otherwise unknowable, in answer to their specific, believing prayer.

Verses 24-29: The Drama Unfolds

- Daniel went to the official and announces that he has the answer.
- He is brought before the king and reviews that the astrologers etc. cannot answer the king.
- But the true and living God can.
- In sum: God has shown the future to the king.

Verses 24-29: The Drama Unfolds

- Note Daniel's confidence.
 - He knows he has the answer.
 - He tells the official to stop killing the wise men.
 - He tells the official to bring him before the king.
 - If he is wrong, or if the interpretation is not appreciated by the king, Daniel could lose his life.

Verse 30: Humility of Daniel

- Daniel openly admits that he is nothing special. But he had a connection to the God of heaven that the astrologers did not have.
- Two reasons God revealed this information:
 - So that Daniel and his friends could live.
 - So that Nebuchadnezzar could understand.

Verses 31-33: A Great Statue

- Nebuchadnezzar saw a statue in his dream. It was huge, awe-inspiring, fearful, imposing, and mind-consuming.
- Gold, then silver, then bronze.
- Iron and then mixed iron/clay (pottery).
- This may have looked like the Colossus of Rhodes, about 30m (100 feet) tall.



Verses 34-35: Statue Destroyed

- A stone of supernatural origin struck the bottom of the image and powerfully destroyed it.
- The stone grew to become an earth-filling mountain.



The Scene

- Imagine for a moment the effect that Daniel's words would have on the king and the large audience that may have been gathered.
 - Silence?
 - Awe?
 - Fear?
 - Suspense to find out what it all meant.

Thoughts on the Statue

- The statue appears glorious in quality at the top, but progressively less so toward the feet.
- The metals are also somewhat stronger toward the bottom, until the clay-mixed portion.
- Remember that God is showing the future. The statue somehow represents the progress of the future. Things do not bode well.
- But, something better is coming.

Verses 36-38: The Interpretation

- The head of gold represents Nebuchadnezzar and his expansive kingdom.
- There is some glory in his kingdom that will be missing in the later kingdoms.
- God has given him his kingdom and all its domain, power and glory. That is why he is “king of kings.” Nebuchadnezzar is a steward.

Side Note: Gold

- Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom was ruled from a "golden city."
 - A "god" there, Marduk, was a god of gold and the idol was made of solid gold.
 - Many buildings and walls were overlaid with gold.

Side Note: Times of the Gentiles

- The “times of the Gentiles” can be seen to begin with Nebuchadnezzar.
- In these times, Israel is judged, eclipsed and, for the most part, ruled over by Gentile nations.
- See Luke 21:24, Romans 11:25.

Verses 39-40: The Interpretation

- 39: After the kingdom of gold, there is an inferior kingdom represented by silver and yet another of bronze. Each will rule the earth.
- 40: The fourth kingdom will be strong like iron.
- So, the statue represents a sequence of kingdoms, each with various qualities.

Verses 41-43: The Interpretation

- 41-43: The fourth kingdom will be divided into sub-kingdoms, some strong and some weaker.
- As iron and clay do not stick together or form an alloy, so this kingdom will not be united.
- The two legs is not a figure of division; the two materials is what communicates the division.

Verse 43: Problem Phrase

- What does “mingle with the seed of men” mean?
- Usually this kind of language refers to intermarriage. There could be intermarriage of people of different kingdoms, but that won't cement the kingdoms together.

Verses 44-45: The Interpretation

- At last, the “Kingdom of the God of Heaven” will come on the scene.
 - It will destroy all the prior kingdoms.
 - It will stand forever. See 7:27.
 - It will encompass the entire earth.
- The dream and its interpretation are certain.

Two Types of Kingdoms

- The “statue kingdoms” are organically connected to one another and essentially human in nature.
- But the stone represents a kingdom that does not grow organically out of the others. It has a supernatural origin: the God of Heaven.
 - This argues against a post-millennial view, in which the church grows into the kingdom of heaven over a long period of time.

Kingdoms in Daniel

- The identification of these symbols with specific historical kingdoms is given on the next slide.
- Confirm with Daniel 8:20, 21; then 11:2-3.
- We will see the same again in chapter 7.
- This sequence of kingdoms supports the long chronology of Daniel 9: not 70 years; instead, 70 sevens of years.

Kingdoms in Daniel

In the Vision	Kingdom In World History
Head of gold	Babylon – to 539 BC
Upper body of silver	Medo-Persia – 550 to 330 BC
Belly and thighs of bronze	Greece – 336 to 323 to 146 BC
Legs of iron: “the iron legions”	Rome – 27 BC to 395 AD
Feet of iron and clay	Divided Rome – 395 AD ...
Stone cut out without hands	Kingdom of the God of Heaven aka the millennial kingdom ruled by Christ.

More on the Kingdoms

- Medes come after Babylon: Isa 13:17, Jer. 51:11, 28. It ruled for 200 years.
 - Larger territory; just as “strong” politically.
 - Its monetary system was based on silver coins.
 - Inferiority in its system of rule, not vested in a single all-powerful individual but split between Medes and Persians and many satraps/provinces.

More on the Kingdoms

- Greece ruled after the Medo-Persian empire.
- Alexander the Great conquered an even larger territory and the kingdom ruled for 130 years.
- But his kingdom was soon divided in four parts after his untimely death at 33 years old.

More on the Kingdoms

- Rome ruled for 500 years (until 476 AD); and much longer if you count the eastern empire (1453 AD).
- Rome's military was characterized by iron weapons.

More on the Stone

- The stone represents Christ himself. “It” is a “who,” not a “what.”
 - Psalm 118:22, Isaiah 28:16, Rom. 9:33, 1 Peter 2:6; Luke 20:18.
- The mountain that grows from Him is His kingdom.
- His sudden appearance was troubling to Neb.

Kingdoms in Daniel

- Knowing this information would provide strategic advantage to people who could apply this knowledge to their situation.
 - Like Daniel!
- There is a “pause” in the prophetic timeline somewhere in the image. It is in the iron phase, with the rejection of the “stone.”

Verses 46-49: Honor for Daniel

- The pagan king bowed to Daniel and made an offering to him. How awkward for Daniel!
- Better was the recognition Nebuchadnezzar offered to God. He confessed that:
 - God was over all gods and kings.
 - God reveals impossible secrets.

Verses 46-49: Honor for Daniel

- Daniel was promoted and enriched.
 - Placed in authority over the Babylon province and the king's wise men.
 - Received many gifts.
 - Sat in the king's court. He was an advisor.
- Daniel got promotions for his three friends who helped him in prayer. He delegated his official capacities over Babylon to them.